

A study of the standardization of talents flow among China's universities under the background of "Double First-Class" strategy

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Abstract

In this study, we investigate the issue of talents competition among China's universities. Our findings indicate the policy changes from "key universities" to "Double First-Class" are closely related to talents flow among universities. At present, in order to become one of the universities in China for the Double First-Class initiative, some universities blindly introduce talents at home and abroad. Scramble for Talents among China's universities is growing up. In order to prevent the vicious competition for talents, China should establish a fairer and standardized talents flow mechanism.

Keywords—"Double First-Class" strategy; talents competition; talent flow; policy change.

Introduction

The formal publication of Theodore Caplow and Reece J. Mc Gee's *The Academic Marketplace* (1958) is recognised as the origin of the study of university faculty mobility. Since then, European and American scholars have put forward some related concepts (e.g. Academic Mobility, Faculty Mobility, Staff Mobility, Academic labour market, Brain Drain, Brain Gain) to explain various university faculty mobility phenomena. The concept of Talents Flow is commonly used by Chinese scholars, and there is a distinction between Talents in the broad and narrow sense here. In the broad sense, Talents mainly refer to university teachers with PhD degrees or those who have been appointed to the titles of professor or associate professor. In the narrower sense, Talents mainly refer to the institutionalised academic elite. In China, institutionalised academic elites mainly include academicians of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, academicians of the

Chinese Academy of Engineering and those who have been selected for various national talent programmes (e.g. the Changjiang Scholar Award Scheme, the National Outstanding Young Scientists Fund, the Youth Thousand Talents Programme, "Ten Thousand Talents Programme" and "National Excellent Youth Science Fund").

Research by Chinese scholars on talent mobility in higher education began in the mid-1980s. Through a literature search of CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure), we found that the themes of Chinese scholars' research on talent mobility in higher education in different periods were closely related to the adjustment of higher education policies in the same period. By sifting through 730 relevant literatures, we found 37 empirical literatures. These literatures provide a variety of data that can reflect the mobility of talent in Chinese universities at different periods. These data appear to be fragmented, but they constitute an important chain of evidence that presents the stage characteristics of talent mobility in

Chinese universities. Accordingly, we have analysed the correlation between data on talent mobility in Chinese universities and changes in higher education policy. Our findings suggest that the 211 Project (1994) and the 985 Project (1999), initiated by the Ministry of Education, have been important policy drivers of talent mobility in Chinese universities over the past 20 years.

In October 2015, the State Council promulgated the "overall plan to promote world-class universities and first-class discipline construction" and clearly proposed to take the "Double First-class" as the core of construction, which is the only way which must be passed to achieve the task of strengthening country by higher education. In this sense, the core of the "double first class" strategy is the talents strategy among universities. At present, some universities compete for increasing the introduction of overseas high-end talents in order to seize the "double first" building opportunities. At the same time, the "War of grabbing talents" which is unable to control effectively among the domestic universities has been intensified. Former Minister of Education Chen Baosheng called "the eastern universities on the Midwest universities talents "mercy "in the Midwest Higher Education Promotion Program held at the beginning of this year, which has reflected the seriousness of the problem from one side. The implementation of the "Double First-class" strategy cannot create institutional barriers to the flow of talents in universities, but it cannot sit idly by any way of "digging the wall" talents in universities. How to crack the two difficult choices and establish reasonable and orderly talents flow mechanism, which is the key point to ensure the "Double First-class" strategy to implement smoothly.

The stage features of policy changes in the flow of talents in universities

Before the reform and opening up, the large-scale university talents flow is mainly in accordance with relevant policies, under the strict personnel administrative control, which is well organized and planned. On the whole, it is featured by talents flowing from the eastern to the central and western, from coastal to the mainland, from key universities to non-key universities and from old universities to new ones. As for the adjustment among universities in 1952, it not only completely changed the British-American higher education system established during the period of the Republic of China, but also led to the first large-scale flow of talents in domestic universities. For example, after the faculty adjustment in 1952, 314 modern scientists working in universities stayed only 82 people, only 26% of the total, and 232 leave the original school, accounting for 74% of the total. In the late 1950s, in order to change the situation of the uneven distribution of higher education, the central government decided to build a number of comprehensive universities in the central and western regions, which objectively formed the second large-scale talents flow of domestic universities (Bai & Chi, 2020). In 1958, the number among universities and college students has an explosive growth, some new institutions have been established in some universities on the basis of independent, which also caused the third large-scale domestic talents flow. Since the mid-1960s, in

order to meet the needs of "three-line construction", some universities in the eastern gradually establishes a branch or move part of their departments to inland, which also resulted in the fourth large-scale domestic talents flow.

Since the reform and opening up, the large-scale university talents flow is also carried out under the direct and indirect driving of the relevant policies, especially the reconstruction, upgrading and innovation of the key university policy, especially the influence of the talents flow in universities. Compared with policies before the reform and opening up, the relevant policies at this period is less "instructional". Correspondingly, the autonomy among universities has been expanding, the personnel file system began to lose, and even once become "too flexible", and there is an obvious trend of market-orientation of talents flow in universities. On the whole, after the reform and opening up, the flow of talents in universities is opposite to that before the reform and opening up. The flow of talents is featured by flowing from the eastern to the central and western, from coastal to the mainland, from key universities to non-key universities and from the system of organization to outside. The late 1970s to the late 80s, the state has launched a number of study abroad projects, and more than 180 domestic universities more than 10,000 young teachers get the opportunity to go abroad for further study, but this talents training work also caused a certain of the brain drain. For example, between 1978 and 1987, the number of students studying abroad from Xi'an Jiaotong University was 634, only 336 returned; the number of students studying at Lanzhou University was 390, only 176 returned (Cai, Wu & Yang, 2016). At the same time, some college teachers who were asked to work in border area and inland during 1950s to 1960s, decided to return to the eastern for various reasons, which constitutes the first large-scale talents flow in universities.

In the 1990s, under the impetus of market-oriented reform, especially the encouragement of "211 Project" and "985 Project", the talents flow in universities (mainly the flow forms the middle and western universities to those east ones) has expanded, which constitutes the second large-scale talents flow in universities since the reform and opening up. During the decade from 1991 to 2000, there were about 49932 people in the national university system, and the number of cross-system flows was about 71,758 (Cai, Wu & Yang, 2016).

The flow of talents in the new century, with the "211 Project" and "985 Project" in full swing, many universities become bigger and stronger by combining on one hand, on the other hand, they tried to "dig people" and "grab people" from all over China, which increased the frequency of talents flow and enlarged the forms. That is the third large-scale talents flow. According to statistics, during the five years from 2000 to 2004, the number of college teachers accounted for the same period the number of college teachers 40.6% (Caplow, 1988).

Although China's key university policy was formed in the early 1950s, its impact on the flow of talents in universities was not significant before the reform and opening up, but after the reform and opening up, the key university policy, with its strong "elite consciousness" and typical "all-powerful governance" (Dang, 2018) characteristics, has gradually magnified its impact on the

flow of talents in universities in the process of reconstruction, upgrading and innovation, especially after the mid-1990s, when the "Project 211" and "Project 985" were launched one after another, which became a key variable triggering the large-scale flow of talents in universities.

The outstanding problems of talents flow among universities under the background of "double first-class" strategy

Firstly, some universities digging talents in a "destroy" way, and ignore the law of the development of universities and disciplines. Driven by utilitarianism, some universities try to use some "odd strokes", like giving high-priced employment conditions is not for the purpose of take full use of talents but to improve the assessment grades of the school teachers and the school reputation. As for this kind of short-sighted, self-interest behavior, it will neither useful for the recruitment among universities itself nor the loss of talents for universities, the introduction of high-priced talents has not been effectively used. All the brain drain is a waste of human resources, which is no good to the construction of high contingent of personnel, and even badly affects the higher education in China (Guo & Wang, 2017). As for the individuals affected by it, they cannot show their best in the new workplace, and the areas they good at cannot get any support from school, which will not good for both of their contributions to the field of education and the development of the individual and the whole cause Life has a negative impact.

Secondly, the management and service of education department responsible for talents flow in universities is vacant. For the education authorities, the flow of talents is actually a confused account. In recent years, with the implementation of talents flow policies in key university and the loss of talents caused by the disorderly flow of increasingly, the education department has gradually begun to realize that the management of talents flow in universities to manage, but that is still a realization without any specific measures and actions. In addition, the competent authorities how to deal with the management of the flow of talents in universities, is a paternity problem. To take serve as the fundamental starting point for the flow of talents, neither too strict management, resulting in the flow of resources and planning, nor laissez-faire management, resulting in the disorder flow of talents.

Thirdly, the lack of synergistic development awareness among universities, only focus on the intellectual transfer but ignore the knowledge sharing, intellectual sharing (Huang, Lian & Qu, 2018). As a result of the differences in the economic development of China's central and western areas, part of the central and western institutions in the faculty, geographical location and research funding and other aspects of the lagging behind the universities in east areas. With the economic level of development, under the guidance of "Double First-class", some universities try to use kinds of ways to introduce teachers, such as lucrative pay, stable working environment, rare opportunities for further study. These kinds of ways do not pay attention to quality but to quantity, introducing teachers without purpose, ignoring the knowledge sharing and intellectual

sharing which destroyed one outstanding discipline in a school, multi-disciplinary in multi-schools.

Fourthly, there is a weak sense of contractual relationship between colleges and teachers, which not only reflects the problems in the internal management mechanism among universities, but also highlights the current practice of some universities to dig people and the current rule of law construction in China has deviated. Universities should be the place to cultivate and shape the spirit of contract, but the entry and exit between schools and teachers is imperfect, resulting in the school unable to retain people, lost some teachers cultivated for years, teachers flow disorderly. Some of these teachers may not be reused, which will result in waste of human resources. The wrong introduction of talents concept, mainly expressed in the school talents introduction rules are imperfect, and also in the imperfect campus culture and the imperfect atmosphere overall social education.

Suggestions on establishing a fair and standardized talents flow mechanism in among universities

- a. To learn from the professional sports, transfer system, and establish university talents flow compensation mechanism

The transfer system of professional sports refers to the movement of athletes between two or more clubs. The transfer of athletes shall be paid by the club to the original club or training unit to pay the transfer fee or training fee, the amount determined by the two sides of the club consultation. In the late 80's, China's professional sports transfer system, gradually began to appear a series of informal transfer, mainly between the local players to carry out the second of the situation, most of the administrative intervention involved, by the Commission and the Government to negotiate a player's "Relationship" to another body committee. This is consistent with the flow of talents in the context of "double play". Transfer system is the key to the compensation mechanism, between the universities, if the implementation of talents "transfer" system and the establishment of "transfer" platform works, scientific research and teaching personnel can find the right jobs through the "transfer", universities can get much-needed talents. Talents in universities can improve compensation through the "transfer fee". Therefore, the establishment of university personnel flow transfer system and improving the compensation mechanism, on the one hand, can create a virtuous competitive environment for talents flow. Universities that need research and teaching talents can seek the necessary talents through the normal way, and professionals who want to reflect the value of their own platform can find the most suitable university for their own potential. On the other hand, this kind of system can guarantee the interests of universities and cultivate talents. Universities can maximize the avoidance of idle waste of human resources. By doing so, it will make talents flow reasonably, and to reduce the phenomenon that talents belong to a college but not only for the use of this college, so as to activate human resources.

b. To establish of university personnel flow monitoring and warning mechanism

To develop into a first-class university, you must have first-class academic leaders and a group of cohesive academic team. Schools should establish a correct concept of employment, combined with their own situation, taking the "scientific amount of talents" concept of employment, to promote the overall development of teachers (Hu, 2008). Local universities should make a sound entry plan and maximum the degree of introduction of high-quality talents through the additional targets. Firstly, dilute the authority strength and use contract appointment to achieve "access to accessibility." Secondly, to create a good working environment and living environment, is to retain the basic protection of introducing high-quality personnel. As for some overseas talents, try to perfect the personnel reform, and to provide appropriate buffer base, so as to internationalize the working environment, and make them gradually adapt to domestic work. Finally, to strengthen the outstanding academic talents. The local universities should be proceeding by the needs of the discipline team and give preferential policies and increase support to them so that to ensure that the investment have been used to enhance the competitiveness of teachers. To strengthen the construction of the famous professors and the groups of educators in the relevant disciplines, and it is necessary to form a master-subject-academic good circulation effect, which is conducive to the introduction of high-quality talents and the retention of talents.

In the process of managing high-quality talents, if there are difference between the organization objectives and personal goals, try to communicate timely and reasonable which is conducive to understanding the high-quality people's internal needs, to amend the imperfect system, to establish effective warning mechanism. Only by doing so can meet both needs of organization and individuals. Achieve a consensus in order to achieve a win-win organizational and personal performance. The establishment of the mechanism should be teacher-oriented. And try to respect, understand and affirm the desire of teachers to develop. Besides, it should pay much attention to the professional growth of teachers and the performance management are better to be located in the help, correction, promotion and to encourage all teachers in the realization of personal career development basically and to complete the organizational tasks well.

c. To cultivate cross-regional, cross-school, interdisciplinary university talents development alliance

As the phenomenon of disciplines and major's repetition in some universities is sever in recent years, it is not only result in the waste of resources, but also led to vicious struggle between universities. In the construction of local universities in the 1990s, universities have invested to build special majors. With the increase of students, the professional advantages of local universities have ceased to exist. The "Double First-class" program emphasizes the strategic planning and top-level design of the subject, so that it can effectively encourage the professional

differences in the development of institutions, and help local institutions to form their own characteristics of professional, and it can also effectively avoid the various competition. The vicious competition between the school, resulting in a various waste of resources and funds. At the same time, it is necessary to cultivate a cross-regional, interdisciplinary and efficiently development alliance, which is effective in knowledge sharing and intellectual sharing. It is beneficial to the integration of resources under the guidance of the country, so that the talents among universities can be in an open research environment so that to make the school 's production and research promote the operation among universities under the coordination of each other. In addition, universities can also cooperate with enterprises and groups to some personnel training projects to establish alliances, by doing so, universities can increase the exchange of talents to achieve mutual employment, at the same time, the use of both the various financial advantages, academic advantages, platform advantages and scientific research advantages all will help to promote the cultivation and development of young talents.

d. To formulate the Convention on Talents Development in Universities

The spirit of the contract in the West has the principle of rational egoism, which is based on the agreement of autonomy and voluntarily. It has a general acceptance and recognition of the statute, and the balance between the individual and the point of integration as a link between individuals of the link to maximize the basic interests of both sides. Being faced with the disorderly flow of talents under "double first-class" background, to establish efficient development of the convention between schools and teachers is conducive to good interaction between schools and teachers. The Convention will not only use to restrict universities, but also to bind individuals. The Convention will not only have used to serve the flow of talents in colleges but also to prevent vicious competition. At the school level, the faculty construction work should be put on an important agenda. On the condition of a reasonable increase in the treatment of teachers, it is necessary to further enhance the sense of urgency and sense of responsibility, the establishment of teachers for their own sense of school and the sense of belonging, the emphasize of "teacher-oriented, talents first" concept, and to take the construction of teachers as part of the overall development of department. At the teacher level, healthy and convenient living environment, from the government's policy support and the school's high degree of attention, humanized working environment is conducive to the improvement of the enthusiasm of teachers, which is conducive to their maximum devotion to work and to produce more scientific researches.

Conclusion

The implementation of the "Double First-class" strategy cannot create institutional barriers to the flow of talents among universities, but it cannot sit idly by any way of "digging the wall" talents among universities. How to crack

the two difficult choices and establish reasonable and orderly talents flow mechanism, which is the key point to ensure the "Double First-class" strategy to implement smoothly.

- To establish university talents flow compensation mechanism. On the one hand, create a virtuous competitive environment for talents flow; on the other hand, this kind of system can guarantee the interests of universities and cultivate talents.
- To establish of university personnel flow monitoring and warning mechanism. On the one hand, monitoring the trend of talents flow among universities; on the other hand, making policy adjustments for vicious competition.
- To cultivate Chinese university talents development alliance, it can effectively encourage the professional differences in the development of institutions, and help local institutions to form their own characteristics of professional, and it can also curb the vicious competition.
- To formulate the Convention on talents development. The Convention will not only have used to restrict universities, but also to bind individuals. The Convention will not only have used to serve the flow of talents in colleges but also to prevent vicious competition.

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