

# A Study on the Theoretical Logic of High-Quality Development of Higher Education from the Perspective of Quality

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**Abstract:** High-quality development is the new development mode and development concept of higher education in China, and its basic connotation cannot be clarified without the interpretation of the two core concepts of “quality” and “development”. High-quality development of higher education is the process of improving the overall quality of higher education by optimizing and coordinating the elements and mechanisms that affect the organization of higher education systems and disciplines. High-quality development of higher education has multiple theoretical logic.

**Keywords:** High-Quality Development of Higher Education; Theoretical Logic; High-Quality Higher Education System

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## Introduction

The Proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Formulation of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Visionary Goals for the Year 2035 proposes to “build a high-quality education system”<sup>[1]</sup>, which is a major reform initiative implemented by the Communist Party of China throughout the country, and points out the direction of the development of higher education in China in the new period. High-quality development, as a new way and concept of higher education development, carries the important task of building a high-quality higher education system and a strong country of higher education, and it is a difficult problem for the reform and development of higher education in the future. In essence, to realize the high-quality development of higher education, its theoretical logic must be clarified.

## 1. High-quality development of higher education is a composite concept

Clarifying its basic connotation is inseparable from interpreting the two core concepts of “quality” and “development”. Based on the basic concept of quality, high quality means that the attributes of the object can meet the needs of the subject to a high degree. “Development” means change, growth, progress and evolution. The combination of high quality and development reflects a concept of development centered on high quality, i.e., a development paradigm that better meets the real needs of disciplinary development.

Some scholars have pointed out that high-quality development is a value judgment and factual judgment of the state of educational development, which requires achieving a high-quality state qualitatively and quantitatively, characterized by high quality, high efficiency and strong supply stability. For higher education, high-quality development is also a value judgment and factual judgment of the development of higher education, that is, high-quality development of higher education is the process of improving the overall quality of higher education by way of optimizing and coordinating the factors and mechanisms affecting the organization of higher education systems and disciplines<sup>[2]</sup>. In order to realize its high-quality development, universities need to have a more unified understanding of the relationship between quality and the quality of higher education. The formation of a consensus on quality and the quality of higher education is usually a process of deep understanding of the quality development of higher education. This process is both an exposure of the theoretical logic of high-quality development of higher education and the key to the formation of a consensus on quality and quality of higher education<sup>[3]</sup>.

## 2. The multiple meanings of quality imply the emergence of a theory of high-quality development in higher education

Throughout the development of quality perception, people have actually developed many recognized views on the definition of the concept of quality. 1. Quality value theory. This theory holds that quality is in the pursuit of the highest or greatest value, and that the highest economic efficiency cannot be ignored when considering production costs, labor time, and other factors of production. 2. Quality Conformity

Theory. This theory holds that quality is a specific criterion that indicates whether a product or service is capable of meeting specific design and production standards.<sup>3</sup>Quality Matching Theory. This theory defines quality as the degree to which a product or service matches customer expectations.

If the above concept of quality is appropriately transplanted, it can be concluded that school (or education) quality standards have both objective yardsticks and subjective identities, and that the judgment of educational quality is in fact a dynamic process or result of subject-object consistency. Therefore, in the polysemous concept of quality, it is an important issue and prerequisite for the unavoidable development of high quality in higher education to refine a concept of high quality education that embodies both the characteristics and connotations of higher education.

### **3. The differences in the concept of quality call for the concept of adaptability for the high-quality development of higher education**

To grasp the quality of higher education, it is necessary not only to pay attention to the particularities of the transformation of higher education into elitism, mass-satisfaction and popularization, but also to consider the universal adaptability of the quality of higher education. Differential quality concepts of higher education reflect different perceptions of the laws of higher education development and social development, as well as their value orientation and theoretical logic. In the era of elite education, it was generally believed that universities were for the educated. Higher education was synonymous with quality, academic reputation was the best measure of quality, and the number of educated people reflected quality. However, since the middle of the 20th century, along with the emergence of the wave of mass-satisfaction of higher education, the issue of quality of higher education has increasingly received great attention from governments, markets and consumers. With the support of government forces, the quality of American higher education has been highly valued by the society. U.S. News conducts a comprehensive evaluation of American universities every year, which includes such indicators as: academic reputation, faculty reserve, quality of student population, alumni satisfaction, financial resources, graduation rate, etc. The quality of higher education in the United States is highly valued by the society. Since the Robbins Report was published in 1963, the UK has published a number of studies on the quality and effectiveness of higher education, based on the National Degree Awarding Council (NDAC) set up by the government to monitor the quality of higher education. The Times and the Times Higher Education Supplement have been closely monitoring the evaluation of universities and have summarized the results to form a complete list for the society, while in 1993, Diamond Weekly of Japan established a series of university evaluation index system and classified universities accordingly. At present, the ranking of famous universities around the world has become an important way for people to recognize universities, evaluate them and even promote themselves.

The popularity of the digital complex in the world can be seen as a response to the dominant nature of the mass and universalized higher education program management system and the strategic idea of scaling up. In this context, both the policy discourse and the academic discourse are positive towards the arrival of the popularization of higher education. With the popularization and mass-satisfaction of higher education, the issue of higher education quality has become a popular topic. On the one hand, the importance of higher education in social life is increasing day by day; on the other hand, the development of higher education cannot be separated from the huge consumption of social resources, which makes colleges and universities increase their sense of responsibility to the society while delivering talents to the society. At present, the high-quality development of higher education has become a common concern of the whole society, and at the same time, it has also aroused the strong expectation of the general public for universities to assume social responsibility.

### **4. The process of quality conceptualization as an inherent vein of quality development in higher education**

The problem of quality in higher education has both objective reality and social history. Objective reality is reflected in the quality of higher education, the key elements are mainly educators and educated, educators and educated physical and mental characteristics and state directly determines the quality of higher education; the quality of higher education behavior is closely linked with its educational content and methods; university conditions, students' family status, social atmosphere and so on are closely related to the quality of higher education. Social-historical nature is closely related to the long cycle of quality generation, the development of quality concepts and the complexity of

quality assessment methods.

In the three stages of elitism, mass-satisfaction and popularization of higher education, the concept of quality of higher education is not exactly the same, although it has some common points. The quality of higher education should be comprehensively evaluated from several aspects such as students' moral quality, knowledge quality, professional quality, physical and mental quality, etc. Some of these aspects can be measured by numbers, and some qualitative analysis is needed to measure and assess the quality of higher education with quantitative indicators. The quality measurement of higher education is characterized by a comprehensive nature, which makes it difficult to be accurate and non-controversial in the measurement work. In view of this, some scholars have proposed that the quality of higher education is a three-dimensional concept consisting of the quality of talent cultivation, the quality of scientific research and the quality of social services<sup>[4]</sup>. From the perspective of stakeholders, the quality of higher education can be divided into internal adaptive quality and external adaptive quality. The quality of internal adaptability is embodied in the quality of talent cultivation in higher education, and the quality of external adaptability is embodied in the quality of higher education's service for the development of social politics, economy and culture, science and technology, as well as in its role in promoting educational equity and social equity<sup>[5]</sup>. The evolution of the concept of quality of higher education is actually the evolution of the concept of development of higher education, which has theoretical interpretation and practical revelation on the high quality development of higher education.

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