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Abstract

Research theme: A comparative research on doctoral education

Research problem: The apparently tediousness and relatively low efficiency on China’s doctoral candidates’ cultivation system. The tediousness of China’s doctoral candidates’ cultivation system can be proved on the basis of two points as follows. I. The strikingly substantial amounts of staffs and higher education institutions including universities and research academies which can provide Ph.D. education. II. The highest scale of enrollment of Ph.D. students in the world. The comparative low efficiency can be proved in two ways. I. Higher quantities of published research papers versus fewer issued on the high-level journals. II. Poor citation frequency in contrast to higher quantities of published research papers.

Research situation: The above mentioned statements demonstrate the problem beneath the complicated doctoral education system in China. Researches were seldom on it in tradition, although doctoral education has been taking an essential role in the education system. In the early works, researchers didn’t regard doctoral education as an independent subject but a part of graduate education until the 1990s (Rudd E. Simpson R., 1975; Blume S., 1987). From the literatures on doctoral education in the latest two decades, the main theme of research focused on six aspects. I. The amount and structure of the doctoral education institutions (Lori Thurgood & Mary J. Golladay & Susan T. Hill., 2006). II. The academic supervision and relationship between Ph.D. students and their supervisors (Benita J. Barnes, 2005; Laura L. Paglis & Green S. G., Bauer T. N., 2006; Bathany A. Bell-Ellison & Dedreck R., 2008). III. The dropouts, completion and limit of doctoral degree (William Bowen & Neil Rudenstine, 1992; Mark Sinclair, 2004; Scott Smallwood, 2004; Lori Thurgood & Mary J. Golladay & Susan T. Hill, 2006). IV. The quality assessment of doctoral education (Martin Harris, 1996; AAU, 1998; Chris M. Golde & Timonthy M. Dore, 2001; Sverker Sörlin & Peder Andersen, etc., 2006; Brooks Rachelle L. & Heiland Donna, 2007; Sid Bourke, 2007; Helena Aittola, 2008). V. The career of Ph.D. graduates (NRC, 1968; Mary Jo Clark & John A. Centra, 1982; CIRGE, 2007-2009). VI. The professional doctoral education(Maxwell & Peter Shanahan, 1996; Terry Evans & Barbara Kamler, 2002; T. W. Maxwell, 2003; Carol Costley & John Stephenson, 2005; Peter Smith & Ms Helen Curtis & John Fulton & Judith Kuit & Gail Sanders, 2012). Numeral efforts were also made on evaluation of the characteristics in China’s doctoral candidates’ cultivation system and comparison with them in western countries. However, most of them were qualitative and descriptive analysis which remained a distance to go deep into uncovering the actual elements of different idea and conception in doctoral education.

Research plan: Modern higher education was originated in Europe accompanied by most of the modern educational idea and conception. In this study, we will review and evaluate them in modern European education with the educational theories invoked. Hence, the decisive influence functions will be drawn and the evaluation model will be constituted based on them. A trial of introducing the methods in natural science may be helpful to understand the correlations within these variables and explain the problems existing in China’s higher education system by generalizing functions with multiple variables and differential equations. Afterwards, it will be easy to figure out which kind of education is good, clarify why it is good, and conclude what factors have influenced the educational system and which of them are the most essential elements.

Research method: The mixed methodologies will be used in this study. Quantitative methods: Statistics method will be used in analysis of the phenomenon by comparing the amount of doctoral students, gathering the classification data of the universities in China and the Czech Republic, collecting the publication status in the amount and quality in international professional journeys. Questionnaires will be used in the investigation of the attitude of doctoral students and graduates to their study programs. Mathematical model will be constructed to show the difference between what the doctoral education is and what it should be. Qualitative methods will be used in description of the educational theory comparing the Chinese traditional view with the European modern point, reviewing of the development of ideas of doctoral education, interviewing and describing the other subjects’ experience and attitude of doctoral education, such as tutors and science board members, and analyzing the barrier and solution in the doctoral education in China by using the system theory.

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