

# Research on the Reconstruction of Governance System in Secondary College under the Background of University Management Decentralization

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## ABSTRACT

With the continuous expansion of the university, the focus of university management is constantly moving down, and the governance of secondary colleges has gradually taken place. Based on the analysis of the current situation and development trend of the internal management of colleges and universities, the difficulties and obstacles in the governance system of secondary colleges, and the opportunities and challenges faced by the governance of secondary colleges, this paper explored the ways to eliminate the obstacles in the governance system of secondary colleges, and then, put forward the idea of reconstruction of the governance system of secondary colleges, finally provided a preliminary idea for the study of the management system of colleges and universities.

**Keywords:** university management, the moving down focus, secondary colleges, governance system

## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the continuous expansion of enrollment and increasing diversity in the development between different colleges and universities, the focus of government's management and internal management are constantly moving down. It was proposed that "We will further push ahead with the separation of government administration, school management and educational evaluation, delegate greater power to provincial governments in making their overall educational development plans and to schools to make their own decisions about school affairs, and improve the internal governance structure of the schools." by the decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on several major issues of comprehensively deepening the reform, which was adopted at the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. The internal governance system of colleges and universities and the downward shift of the management focus are also mentioned in the overall plan for promoting the construction of world-class universities and world-class disciplines and the outline of the national medium and long-term education reform and development plan. Colleges and universities are required to deepen the reform of secondary management of colleges and universities and optimize the internal governance to build a first-class university with Chinese characteristics. China has gradually changed their ideas from "running colleges by universities" to "running universities by colleges". It has become an important part of higher education reform to

improve the internal management ability and system, actively promote the two-level management system of colleges and universities, stimulate the vitality, and respond to the people's expectations. [1]

Personnel training, scientific research, social services, cultural heritage and innovation are the four main functions of modern universities. The efficient realization of these functions requires the construction of modern university system. The construction of modern university system is a systematic project, in which not only top-down design and promotion are needed but also bottom-up practice and encouragement. The two directions should be opposite to each other which could achieve mutual integration to build a truly meaningful modern university system. At present, in the process of the construction of modern university system in China, more attention is paid to the top-down design and promotion. But its effect is not significant, even in trouble. The governance of secondary colleges is bottom-up practice and encouragement. Through the promotion of the governance of the secondary colleges, the subjectivity and enthusiasm of the grassroots staff in the internal governance structure of the schools are enhanced. We could also carry out the system design and practice of straightening out the relationship between political power, administrative power and academic power in a relatively small scope and explore the mechanism of building democratic and harmonious governance of the cultural environment. Through the innovation and practice of the governance mechanism of the secondary colleges, the motive force for the construction of modern university system from the bottom up is finally formed with the backward mechanism to support the construction of the modern university system.

## **2. DIFFICULTIES AND OBSTACLES IN THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM OF SECONDARY COLLEGES**

### ***2.1. Unclear responsibilities and rights of the two-level management system of colleges and universities***

The two-level management mode can fully mobilize the enthusiasm and initiative of the secondary college which give full play to the main position of the college in personnel training, scientific research, discipline development, etc. Meanwhile, it could also realize the purpose of streamlining administrative personnel and optimizing management organization. In the actual operation process, since the reform plan is formulated by the functional departments of the universities, only the overall coordination and implementation are handed over to the secondary colleges to a certain extent. If the work tasks are decomposed and transferred to the college without the right of staff employment and fund allocation, it would lead to the increasing tasks of grass-roots organizations, the mismatch between personal, financial and administrative rights, the unclear responsibilities, rights and interests. As a result, the college managers are tired of providing various materials, have no time to care about the realization of important functions such as personnel training and scientific research.[2] The management efficiency of the management system of the secondary college is strongly reduced.

### ***2.2. Lack of authority and enthusiasm of professors in academic research***

From the perspective of national policies, such as the overall plan for promoting the construction of world-class universities and world-class disciplines issued in 2015, it is clearly required that universities should strengthen the institutional setting and personnel election of academic committees, and endow the academic authority with responsibilities for professional construction, academic evaluation, etc. In the practice of university reform, many universities have realized the problem of academic power, and put forward the implementation of "professors' academic management" from system and operation. However, the actual situation is that although the second level college has established academic institutions such as an academic committee, most heads of academic institutions are concurrently held by the deans, most professors who enter the academic committee also have administrative duties. In addition, most academic committees are only responsible for the deliberation of a few academic affairs, and use administrative power in the form of advice and consultation. As a result, academic committees haven't become the main institution that controls the academic power and is lack of authority. On

the other hand, due to the long-term administrative tendency of colleges and universities, there is no strong concept of "academic freedom" from university administrators to professors themselves. Most professors acquiesce that administrative power is greater than academic power, believe that it is meaningless and costly to fight against executive power. Consequently, the academic committee members, discipline leaders and professional leaders who participate in the use of academic power seriously lack the enthusiasm to be involved in the decision-making and development of the college.

### ***2.3. Unclear boundaries of the party and government power***

First of all, the distribution and balance of power within the system should be solved in the construction of the governance system. The internal power of secondary colleges includes political power, administrative power, academic power and supervision power. During daily operation, the political power organization led by the Party committee and the administrative power organization led by the dean are the main management organizations, which are important parts of the governance system of the second level college. The efficiency of the operation of the two power organizations directly affects the governance system of the second level college. At present, the general practice is to use the joint meeting of the party and the government to balance the four kinds of power. However, since the power boundary between the party and the government in the secondary college is not clearly divided in the secondary college, the work related to the development of the college and personnel training mainly focus on the administrative power. At the same time, because the dean is usually an expert in the field and often tends to be strong, the decision-making of the joint meeting of the party and the government is easy to be ruled by the voice of the dean alone. On the contrary, the secretary of the Party committee of the college has a weak voice, which makes the political power relatively weak in the governance system of the secondary college, and directly affects the effect of the governance of the secondary college. [3]

### ***2.4. Imperfect democratic supervision mechanism***

The supervision power is important in the governance system of the secondary college. The college exercises its power of supervision through the establishment of teachers' congress, labor unions, student unions and other organizations composed of representatives of teachers and students. However, because the consciousness of safeguarding rights and democratic supervision in Chinese society has not been deeply rooted in people's minds, people are used to being managed and educated. Meanwhile, there is no standardized and complete system of teachers' congress to guarantee the right of teachers to

participate in democratic management and supervision. Finally, there is no way for the staff and students of the second level college to participate in the governance. The supervision power is in vain in many cases.

### **3. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FACED BY THE GOVERNANCE OF SECONDARY COLLEGES**

#### ***3.1. The expansion of university scale makes "college running" an inevitable choice***

Since 1999, colleges and universities in China began to expand their enrollment. From 2000 to 2013, the number of students in schools of 10000 people increased from 5077 to 18393, 2.62 times increased. The number of students at school in Beijing increased 38 times from 15161 in 1949 to 581133. With the expansion of colleges and universities, it is more and more difficult to carry out governance at the university level. At the same time, with the continuous rising of social expectations for the quality of talent training and service ability for the economy and society, college running has gradually become an important choice. With the continuous promotion of the governance system of colleges and universities, college running has become an inevitable choice.

#### ***3.2. Strengthening the leadership of the party urgently needs the reconstruction of the governance mode of the secondary college***

At the university level, the party and government in colleges and universities in China is the president responsibility system under the leadership of the Party committee.[4] The party's leadership is a guarantee for the development of higher education. It plays a leading core role in the political direction, university running ideas, personnel training and other aspects. College as the second level is mainly the implementation unit that undertakes the functions of university such as talent training, scientific research, social services and cultural heritage. If it has no clear positioning for the leadership of the party, this governance system obviously cannot meet the requirements of strengthening the leadership of the party. At current stage, the core of the joint meeting system of the party and the government is the common responsibility, and its decision-making form is collective leadership. How to improve the joint meeting system of the party and the government to strengthen the leadership of the party urgently needs the construction of the governance system of the secondary college.

#### ***3.3. "Four returns" provide a driving force for secondary colleges to strengthen personnel training***

The National Undergraduate Education Conference held in Chengdu in 2018 clearly proposed that the reform and development of higher education should follow the principle of "based on undergraduate education, four returns", which provides a clear direction for colleges and universities to run schools, and also provides higher requirements for colleges and universities to carry out personnel training. At present, there is a big gap between the talent cultivation of secondary colleges and the "four returns". How to realize the "four returns" requires colleges and universities to rebuild an efficient governance system, especially the talent cultivation system. However, it requires the governance system of secondary colleges to be adjusted and improved based on the relevant requirements, which has also become an effective driving force for secondary colleges to strengthen personnel training.

#### ***3.4. Deepening the reform of science and technology system provides support for the reform of discipline and scientific research mechanism of secondary colleges***

With the deepening of the reform of the science and technology system, arousing the enthusiasm and creativity of scientific researchers has gradually become the focus of attention. As the main place for scientific researchers to engage in teaching and scientific research, the discipline and scientific research operation mechanism determines the enthusiasm and creativity of university scientific researchers. Therefore it puts forward higher requirements for the operation mechanism and scientific research activity management of the secondary school management system, which also provides good support for promoting relevant work.

### **4. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM OF SECONDARY COLLEGES**

#### ***4.1. Building the system of the party and government joint meeting with balanced power and high efficiency***

To improve the system of the joint meeting of the party and government, the Party committee's political leadership should adhere to the core position, which means it shall lead the party construction work and major development direction of the whole college, so as to coordinate the relationship of various stakeholders. As a fixed member of

the joint meeting of the party and the government, the director of the academic committee who is not the person in charge of the party and the university should participate in the discussion and decision-making of the important reform measures, personnel training, discipline construction, scientific research and social services of the secondary college, so as to realize the mutual check and balance of administrative power and academic power. When encountering matters involving the vital interests of teachers and students, the chairman of the teachers' congress, the league and student union should be invited to attend the meeting, so as to realize the institutionalization and democratization of supervision and to build an overall system of four kinds of balanced rights of the party and government joint meetings.[5]

#### ***4.2. Re-establishing the personnel training system***

The existing personnel training system takes too much account of the traditional teaching methods and the existing teachers' situation, which can't meet the needs of the society for talents and the requirements of teaching methods in the Internet Era. The talent training system should be reconstructed facing the social needs by combing the talent training objectives, clarifying the knowledge, skills and ability needs in the process of talent training. We should also explore the mixed teaching mode of online actively, which form a teaching method matching the learning characteristics of university students in the Internet Era and ability and achievement-oriented practical teaching system. It could improve the students' learning satisfaction and society's satisfaction with the talent training of the college.

#### ***4.3. Cultivating teaching and research community***

Teaching and scientific research community within the college, such as scientific research team and teaching course group should be constructed to replace the teaching department, in view of the lack of organization of teaching and scientific research activities of teachers in the secondary college, the lack of a platform for communication and interaction, the lack of effective dialogue between teachers and administrative power, and the lack of in-depth discussion on relevant teaching and scientific research issues among teachers. So that teachers can fully exchange and cooperate within this organizational framework, at the same time spokesperson of participating in the college, governance could be cultivated. Finally, the enthusiasm and effectiveness of faculty's participation in college governance would be enhanced.

#### ***4.4. Strengthening democratic supervision power***

At present, many college stakeholders do not have public awareness and ideas, pay more attention to the handling of personal affairs, and do not care enough about public affairs. In the construction of the governance system of secondary colleges, we should further strengthen the construction of academic committees and other academic organizations, strengthen the supervision of academic power over administrative power, and stimulate the enthusiasm of scholars and professors to participate in public affairs. Meanwhile, we should strengthen the organizational form and power implementation of teachers 'congress, increase the proportion of ordinary staff in teachers 'congress, gradually form a democratic supervision atmosphere. As a result, democratic supervision power could be strengthened from the two aspects above. [6]

#### ***4.5. Constructing the mechanism of students' participation in college governance***

At present, colleges and universities neglect the advantages of students' participation in college governance, which makes students only act as executors and who be regulated of the governance system. It is unable to effectively play the effect of the governance system in student training. We could build a mechanism for students to participate in college governance through student union and other groups by giving students the right to speak so that students can participate in specialty construction, curriculum reform, talent training and evaluation. Through the direct feedback of students, not only the classroom teaching quality could be improved, but the students could feel that they are one of the masters in the construction of the college, which would stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

This paper was based on the analysis of the difficulties in the governance system of Secondary Colleges, such as unclear responsibilities and rights, lack of authority and enthusiasm of professors in academic research, unclear boundaries of the party and government power, and imperfect democratic supervision mechanism. Combining with the opportunities and challenges faced by the governance of secondary colleges such as "Four returns" it put forward the reconstruction of the governance system of secondary colleges. It suggested that we could build the system of the party and government joint meeting with balanced power and high efficiency, re-establish the personnel training system, cultivate teaching and research community, strengthen democratic supervision power, and construct the mechanism of students' participation in collage governance. Through these, this paper finally provided a preliminary idea for the management system of

colleges and universities, especially for the governance system of secondary colleges.

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