

# A Comparative Study on the Difference of Vocational Education between China and Germany

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**Abstract.** In recent years, China has attached great importance to the development of vocational education, and China is eager to improve itself by learning from the world's advanced vocational education system. China has been cooperating with Germany since the last century and has learned the German dual system. However, there is still a gap between the two until now in vocational education. By comparing the differences between the two countries in vocational education in top-level design, colleges, universities, and society, this paper finds out the differences between China and Germany in vocational education and hopes to find out the problems in the above three aspects as well as in other aspects on the road of development of vocational education in China from these differences and provide some relatively feasible solutions, to further advance the development of vocational education in China. We hope to explore the problems in these three aspects and others in the development of Chinese vocational education from these differences and provide some relatively feasible solutions to further promote the development of Chinese vocational education.

**Keywords:** vocational education; policy; income; culture.

## 1. Introduction

In the education sector, vocational education and training are defined in many different ways. Some emphasize the vocational aspect more, arguing that students should receive a more comprehensive and integrated basic knowledge. Others believe that more emphasis should be placed on vocational training, teaching skills, and competencies relevant to the occupation [1]. As a developing country, China's government has attached great importance to the development of vocational education in recent years. It has also been learning from countries with advanced vocational education systems in the world, and since the beginning of the last century, China has been cooperating with Germany to learn the relevant systems. However, the development of vocational education in China is still hindered, and there is still a big gap with Germany, which is an excellent vocational education powerhouse, and there are gaps at all levels. This thesis will compare and analyze the vocational education systems of China and Germany at several levels, hoping to see the gaps between the two in the comparison of two, and looking forward to finding solutions to the problems.

## 2. Differences between Vocational Education in China and Germany

In this section, the problem will be analyzed in three parts: at the high-rise level, at the university level, and the societal level. A comparison of these three aspects will follow and the differences between the two will be explained.

### 2.1. Top-Level Design

The policies and laws for vocational education in China and Germany are different. Germany has adopted a dual system of vocational education in which the main participants are teachers and students of vocational schools as well as chambers of commerce and enterprises. At the same time, the two are also different at the legal level. In Germany, the relevant laws in Germany are very well-developed, with a wide range of laws, and at the same time, the laws are very practicable. The laws in Germany have: the Law on Vocational Education of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Law on the

Protection of Young People's Labor, and the Handicrafts and Trade Law regulate the vocational education system as a way of providing for and improving the education system in Germany [2].

This system has been successful in Germany and has attracted imitation in Asia and other European countries [3]. This includes China, which has been cooperating with Germany since 1983 and started to implement the dual system teaching model in China. However, there are limitations in China's cooperation with Germany in the dual system of teaching. China focuses more on cooperation in construction and organizational development and will apply for loans to improve its teaching facilities [4]. At the same time, the only law enacted in China on vocational education is the Vocational Education Law of the People's Republic of China, which was promulgated in 1996, and although the Constitution has been amended 34 times until 2022, it is still far fewer perfect and rich than that of Germany.

## 2.2. Universities

At the university level, there are obvious differences between China and Germany. Firstly, on the German side, vocational colleges in Germany have a high understanding of vocational education, and the relevant institutions have a high degree of understanding of vocational education and the improvement of educational facilities. The cooperation between German vocational institutions and enterprises is also very good. Enterprises in Germany can only cooperate with schools after they have been recognized by trade associations. At the same time, the development of each region in Germany is relatively even, and the distribution of educational resources in each region is more evenly distributed, making the level of education in each region relatively even.

On the Chinese side, vocational education schools in China are mainly transformed from professional colleges and universities and generally lack an understanding of vocational education and related background. Secondly, China's dual system of school-enterprise cooperation has no clear criteria as to whether the enterprises can carry out teaching and whether the teachers in the enterprises are qualified to teach [5]. Finally, because China is a developing country, the unbalanced economic development of various regions leads to different inputs to colleges and universities by regional governments, which indirectly leads to the existence of unbalanced educational resources in vocational colleges and universities in various regions, and different backgrounds of enterprises, which together lead to the disparity of vocational education in various provinces of China.

## 2.3. The Social Dimension

Pressures at the societal level are equally important factors that contribute to the differences in the education systems of the two countries. The first is the income side.

Table 1 can be seen from the above that, the highest monthly income of students graduating from vocational schools in the four best-developed cities in China is far below the average monthly income compared to the monthly income wages in the cities, which shows that students graduating from vocational schools have a lower status in the society, and even lower than the level of the middle class in the society. The underground income level directly leads to the fact that receiving vocational education in China means a low social level.

**Table1.** Comparison of monthly per capita income [6,7]

Province	Average monthly income per person in 2022/Yuan	Average Monthly Salary at Local Vocational Schools with Highest Earnings for Graduates in 2022/Yuan
Beijing	11297	6683
Shanghai	12183	6000
Guangzhou	12694	5614
Shenzhen	13730	6231

In contrast, table 2 shows the income of vocational students in Germany. Through the comparison of the two tables shows that can see, the income of students receiving vocational education in Germany is higher compared to China. At the same time, their incomes are slightly lower than the national average, and they can reach the middle level of the country [8]. At the same time, compared with China, the income gap in Germany is much smaller, which leads to the income level of vocational education in Germany can get a stable social status.

**Table2.** Pre-tax income of workers with different educational backgrounds in Germany [9]

	number of people	Before taxes Monthly income/Euro	Hourly wage before tax/Euro	Annual income before taxes (including other income)/Euros
Junior high school graduation with a vocational certificate (completion of dual system or school vocational education)	8 081 512	2 934	17.36	38 644
Graduated from junior high school without a vocational certificate(without completing dual or school vocational education)	1 292 028	2 395	14.25	31 635
University of Applied Science and Technology Graduation (Fachhoch-schedule)	1 024 970	4 253	25.07	56 499
Graduate of a research university (Universitaet)	1 154 541	5 504	32.15	74 770
Germany average (including other educational backgrounds not listed in the table)	14 247 500	3 221	18.98	42 803

## 2.4. Comparison Summary

By comparing China and Germany at three levels: high-rise buildings, institutions of higher education, and society, it is found that there is still a considerable gap between the vocational education systems of China and Germany.

First of all, in terms of high-rise buildings, China is really trying to learn Germany's excellent vocational education system, but the learning is not comprehensive enough, the degree of enterprise participation in China's vocational education system is still far from enough compared with that of Germany, the updating of laws is not fast enough, the feasibility of the law is not high, and the education system is not perfect enough, and the demand for talents is also very vague. The education system is also not perfect enough and the demand for talent is very vague [10].

At the university level, China's requirements for vocational colleges and universities are not clear enough, and enterprises are not enthusiastic about cooperating with vocational colleges and universities, and it is difficult for those enterprises that do cooperate to ensure their own teachers' strength. There is also a big gap between vocational institutions in different regions, which leads to the uneven level of students receiving vocational education in different regions. At the same time, there are also problems with the certificate system, which makes it difficult to ensure the professionalism of students.

Finally, at the social level, students in China's vocational education system have low wages, low social status, and low security after graduation. These "three lows" seriously affect the development

of China's vocational education [10]. At the same time, the biggest problem of China's vocational education stems from China's unique cultural system, since the Sui Dynasty established the imperial examination system, Chinese parents have been proud of their children to enter the dynasty. Instead of letting their children receive vocational education, they prefer to let their children study and enter the imperial court, even if it takes a long time. There is an allusion in China to the story of "Fan Jin winning the examination", which tells the story of a man named Fan Jin who was very happy when he won the examination for a scholar, then went mad, and finally died of madness. From this, we can see that ancient Chinese people attached great importance to reading. Such a tradition has been passed down to this day.

### **3. Suggestion**

To sum up, a lot of changes are needed to change China's vocational education system. The Chinese government should have to re-regulate the vocational schools from the three aspects mentioned above.

#### **3.1. Top Level Design**

From the perspective of high-rise buildings, the government should introduce more school-related rules and regulations, the introduction of new systems to ensure feasibility at the same time, the introduction of different policies for different industries, such as senior skilled workers, the government should introduce relevant policies to standardize industry standards, for factories to maliciously suppress the workers, withholding the wages of workers and other issues to introduce the corresponding laws for industry remediation, to protect the legitimate status of workers. The status of workers is protected. The grass-roots departments in each region should put the policies into practice and visit the grass-roots level to understand the needs and problems of the grass-roots vocational education institutions and students. Discussions should be held to propose feasible solutions to the needs and problems. Financial and social resources can be provided to schools in need.

#### **3.2. University**

At the university level, schools should improve the quality of teaching, strictly enforce teacher qualifications, and strengthen the professional assessment of teachers by setting up a specialized teacher qualification examination to differentiate them from other teacher qualification examinations. In addition, regional governments should make full use of local social resources to promote and proactively guide school-enterprise linkages to strengthen talent training in schools. Support leading enterprises and vocational schools to take the lead in creating an industry-teaching integration community [11]. Regional governments should actively develop local vocational education and create a favorable teaching and learning environment for vocational education teachers and students based on ensuring that the basic teaching facilities of local vocational education institutions are complete. At the same time, improve the examination system of vocational colleges and universities, strengthen the requirements for students, and change the stereotype of vocational colleges and universities.

#### **3.3. Social**

The Government should strengthen the publicity of vocational education at the social level so that more people can understand and accept vocational education. The government should strengthen its investment in basic industries, raise the wages of vocational education students, improve the welfare of teachers and students in vocational schools, and indirectly improve the social status of vocational education students. Enterprises around the world should re-examine the technical level of students who graduated from vocational colleges and universities, and reject the imagination that the level of education is the difference between high and low so that the relevant enterprises can expand the acceptance of students from vocational colleges and universities.

#### 4. Conclusion

Through comparison and analysis, we compare the vocational education in China and Germany from three aspects, the high-rise buildings, colleges and universities, and the social level, there is a huge difference between the vocational education system of China and Germany, the law is not enough even if it is not updated, Chinese enterprises and schools are not professional enough compared to Germany, the social level of the two countries has a huge gap, the vocational education of the students receive low social treatment, and most importantly, in the ideological level, the ancient Chinese thought of entering the civil service limits the education of Chinese parents, which limit the development of Chinese vocational education. Most importantly, at the ideological level, Chinese parents' view of education is limited by the ancient Chinese idea of entering the civil service, which limits the development of vocational education in China. China needs to work on improving relevant policies, making them more feasible, improving the vocational education system, and improving the social status of vocational education students.

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