

# The Relationship Between Knowledge Society and Higher Education

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**Abstract.** The economic foundation determines the superstructure. Knowledge society is a society with knowledge and innovation as the core of development. The paper analyzes the relationship between knowledge society and higher education. In the knowledge society, a knowledge economy dominated by economy occupies an important position in social development. Knowledge society and higher education complement each other and promote each other, but at the same time, there are still some problems between knowledge society and higher education, which need to be solved in the process of development. Knowledge society brings opportunities for development and reform to higher education. Higher education cultivates more lifelong learners for the knowledge society and enables the knowledge society to play the role of knowledge economy. The learning methods and knowledge systems possessed by lifelong learners are exactly what the knowledge society needs to develop a knowledge economy. However, it also brings some uncertainties and hidden worries, such as the threat to the status of higher education in knowledge dissemination and production in the development of a knowledge society, and the simplification and sloganization of higher education reform in the process of reform.

**Keywords:** Knowledge society; higher education; development.

## 1. Introduction

Knowledge society is a society where knowledge is very rich and the value of knowledge is very important [1].

If people want to draw a clear distinction between a knowledge society, there are some common understandings. The typical view is: "knowledge society is a concept corresponding to agricultural society and industrial society, it is a new social form full of vitality"; "knowledge society is knowledge-based society it means a very profound fundamental social change"; "knowledge society is a learning society and innovative society" [2].

The topic of the research is the relationship between knowledge society and higher education. Knowledge society has brought important development opportunities to higher education, but at the same time, the development of knowledge society also has a certain negative impact on higher education. The development of higher education brings the conditions for a knowledge society to expand the knowledge economy. At the same time, some problems in the development of higher education hinder the development of knowledge society.

The purpose of the research is to promote the better development of higher education in the knowledge society, so as to cultivate more lifelong learners and enable the sustainable development of the knowledge economy and form a better cycle.

## **2. The Relationship Between Knowledge Society and Higher Education**

### **2.1. The Influence of Knowledge Society on Higher Education**

#### **2.1.1. Knowledge society brings opportunities to higher education**

Knowledge is becoming more and more important in economic development, but the use of knowledge to create value cannot be separated from one of the most important ways to create and disseminate knowledge - higher education (university education). Knowledge societies bring about diverse changes, and education and learning are at the heart of it. The rapid economic and social development has stimulated governments of all countries to further increase investment in higher education [3]. After the end of the Second World War, the important development of higher education laid the foundation for the emergence of the knowledge society, and the arrival of the knowledge society has also provided a huge opportunity for the development of higher education. The arrival of knowledge society undoubtedly intensifies the dynamic characteristics of knowledge, makes the role of knowledge in society larger and larger, and causes great changes in knowledge structure, industrial structure, class structure and even the whole social structure. As the base of knowledge innovation, higher education has become the power station of social development.

After entering the knowledge society, knowledge has been at the heart of economic growth and the gradual rise in levels of social well-being since time immemorial [4]. Society is becoming knowledge-intensive, and knowledge will become more important than capital. Intangible capital becomes more and more important in the knowledge society. Intangible capital investment is geared to the production and dissemination of knowledge (i.e. in training, education, R&D, information and coordination) [5]. After entering the knowledge society, knowledge has become an important core of economic development. The development of intangible capital has promoted the reorganization of fragmented knowledge to a certain extent, made knowledge more systematic, and promoted the transformation of the structure of higher education into a systematic and diversified one. Therefore, in the process of transforming the industrial society into a knowledge society, the key changes of intangible capital have prompted people to make continuous efforts to develop higher education. Then the development of higher education brings about the development of a knowledge economy. Now the boundary between universities and society is becoming increasingly blurred, so the importance of universities to society is increasing in the knowledge economy.

Another core of knowledge society is innovation. After entering the knowledge society, innovation will make society more electronic and information-based. The development of information technology will make a positive impact on the creation of knowledge. For example, the development of the Internet has increased the speed and distance of knowledge transmission, making knowledge more accurate and higher quality. Knowledge is simplified into information, which increases the space for learning and communication. The function of a university is changing from single to diverse. In the knowledge society, In the knowledge society with knowledge as the core, the status and role of higher education in social development have undergone some changes. The differentiation and synthesis of science make many interdisciplinary and marginal disciplines emerge, such as biomedical engineering and ecological economics. Many new majors have emerged in higher education, and many interdisciplinary majors have emerged, such as artificial intelligence and medical information. It makes the teaching of colleges and universities show more selectivity, flexibility and adaptability to the development of society and science and technology. The educational function of a university has become diversified, and the educational function of a university is not only to teach people. It has also increased the function of developing new knowledge and using knowledge to create an economy. Scholars and ordinary people will gather to study this knowledge because of their common interest in a certain knowledge, which will accelerate the deepening development of knowledge. This highlights a problem: the knowledge society requires universities to cultivate lifelong learners. Although talent training is still an important mission of modern universities, the demand for lifelong learners will grow day by day after entering the knowledge society. The knowledge society has brought diversified changes to all aspects of the world, especially in education

and learning. As Herbert Gerjuoy put it, "the illiterate of the future will no longer be illiterate, but those who have never learned 'how to learn'", and the change in the mode and focus of knowledge production requires that the new age talents be equipped with new skills to improve the level of knowledge production [6,7]. Later, with the further development of the knowledge society, the concept of lifelong learning in higher education will be transformed from a mode of education to a way of life. Higher education plays a special role in helping to develop and implement a lifelong learning system, providing the necessary organizational framework for lifelong learning. This importance derives from the high prestige and important influence that institutions of higher learning enjoy in most national education systems and from the role they play in creating theory and conducting research

### **2.1.2. Knowledge society bring hidden worries to higher education**

Of course, the influence of knowledge society on higher education is a double-edged sword, which brings opportunities to higher education, but also hides many dangers. With the advent of the knowledge age, the monopoly position of modern universities in the production and dissemination of advanced knowledge is changing [3]. Culture also plays an important role in the knowledge society. Higher education is a part of culture, and its fundamental task is to seek truth and educate people. If it fails to fulfill its fundamental task, the social responsibility of promoting economic and social development will cease to exist [3]. In the knowledge society, the surge in the quantity of knowledge leads to the lack of completeness and certainty of the teaching tools themselves. After entering the knowledge society, the monopoly of knowledge is broken after knowledge begins to create value, which requires universities to justify their existence. The value revolution of knowledge has shaken the traditional knowledge level and training orientation based on this. Although the position of higher education in the knowledge society has been shaken, this does not mean that higher education or world-class universities are not important in the knowledge society and the knowledge economy. On the contrary, developing higher education and building world-class universities are essential for knowledge societies and knowledge-based economies. The crux of the problem is that the higher education system which is currently adapted to the needs of the industrial society must take the lead in the transformation of education in order to adapt to the needs of the knowledge-based post-industrial society. In other words, the development of higher education should become a "method" to solve the problems facing the knowledge society rather than a problem to be solved in the knowledge society [3]. The transition from an industrial society to a knowledge society is a long and difficult process, and its impact on the development of higher education is also full of uncertainty. The knowledge society is not a destination for higher education, but a place where innovation needs to take place.

The emergence and development of knowledge society and knowledge economy may become the starting point for in-depth analysis of the theoretical problems of higher education and the logical starting point for exploring the basic functions of higher education [8].

### **2.2. The Influence of Higher Education on Knowledge Society**

The fundamental task of higher education is to explore the truth and educate people. In the knowledge society, knowledge determines the economy, but the carrier of knowledge transmission and creation is the university, which provides us with higher education. The ultimate goal of higher education is to cultivate the lifelong learners most needed by the knowledge society, so as to help the development of a knowledge economy. The knowledge of higher pedagogy has certain economic attributes and resources. The knowledge of higher education provides economic efficiency for university operation and management, and it also has the characteristics of resources. Universities are the axis institutions of the times, and entrepreneurial universities emerge one after another, making knowledge shine on the stage of the municipal economy. Scholars use professional knowledge of higher education to provide specialized consulting services for university strategic planning and act as consultants, so knowledge embodies the value of economic resources [9].

At present, the structure of higher education also has a great impact on the development of the knowledge economy. The current structure of general vocational higher education and general higher education meets the requirements of the diversity of academic qualifications and levels of personnel training required by the knowledge society, and satisfies the demand of the labor market for various talents, thus playing a huge role in promoting the development of the country's knowledge economy. In addition, the continuous expansion of higher education has brought a steady stream of talents with innovative thinking, high IQ and high competitiveness to the knowledge society, meeting the conditions for the development of the knowledge economy. The development of the scale of higher education has driven the rise of the education consumption market, and corresponding industries such as teaching and research, social services and social security have been continuously formed. It has brought great momentum to economic growth and industrial structure optimization. In addition, with the continuous interaction between institutions of higher learning and enterprises, the rapid transformation platform of scientific research results in the collaborative mode of higher education such as "production, study and research" has been continuously constructed, which has promoted the continuous transformation of "knowledge value" to "economic value" of higher education [10].

The change in the quality of higher education plays an important role in promoting the in-depth development of the knowledge society. The better the quality of higher education, the more it can promote the reform of the knowledge society; on the contrary, it can not promote the development of the knowledge society and even hinder the development of the knowledge society. For example, in today's society, the knowledge quality and education level that children in mountainous areas can access are far less good than those in big cities. Therefore, most of them do not have a high level of education, and in the knowledge society, children in the mountains will not be able to create much economic value compared with children in big cities.

In the current knowledge revolution, higher education undertakes the historical mission of leading society into the knowledge society in today's post-industrial era. Higher education should undertake its mission of The Times and strive to cultivate lifelong learners to meet the requirements of the changes and development of today's market economy. Improve the structure of higher education and improve the quality of education by improving relevant training systems and mechanisms, innovating education and teaching methods, stimulating learners' willingness and vitality for lifelong learning, and cooperating with all parties to explore a more supportive lifelong learning system, so as to provide a solid and reliable talent and education guarantee for promoting the deepening development of knowledge society and knowledge economy

### **3. Proposals for the Future Development of Higher Education**

In the development of higher education, simplification, sloganization and over-formalism are becoming a huge difficulty in the reform of higher education, as well as a stumbling block to the arrival of the knowledge society. It will damage the academic environment and the quality of higher education. Once the government, enterprises and society are no longer willing to provide research and teaching resources for universities, universities, as a kind of organization and system, will face collapse due to failure. The vision of a knowledge society will also imprison the power of higher education, and the consequences will be very serious. Higher education cannot be an empty slogan, nor can universities be enveloped by formalism, nor can the knowledge economy be simplified. It is urgent to solve these problems!

### **4. Conclusion**

Knowledge society is a society with knowledge as the core development, and knowledge plays a major role in the development of the social economy, which provides opportunities for the development of higher education. Meanwhile, the development of the knowledge economy makes the quantity of knowledge surge and knowledge become more social, which makes higher education institutions (universities and junior colleges) face a crisis, and higher education urgently needs to

optimize and reform the educational structure. Higher education becomes more diverse, communicates more and learns from each other. The fundamental goal of higher education is to seek knowledge and educate people. In the implementation society, higher education will cultivate more lifelong learners, thus boosting the development of the knowledge economy. However, in the development process of higher education, there are still problems such as formalism and sloganization, and higher education also needs to optimize the teaching environment so that the reform of higher education is not just an empty talk.

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