

The Development Status and Future Trend of China's International Basic Education Industry——Interview With Qi Shu, an International Basic Education Expert

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Abstract: With the development of economic globalization, information technology, and world integration, the internationalization of education has become an important trend in education reform and development. Since the 1990s, China has conducted pioneering explorations of international basic education and gradually upgraded it to a national strategy. Under the background of promoting the “Belt and Road” initiative, primary and secondary schools need to explore and develop in diverse ways to promote international basic education, such as building an international basic education core literacy target system, optimizing the international basic education content system, cultivating leaders with international horizon, strengthening the construction of humanities exchange mechanism, and establishing international basic education academic organizations to promote people-to-people bonds and cultural understanding. In this context, what is the status quo of the development of China's international basic education industry? What kind of development will there be in the future? Based on this, the reporter interviewed Qi Shu, a well-known international basic education expert in China, asking her to analyze the development status of China's international basic education industry and give her own insights on the future development trend of the industry.

Keywords: International Basic Education; Future of the Industry; Development

1. The development status of China's international basic education industry

Shuo Zhang: What do you think is the current development status of China's international basic education industry?

Qi Shu: Since the 1990s, basic education has been put on the agenda of both developed and developing countries. Popularization and improvement have become two arduous tasks for basic education in all countries. In the 1998 Statistical Yearbook, UNESCO summarized the new developments in basic education in the world in recent years, including: preschool education is making significant progress in developing countries, the first and second level education enrollment rates continue to rise, and educational opportunities are further expanded. However, the differences in educational opportunities between countries, regions, and genders are still obvious. The difference in second-level education between developed and developing countries,^[1] especially the least developed countries, is quite large.

2. Current development of international education

Shuo Zhang: As an industry leader and an expert in international basic education, what do you think of the development of international education?

Qi Shu: First of all, the strength of China's education is worthy of recognition. Although there are still controversies in the academic circles about the development of Chinese students' “core literacy”, our education standards are comparable to those of the international community, and we are not at all lagging behind. Although our educational goals are very good, it is undeniable that there is a certain gap in the implementation. The resistance mainly comes from the fetters of our education system. The examination evaluation system plays an important role in guiding education. The high school and college entrance examination score system objectively determines that for a long period of time, parents and schools will only rely on scores to judge students. What is worth thinking about is, in such a case, is it true that only the first place is successful? In many cases, our students still receive passive exam-oriented education. Parents and schools should understand that behind scores, we hope to cultivate a student who is good at thinking. The last thing I want to say is that our system has certain advantages, and reforms have been going on. In this special period, we must draw on the advantages of other systems, and at the same time be neither humble nor overbearing, nor underestimate ourselves. I have full confidence in the future of Chinese education^[2].

3. The school and parents' concept of child education

Shuo Zhang: Today's international basic education faces many challenges. How do you respond the confusion about the concept of child education by schools and parents?

Qi Shu: I think the differences between Chinese and Western cultures brings about differences in the ideas of Chinese and foreign teachers. Chinese teachers are often unable to abandon the role of nanny and take care of students' big and small problems, while

foreign teachers let the students deal with problems by themselves. There are even paradoxes in running schools. Does the school only admit the best children? Can parents accept that not every child can be admitted to a prestigious school? The best answer is that we help each child develop his full potential and be the best he can be. The foundation of education is to make children a happy person, not a machine that takes high scores into prestigious schools.

4. What core qualities do students need to meet the challenges of the future world?

Shuo Zhang: What core qualities do you think students need to meet the challenges of the future world?

Qi Shu: First of all, the multiple thinking. Language has an important influence on the development of thinking. The project system and task-based learning that emphasize learning in experiential inquiry are also of great benefit to the cultivation of students' thinking ability. The second is being knowledgeable. An erudite must not only read books, but also be able to read people and society.^[3]

5. The future trend of China's international education industry

Shuo Zhang: Finally, can you give some insights on the future of China's international education industry?

Qi Shu: The world is undergoing a huge economic shift, and automation and globalization are affecting everything. People are no longer merely satisfied with educational opportunities, but to obtain better education. The trend of international basic education is to pay more and more attention to the comprehensive development of students. The traditional and single learning path is outdated. Lifelong multi-disciplinary learning is the future direction. Because of the "discipline-led" education model and the long-term test-oriented education, the education system has the characteristics of standardization and large scale. However, as it enters the information society, innovation is the first driving force for development^[4]. In this case, personalized education is needed for students. China's Overall Plan for Promoting the Construction of World-Class Universities and First-Class Disciplines also clearly states that "vigorously promote personalized education and comprehensively enhance students' comprehensive quality, international vision, scientific spirit, entrepreneurial awareness, and creative ability."^[5]

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