

A Study on the Long-Chain Integration Model of Hakka Cuisine Vocational Education: The “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” Connection Mechanism

Ganhong Chen¹, Yuhuang Wang², Shaoxiong Zheng², Ruixuan Ou³, Baochuan Wu^{4*}

¹Guangdong Meizhou Vocational and Technical College, Meizhou 514000, Guangdong, China

²Jieyang Technician College, Jieyang 522000, Guangdong, China

³Raoping County Technical School of Chaozhou City, Chaozhou 521000, Guangdong, China

⁴Jieyang Polytechnic Vocational and Technical School, Jieyang 522000, Guangdong, China

**Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

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Abstract: This paper focuses on the field of Hakka cuisine vocational education and conducts an in-depth study on the “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” connection mechanism. By analyzing the necessity from multiple aspects, including the continuity of talent cultivation, the talent structure for industrial development, and the optimal allocation of educational resources, it reveals the significance of constructing this connection mechanism. In terms of the construction ideas, the paper proposes targeted and operable strategies from three key dimensions: the connection and integration of curriculum systems, the collaborative construction of teaching teams, and the sharing and expansion of practical platforms. Meanwhile, to ensure the effective implementation of the mechanism, it elaborates on safeguard measures such as policy support and guidance, the participation of industry associations, and quality monitoring and evaluation. This study holds important theoretical and practical value for improving the Hakka cuisine vocational education system, cultivating high-quality culinary talents that meet the needs of industrial development, and promoting the inheritance and innovation of Hakka cuisine culture.

Keywords: Hakka cuisine; Vocational education; Connection mechanism; Talent cultivation

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1. Introduction

Vocational education, as an important approach to cultivating high-quality, skilled talents, can inject new vitality into the inheritance of Hakka cuisine culture. Through learning and practical training in vocational education, the cultivation of Hakka cuisine talents can be realized, which in turn can better promote the development of Hakka cuisine and provide corresponding human support^[1]. The establishment of the “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” connection mechanism is mainly based on such purposes and

requirements. The main goal of this connection mechanism is to pursue the connection and systematization of talent cultivation approaches and methods based on the development and needs of the “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” talent cultivation mechanism. It can create a coherent learning process for students: by connecting the curriculum content, the cultivation of teaching staff, and the practical platforms, curriculum resources and teaching resources are connected and integrated. This enables students to gradually improve their practical abilities in terms of practical courses and teaching teams at different levels of secondary vocational education, higher vocational education, and post-vocational training ^[2].

2. The necessity of the “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” connection mechanism

2.1. Demand for continuity in talent cultivation

Hakka cuisine possesses both technical and cultural attributes, making talent cultivation a long-term endeavor. Vocational colleges lay the foundation by providing students with basic technical training and knowledge of food culture. This equips students with fundamental skills such as knife work and heat control, building a “foundation” for them. However, relying solely on vocational colleges for cultivation is not conducive to enhancing the capabilities of talents required for the development of the catering industry ^[3]. After completing their studies at institutions, receiving education in more advanced skills and broader knowledge allows students to gradually transform from “only knowing how to cook” to “being able to create and manage.” This meets the demand for intermediate-level talents. Nevertheless, the Hakka cuisine industry undergoes rapid technological innovations and ideological changes. Relying solely on the training from a single vocational college will lead to a knowledge gap for practitioners. Further studies at training institutions can serve as a channel for students to continue their knowledge acquisition. Through this, students can learn again, draw lessons from predecessors, and master new skills, thereby meeting the long-term demand for talent cultivation ^[4].

2.2. Demand for a talent structure to support industrial development

When the Hakka catering industry expands, its demand for practitioners becomes multifaceted. There is a large demand for entry-level practitioners with basic skills, such as food preparers and junior chefs, which can be met by secondary vocational schools. The industry’s demand for mid-level management, R&D, and management talents needs to be fulfilled by higher vocational schools. For the high-end sector of the industry, which requires talent in cultural promotion and high-end banquet design, support from personnel with certain professional qualifications is necessary. However, the “high-end gap” in talent development depends on post-vocational education. If these three segments (secondary vocational, higher vocational, and post-vocational training) are not connected, it will easily lead to a mismatch between the supply of vocational education talents and industrial demand. Only through the linkage of the three can a “talent echelon” be formed from the grassroots to the mid-level, meeting the talent needs of both frontline and mid-level positions ^[5].

3. Construction of the “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” connection mechanism

3.1. Connection and integration of curriculum systems

3.1.1. Gradient design of curriculum content

The development of hierarchical curricula must align with the growth patterns of Hakka cuisine talents. By

linking the distinct training objectives for talents at different levels of Hakka cuisine vocational education, a progressive curriculum system featuring “low-level → high-level → advanced level” progression should be established ^[6]. In secondary vocational education, low-level courses focus on fundamental skills and knowledge of Hakka cuisine, including basic knife work and heat control techniques, Hakka culinary ingredients, and basic preparation processes for home-style Hakka dishes. Examples of such courses are Basic Knife Work and Heat Control for Hakka Cuisine and Basic Home-Style Hakka Dishes. These courses help students understand the cultural characteristics of Hakka cuisine, with teaching content emphasizing “standardization” and “practicality” to supply human resources for entry-level service positions in the Hakka catering industry. Built on the foundation of secondary vocational education, higher vocational education targets a more advanced level. Its curriculum is designed to prepare students for higher-level competencies, shifting the learning focus to a new dimension of “skills + enhanced operation and management capabilities + R&D awareness and skills.” Core courses include Design of High-End Hakka Dishes and R&D and Innovation of Hakka Dishes, guiding students from “being able to cook traditional Hakka dishes” to “being capable of banquet design, new dish R&D, and operation management.” Content such as “market research” and “customer demand analysis” is also integrated to equip students with the ability to adapt to mid-level positions in the Hakka catering industry. Post-vocational training is guided by the development trends of the Hakka catering industry and the demand for Hakka catering talents, with a focus on “targetedness” and “timeliness.” For chefs, courses like R&D and Enhancement of New-Style Hakka Dishes and Use and Application of Intelligent Cooking Equipment are offered; for enterprise managers, courses such as Brand Planning and Marketing for Hakka Catering are provided; for cultural inheritors, courses including Protection and Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Hakka Cuisine are available. Additionally, short-term training programs on topics like “production of traditional Hakka seasonings” and “banquet carving techniques” can be launched to achieve precise skill improvement.

3.1.2. Credit recognition and curriculum replacement

A curriculum and credit replacement system should be established to break down the barriers between different educational stages. A unified credit standard for Hakka cuisine vocational education needs to be formulated, with clear credit recognition rules—for example, 2 credits for core practical courses in secondary vocational education, 3 credits for comprehensive courses in higher vocational education, and 1–2 credits for short-term specialized post-vocational training programs—to ensure consistent credit measurement. For credit recognition: When secondary vocational students advance to higher vocational education, credits for courses they have completed and passed (such as Basic Knife Work and Heat Control for Hakka Cuisine) will be recognized by higher vocational institutions, allowing them to take advanced courses. When higher vocational students obtain credits through participating in short-term post-vocational training, these credits can be converted proportionally for future pursuits like undergraduate studies or advanced certificate programs. For curriculum replacement, an “equivalent curriculum recognition system” should be established. For instance, secondary vocational students who win awards in Hakka cuisine industry skills competitions can replace credits for equivalent practical courses; higher vocational students with achievements in dish R&D projects can replace credits for the course Innovation and R&D of Hakka Dishes; practitioners with several years of catering management experience (supported by valid proof) can replace credits for the post-vocational course Catering Management. For inter-institutional curriculum replacement, secondary and higher vocational schools can jointly develop “shared courses,” and specialized post-vocational training courses can be included in the elective courses of secondary and higher vocational education to achieve resource sharing ^[7].

3.2. Collaborative development of teaching staff

3.2.1. Cross-stage teacher exchange and cooperation

A regular exchange mechanism should be established, such as the “inter-employment of teachers between secondary and higher vocational schools”: secondary vocational schools can hire teachers from higher vocational schools to deliver special lectures on topics like “Innovative Ideas for Hakka Dishes”; higher vocational schools can employ teachers from secondary vocational schools as teaching assistants for practical courses to leverage their strengths in hands-on operations. Secondary and higher vocational schools should establish a “teacher resource sharing” mechanism with post-vocational training institutions: industry experts from post-vocational institutions can work as part-time teachers in secondary and higher vocational schools to teach cutting-edge courses; teachers from secondary and higher vocational schools can share theoretical knowledge and teaching experience at post-vocational institutions, achieving two-way talent flow. Cross-stage “Hakka Cuisine Teaching Teams” should be formed, composed of teachers from secondary vocational schools, higher vocational schools, and post-vocational institutions. These teams collaborate on tasks: jointly developing shared courses and taking charge of designing modules for basic practical skills, comprehensive capabilities, and cutting-edge skills in different stages; jointly guiding dish R&D projects and providing phased guidance on basic preparation, innovative ideas, and market feedback; and jointly conducting educational research to address issues such as “improving teaching quality” and “inheriting culture” and produce practical results.

3.2.2. Hierarchical improvement of teachers’ competence

Hierarchical training should be carried out based on the needs of teachers at different stages to ensure their capabilities match the teaching objectives. For secondary vocational school teachers, the focus is on enhancing their “basic practical teaching ability” and “cultural integration ability”: through “Hakka Cuisine Basic Technique Training Camps,” senior industry chefs are invited to demonstrate and provide guidance to refine their practical skills; through “Hakka Food Culture Special Training,” their understanding of Hakka culture is improved, enabling them to integrate cultural elements into teaching—such as sharing folk stories about stuffed tofu. For higher vocational school teachers, the emphasis is on upgrading their “comprehensive teaching ability” and “innovation guidance ability”: “Hakka Cuisine Comprehensive Curriculum Design Training” is conducted to help them master multi-dimensional curriculum design methods covering “technique + management + R&D”; “Hakka Dish Innovation Workshops” are organized, where industry talents are invited to share experiences and guide teachers to lead students in R&D based on market demands. Teachers can also be arranged to take temporary positions in Hakka catering enterprises to gain insights into actual operations. For post-vocational training teachers, the key is to improve their “cutting-edge skill reserve ability” and “personalized teaching ability”: regular “Hakka Catering Industry Cutting-Edge Trend Training” is held, with experts and equipment manufacturers invited to lecture on topics like pre-prepared dish technology and healthy eating trends.

3.3. Sharing and expansion of practical platforms

3.3.1. Joint construction of school-enterprise cooperation platforms

Promote secondary vocational schools, higher vocational schools, and post-vocational training institutions to jointly build diversified platforms with Hakka catering enterprises and industry associations ^[8]. First, co-establish “Hakka Cuisine Training Bases.” Secondary and higher vocational schools provide venues and basic equipment, enterprises offer advanced equipment, raw materials, and technical guidance, and post-vocational institutions participate in operation. The bases are divided into “Basic Training Areas,” “Comprehensive

Training Areas,” “Innovation R&D Areas,” and “Production Practice Areas,” allowing learners to improve skills in real scenarios. Second, co-build “Hakka Cuisine Culture Communication Platforms” such as “Cooking Culture Experience Halls” and “Food Culture Study Bases.” Secondary and higher vocational schools are responsible for cultural exploration and curriculum design, enterprises handle operation and promotion, and post-vocational institutions take charge of training study mentors. The experience halls display cooking tools, ingredients, and dish preparation processes to the public and provide food tasting experiences. The study bases offer research courses for primary and secondary school students and tourists, while providing learners with opportunities to practice cultural communication.

3.3.2. Collaborative implementation of practical projects

Integrate resources to launch practical projects and enhance learners’ comprehensive capabilities. First, organize “Hakka Cuisine Skill Competitions.” Hosted by secondary and higher vocational schools, post-vocational institutions, and industry associations, and sponsored by enterprises, the competitions set up groups for secondary vocational students, higher vocational students, and post-vocational practitioners. They stimulate enthusiasm, provide exchange platforms, and winning works are industrially developed by enterprises, achieving the goal of “promoting learning and production through competitions.” Second, carry out “Hakka Dish Joint R&D Projects.” Teams are formed by secondary vocational students, higher vocational students, and post-vocational practitioners. Under the guidance of teachers and enterprise staff, they determine R&D themes such as “healthy dishes” and “pre-prepared dishes” based on market demands. Secondary vocational students are responsible for basic ingredient processing and application of traditional techniques, higher vocational students handle formula optimization and nutritional analysis, post-vocational practitioners provide market feedback, and enterprises take charge of trial production and promotion. This cultivates innovation and collaboration capabilities, realizing a win-win situation for education and industry.

4. Implementation guarantee measures for the “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” connection mechanism

4.1. Policy support and guidance

The government should formulate relevant targeted policies to clarify the development orientation and goals of the “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” connection for Hakka cuisine vocational education, incorporate it into the local vocational education development plan, and provide institutional top-level design for the advancement of this mechanism. At the same time, supporting policies should be established as guarantees. It is necessary to set up special support funds to back curriculum connection, teacher exchange, and practical training base construction in secondary and higher vocational schools; introduce preferential measures to encourage enterprises to participate in school-enterprise cooperative education, and offer tax or financial subsidy preferences to enterprises that join in building practical training bases. In addition, policies linking further education and employment should be implemented to smooth the channel for secondary vocational students to advance to higher vocational education, and establish a connection system between post-vocational training credits and vocational qualification certification. These efforts will remove policy barriers, guide the direction for the advancement of the mechanism, and encourage participation from all parties involved.

4.2. Participation of industry associations

Industry organizations serve as a bridge between “industry and education” and should give full play to their guiding and coordinating functions. The Hakka Cuisine Industry Association can take multiple actions to advance the connection mechanism: it can formulate industry standards for Hakka cuisine education, defining talent training objectives, curriculum requirements, and skill assessment criteria at different stages and levels to achieve effective alignment between talent cultivation and industry needs; it can organize networking and exchange activities among industry associations, educational institutions, and post-vocational training organizations, build school-enterprise cooperation platforms, and realize information and resource sharing; it can also participate in the talent cultivation process—for example, recommending industry experts to join in curriculum development, teacher training, and teaching internships for talent cultivation, as well as participating in skill assessment—to ensure that the trained talents meet the development needs of the industry’s frontline production. Meanwhile, it can feed back information on the industry’s demand for skilled talents, providing references for improving the connection mechanism^[9].

4.3. Quality monitoring and evaluation

Quality monitoring and evaluation are key to ensuring the effectiveness of the connection mechanism. A multi-dimensional evaluation system needs to be established, with evaluation indicators set from aspects such as curriculum connection, teacher competence, practical results, and talent quality^[10], to conduct regular evaluations of all links in the “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” system. A professional evaluation team should be formed, consisting of education experts, industry representatives, and enterprise managers, which conducts evaluations through methods like on-site surveys, document reviews, and feedback collection. A dynamic adjustment mechanism should also be established to promptly optimize curriculum content, teacher training plans, and practical projects based on evaluation results, thereby solving problems in the operation of the mechanism. Additionally, evaluation results should be made public to accept social supervision, ensuring the connection mechanism operates at a high quality at all times, effectively improving the level of Hakka cuisine vocational education, and supplying high-quality talents to the industry.

5. Conclusion

Constructing the “Secondary Vocational–Higher Vocational–Post-Vocational Training” connection mechanism is a crucial exploration for Hakka cuisine vocational education to adapt to the development of the times and align with industrial demands. Through curriculum integration, teaching staff collaboration, and platform sharing, this mechanism not only addresses the problem of disconnection in talent cultivation but also optimizes the allocation of educational resources. It supplies multi-level high-quality talents to the Hakka catering industry and further contributes to the living inheritance of Hakka food culture.

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