

On the Current Status and Future of Self-Taught Higher Education Examination

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Abstract: As one of the major innovations of China's higher education system, the self-taught examination system has made brilliant achievements in its decades of development and has nurtured a large number of high-quality talents for the country and society. However, with the development of the times, various forms of higher education are emerging, which has had a great impact on self-taught exams. Some problems of self-taught exams have been exposed. Solutions to solving these problems have become the key to promoting the healthy and sustainable development of higher education self-taught exams.

Keywords: Higher education; Self-taught examination; Educational formats

Publication date: November, 2020

Publication online: 30 November, 2020

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1 Introduction

Higher education self-taught examination is an examination system and educational format that combines individual self-learning, social assistance and national examinations. It has nurtured a large number of high-quality talents for the economic and social development of China in the past 40 years. In the development and reform of China, it has been continuously improved and has become a shining star in China's higher education.

The emergence of higher education self-taught examinations has its profound historical background. At the end of the 1970s, China entered a new era of reform and opening-up. The country and society urgently needed a large number of high-level talents with knowledge and quality in various fields, which

in turn compelled the vigorous development of higher education to meet the needs of economic and social development. In 1977, the university entrance examination resumed enrollment, and a large number of people eager to receive higher education were able to re-enter the campus. However, due to the constraints of conditions at that time, ordinary colleges and universities still could not satisfy the people's thirst for higher education, nor could they fully satisfy the society's urgent need for a large number of talents. Therefore, it is inevitable to establish a new type of higher education that conforms to China's national conditions.

At the beginning of the establishing self-taught higher education examination, the self-taught examination closely combined the needs of economic and social development and the demand for the professional structure of talents, and set up some majors and courses urgently needed by the society, so that the self-taught examination graduates can apply what they learnt, which received tremendous support from the society. With the changes of the times, the self-taught examination is facing unprecedented challenges under the impact of factors such as the large-scale expansion of ordinary colleges and universities in China at the end of the 20th century, the blooming of various forms of adult higher education, and the educational changes brought about by the development of new technologies. With the widespread of lifelong education trend and the development of equalization and popularization of education, new vitality has been injected into the development of self-taught examinations. In this regard, some researchers have tried to put forward some new ideas and practices, and have accumulated

valuable experience for the development of higher education self-taught exams and the development of China's higher education system.

The self-taught higher education examination has made brilliant achievements in the past 30 years and nurtured a large number of high-quality talents for the country and society. However, at current times, science and technology are changing with each passing day, and economic and social development pay more attention to efficiency. Education has entered a new phase of connotative development, all of which have put forward requirements and challenges for the sustainable and healthy development of self-taught higher education examinations. There are also some problems in the self-taught higher education examination itself that need to be solved urgently.

2 The professional setting cannot fully reflect the needs of current social development, and the professional system urgently needs to be supplemented and updated

In the historical development stage of the self-taught exam, the professional setting and the social and economic needs are generally matched. The two interplay in such a way that the needs of social and economic development provide a guiding direction for the professional setting, and the professionally trained talents meet the society's demand for talents well. However, with the change of the times and the advent of the information era, the development of science and technology has accelerated, and the update cycle of knowledge has shortened, making the professional setting of self-taught exams out of touch with the actual needs of society. The professional settings of self-taught exams in many provinces and cities still remain the same as those many years ago, this weakened the open and flexible features of self-taught higher education exams. In addition, due to the lag in the professional settings, some majors have no one applying. In response to this situation, many provinces and cities have issued notices of suspension of exams in recent years. It is true that suspension of majors with saturated social demand is helpful for the rational use of educational resources and the social and economic benefits of self-taught exams. However, in the development of self-taught exams in recent years, we usually only see exam suspension

plans for some majors, but few new popular majors and emerging majors have been added. The number of majors in each province and city has shown a downward trend as a whole each year. On the one hand, the lagging and slow updating of majors is due to the incomplete knowledge system of emerging majors. The formulation of relevant professional plans and examination syllabus must undergo a comprehensive and detailed study, which objectively slows the time and progress of the entry of emerging majors into self-taught exams.

3 The curriculum cannot meet the requirements of candidates' comprehensive development

First of all, the curriculum of the self-taught higher education exam is designed to coordinate with the professional scheme to nurture high-quality talents that the society needs. The scientificity, rationality and practicality of the curriculum in the self-taught exam can directly restrict the quality of talents nurtured by the self-taught exam. For a long time, the professional setting of self-taught higher education exams basically imitated the professional schemes of the corresponding majors of ordinary colleges and universities, and selected several main subjects as the test content. This is conducive to learning from the experience of ordinary colleges and universities to nurture talents and maintaining a complete faculty system. However, due to the obvious differences between general higher education and self-taught exams, and the wide range of people taking self-taught exams is different from the situation of full-time young people studying in ordinary colleges and universities, it is not feasible to copy the curriculum plan of ordinary colleges and universities for the self-taught exam. On the one hand, self-taught exams emphasize openness and flexibility, and many self-taught candidates do not have the means to study like full-time students; on the other hand, although ordinary colleges and universities also emphasize the combination of theory and practice, in reality, their courses setting reflects more of the study of theoretical literacy. This is in stark contrast to the attributes of self-taught exams that pay more attention to practical vocational training and follow-up education. Therefore, revising the curriculum to improve the practical skills of candidates is an issue that self-taught higher education exams have to face

for a long time.

Secondly, since entering the 21st century, the comprehensive implementation of quality education has become the consensus of the society. What society needs is compound talents comprehensively developed in morals, intellectuals, physicals and aesthetics. The curriculum of the self-taught exam mainly reflects the importance of intellectual education, while neglecting the important roles of other aspects. The number of courses assigned for self-taught exams is generally between 10 and 20, which is about one-fourth that of the professional curriculum of ordinary schools. To carry out immersive quality education, cultivate students' innovation skills and promote the formation of a sound personality in such limited curriculum is undoubtedly a major problem in the development of self-taught exams.

Thirdly, teaching materials are the basic tools for the course and the carrier of subject knowledge. The quality of teaching materials will directly affect the learning quality of the self-taught candidates. Although relevant national departments update and revise some professional textbooks every year, the speed of updating is still relatively lagging behind, and many emerging knowledge and skills need to be added to the textbooks. In addition, because the compilation of some self-taught textbooks emphasizes theory and neglects practicality, the difficulty in understanding knowledge in the test is not conducive to the cultivation of practical ability and the improvement of learning quality.

4 The social education system still needs to be improved

As a bridge and link between individual self-learning in self-taught higher education examination and national examination, social assistance is of great significance for mobilizing all active factors to participate in self-taught examination assistance activities and improving student learning efficiency. With the development of society, the main body of social student assistance has become more diversified. The main body of social student assistance will carry out student assistance activities in an orderly manner in accordance with policy guidance and market demand to achieve corresponding social and economic benefits. However, there are also

some problems in the process of developing the social education system. First, the government's policy support for social education needs to be improved. Self-taught higher education exams have played an important role in the process of popularizing higher education in China with its advantages of low investment and high benefits. The government's investment in self-taught exams is mainly concentrated on basic business expenses, while investment in the social education institutions is less. This makes the internal driving force of social education institutions to run schools completely dependent on the market. If market demand changes, these institutions have to bear the corresponding market risk, which has a negative impact on the enthusiasm of the social education institutions for running schools. The healthy development of social education institutions can reflect the quality of school operation, and indirectly reflect the learning effect of candidates. Second, the current social education institutions are highly uneven in standards, lacking effective supervision and scientific quality monitoring system. Currently, many social education institutions are mainly directed by market demand, and use the educational resources they have to carry out student assistance activities for the candidates. The teaching process has great autonomy and randomness, and it is difficult to monitor and evaluate its quality. This has caused great risks and difficulties for self-taught candidates to choose education institutions. This not only damages the rights and interests of candidates, but also has a negative impact on the authority of self-taught higher education examinations and the image of national examinations.

5 The public does not sufficiently understand the self-taught higher education examinations

With the development of higher education in China, various forms of higher education are blooming, and there is a serious lack of public understanding of self-taught higher education exams. Firstly, the public lacks understanding of self-taught exams. Currently, many members of the public have a vague understanding of the self-taught exam as a form of education. This is caused by the lack of effective publicity. Secondly, the recognition of self-taught exam diplomas is not high in the society. China has

established the statutory status of self-taught higher education examinations in the "Higher Education Act", but in reality, due to various conditions and factors, the society has questioned the knowledge and abilities of self-taught examination graduates, which is reflected in the employment and other aspects.

6 Due to the rise of new forms of education such as online education, self-taught higher education exams are gradually losing their advantages

The development of information technology has led to the rapid development of online education, and the traditional advantages of openness, flexibility, and fairness of self-taught exams have become less obvious in the competition with online education. Specifically, compared with online education, self-taught exams have three major advantages that are being challenged. First, the advantage of admission restrictions. The self-taught higher education examination is very different from ordinary higher education in its openness, and the "lenient entry and strict exit" education model. Regardless of the initial education level being high or low, one can apply for the exam. With the development of online education, the characteristic of openness is no longer unique to self-taught exams, and the number of enrollment in online education remains high. Second, the advantage of flexible time. Self-taught exams used to attract a large number of in-service candidates with the flexibility of time, but now the development of online education makes this advantage become insignificant, because online education is built on a computer platform, and students can directly learn related courses on the online teaching platform at any time and anywhere, and communicate and discuss learning through the internet. Third, economic advantages. Self-taught exams used to expand rapidly in the society with its low cost and high benefits, but at the present stage, its economic advantages are also much less compared with online education. The general education system for online education undergraduates is about 2.5 years and the total tuition amounts to about RMB 5000~6000. The fees of self-taught exams and social education agencies vary. The full-time or part-time tuition is usually around RMB 5000~6000. The costs of the two are about the same. Therefore, the economic cost advantage of self-taught examination has been greatly impacted by online

education.

The self-taught examination system is the world's largest open higher education system that best reflects the idea of lifelong education and the characteristics of a learning society. It is led by national examinations, based on individual independent learning, and has a wide range of social education resources participating in the assistance. It is a "university without walls" with Chinese characteristics and a cradle for self-learning.[1] China is currently facing profound social and economic changes, with various new industries and new professions springing up. The demand for high-quality talents in some industries has remained high for a long time, and the structural shortage of talents still persists for a long time, which provides the internal incentives for the development of self-taught higher education examination.

First, keep up with the pace of development of the times and make the professional setting better meet the needs of social and economic development. Government departments and relevant self-taught examination institutions should increase their sensitivity to social and economic development, and adjust professional settings in a timely manner according to the talent needs of social development. Not only must they promptly eliminate the majors with less social demand, but also the make appropriate expansions of original professional system in order to deliver a large number of high-quality talents to the society.

Second, integrate ideological education and quality education into the curriculum to promote the overall development of students. Due to the limitations of the self-taught exam itself, it is difficult for us to add a large number of courses to the curriculum plan. So, in order to achieve the purpose of quality education, we can blend in relevant concepts in related courses and textbooks, and subtly influence students' worldview and values. At the same time, pay attention to practical teaching, strengthen collaboration with universities and enterprises, establish a practicing base, and cultivates students' practical skills and innovation capability in practical operation.

Third, strengthen the management and supervision of social aid institutions and improve the social aid system and quality evaluation system. Strictly implement the review and record system of educational institutions, strictly prevent illegal school running, and false advertising, etc., and strengthen

the policy support for social student assistance institutions, so that they follow the change in market demands and plan to carry out student assistance activities under the guidance of the government. Strengthen each student assistance institution's enthusiasm for running schools, mobilize all positive factors to develop the cause for self-taught higher education examinations, so that self-taught examinations are more suitable for the building of a learning society and the trends of lifelong education. Establish a complete evaluation system for the quality of social aids, promote the steady improvement of the quality of aids, and safeguard the relevant rights and interests of candidates.

Fourth, increase publicity to increase public understanding of self-taught exams. On the one hand, we must vigorously develop academic education to meet the needs of people from all walks of life and industries for academic improvement and transfer of knowledge. On the other hand, we will continue to expand the non-academic education system, make self-taught exams to be both academic and non-academic, interconnecting both theory and career, and carry out timely publicity to the public. At the same time, strictly control the quality of graduates and use the standard and ability of self-taught exam graduates

to win the public's trust and recognition for self-taught exams.

Fifth, self-taught examination and online education complement each other's advantages and coexist harmoniously. Online education has risen rapidly due to its flexible teaching arrangements. Self-taught exams can also use this form of assistance, by using information technology and other media, so that candidates can receive assisted training anytime and anywhere, and improve the efficiency and quality of learning.

To sum up, as an innovation of China's higher education system, the self-taught higher education examination has shown its vigorous vitality. Although it is now facing many challenges with the development of the times, the demand for talents is driven by society. It continues to reform and improve itself, and will continue to play its unique role in the process of popularizing higher education in the future.

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