

Curriculum Construction for an Integrated General and Vocational Education of Comprehensive High School

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Abstract: At present, there is a lack of policy guidance and professional research on the general vocational integration curriculum system in China's comprehensive high schools. This study plays a promoting role in changing this phenomenon. The main purpose of this paper is to construct a general vocational integration curriculum of tourism management and service major in comprehensive high school by looking into the similarities and differences of the curriculum system of ordinary high school, comprehensive high school, and secondary vocational school. The relevant information of the main curriculum integration mode in China's general vocational integration and the research status of the development of comprehensive high schools were obtained through the network inquiry. The course materials of comprehensive high schools, ordinary high schools and secondary vocational schools in Weifang City, Shandong Province were collected through personal interviews with teachers and course designers of these schools. Document analysis was utilized for the curriculum system of tourism service and management major in a secondary vocational school. Based on the curriculum setting requirements of secondary vocational schools and the concept of general vocational integration curriculum setting, the course types, content, class hours and class hour ratio of tourism service and management major were analyzed and summarized. By comparing the three curricula according to concept, content, difficulty and arrangement, the similarities and differences were obtained. Thus, the curriculum of tourism service and management major in comprehensive high school was constructed. For further improvement, some suggestions and strategies for the construction of general vocational integration courses were given.

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of China's economy, comprehensive high schools have emerged with more diversified social demands for education. Comprehensive high school is one of the forms of diversified development of ordinary high school, so higher education is its important goal.^[1] Its orientation is a school-running form of integrated development of vocational and general education. Curriculum integration is the basic point for comprehensive high school to realize general vocational integration.

2. Course Integration Mode

In 1995, a Chinese author used the word “general vocational integration” in his paper *Market Oriented, Economy Oriented*.^[2] General vocational integration plays a constructive and developmental role in high school education, such as promoting the diversified development of ordinary high schools, encouraging them to develop their characteristics, and meeting the development needs of students of different levels.. There are three main modes of curriculum integration, which are curriculum penetration, “comprehensive high school” and double-subject intercommunication.^[3]

3. The Development of Domestic Comprehensive High Schools

Since the beginning of this century, according to the actual needs of education, various provinces and cities have explored the mode of running comprehensive high schools, such as Jiangsu Province and Shanghai. However, due to the influence of many social factors, the development of comprehensive high schools is still very backward. According to relevant statistics, by 2010, the number of comprehensive high schools in China was very small.^[4] However, in recent decades, the central and local governments have issued documents such as the *Outline of the National Medium - and Long-Term Plan for Educational Reform and Development (2010-2020)* and the *Shandong Provincial Plan for the Development of Education in the 13th Five-Year Plan Period*. In these documents, it is clearly pointed out that the education structure of senior high schools should be optimized to achieve general vocational integration, pilot comprehensive high schools should be carried out, and students should be supported to choose the direction of development according to their needs. The proposal of this series of documents provides an opportunity for the development of comprehensive high schools.

4. Secondary Vocational School Curriculum

The most important basis to realize educational objectives and implement educational activities is the curriculum system.^[5] According to *Several Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Further Deepening the Teaching Reform of Secondary Vocational Education* and *Principles of the Ministry of Education on the Development of Secondary Vocational School Teaching Plan*, the curriculum of secondary vocational schools pays more attention to the practical application of knowledge. The main task of secondary vocational schools is to cultivate skilled talents, and the secondary task is to enter higher education. Take the course structure table of tourism management and service major in a secondary professional school in Shandong Province as an example, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1 Curriculum Structure Table of Tourism Service and Management Major in a Secondary Vocational School in Shandong Province

Course category	Compulsory courses				Elective course	
Class types	Basic course		Professional course		Enterprise internship and graduation project	Restricted, industry knowledge, practical skills, life
	Theory course	Practice course	Theory course	Practice course		
Class hours	752	272	372	476	520	400
The proportion	27.9%	9.7%	13.3%	17.0%	18.6%	14.3%
Course	Theory course		Practice course		Enterprise internship and graduation project	
Total class time	1124		1148		520	
The	40.3%		41.2%		18.6%	

proportion			
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5. Constructing Professional Courses of Tourism Service and Management in Comprehensive High Schools

Only from extensive and simple integration in form to deep and effective integration, can the integration of general vocational courses truly reflect its ideal value for talent cultivation. Only by trying to break the traditional form of separation between vocational education curriculum and general education curriculum, can general vocational integration make a breakthrough in the construction of new curriculum form.^[6]

5.1 The Setting Concept of General Vocational Integration Courses

The document *Guiding Opinions on Pilot Comprehensive High School Class* points out that comprehensive high school classes should not only offer good general high school culture courses, but also strengthen the setting of technology-related courses, and also offer some professional elective courses.^[7] *The Outline of the National Medium - and Long-Term Plan for Education Reform and Development (2012-2020)* calls for the integration and reconstruction of regular senior high school education and vocational education should be applied to equip students with basic life skills, occupation and morality in addition to cultural qualities. In this way, the student will be assured of fuller and optimum development in the future. In high school, vocational technical courses are generally divided into four categories, which mainly include career planning, career exploration, vocational skill orientation and professional linkage. Cultural courses include the teaching of ordinary high school curriculum content and characteristic courses. Featured courses are mainly courses with professional characteristics set by the school for students to learn majors.^[8] The curriculum design concept of “broad foundation, lively direction” and the integration of the curriculum should be paid more attention to in the general vocational integration, so as to truly realize the integration of the concept and content.

5.2 Curriculum Setting of Tourism Service and Management Major in Comprehensive Senior High School

The idea and requirement of general vocational integration curriculum should be the guiding principle of comprehensive high school curriculum. The curriculum is constructed in the form of the integration of high school curriculum and secondary vocational school curriculum. Therefore, the curriculum includes not only the basic courses of general high school culture, but also vocational and technical courses. Take the Tourism Service and Management Major of Comprehensive High School as an example to construct courses as shown in the following table.

Table 2 Curriculum Setup Of Tourism Service and Management Major in Comprehensive High School

Semester	Compulsory courses				Elective course	
	Basic course	Comprehensive course	Professional theory course	Professional Skills Course	Professional Bridging Course	Industry general knowledge course
The first semester	Moral education, physical education,	Professional cognition courses				

	mathematics, Chinese, foreign languages, physics, chemistry, music, art, etc					
The second semester	K1	C	K2	K3		
The third semester	K1	C	K2	K3		
The fourth semester	K1	C	K2	K3	E1	
The fifth semester	K1	C	K2	K3	E1	E2
The sixth semester	K1	C	K2		E1	E2

K1: Math, Chinese, foreign languages, moral education, physical education. K2: Catering Service and Management, Introduction to Tourism, Politeness and Etiquette, Tourism Psychology, Guide Practice, Room Service and Management. K3: Catering service skills, room service skills, guide explanation skills, service etiquette norms, and handling skills of special problems in service. C: Professional cognition courses, social practice, Party and League activities, etc. Professional cognition courses include: career planning, social etiquette, professional quality cultivation, national enrollment and employment policies. E1: Overview of tourism products, Chinese tourism geography, public relations, etc. E2: Tourism laws and regulations, professional image design, tourism English, enterprise practice, school-based courses, etc.

The teaching schedule is 40 school weeks per school year, 5 days per week, 7 hours per day. Moral education and physical education are arranged for 2 hours per week. The vocational cognition course is conducted in the form of lectures, and each lecture takes 2 credit hours. Social practice is arranged once a year, each time for 1 week. In the first semester of senior one, the basic courses of culture are 2 hours per week except Chinese, mathematics and foreign language. Art and technology courses are 1-2 hours per week. From the second semester of senior high school to graduation, 4 hours per week for Chinese and math, and 3 hours per week for foreign language. Students who choose to work may reduce the number of hours in these subjects in their third year of high school. K2 professional theory courses are arranged for 8 hours per week. K3 professional skills courses are arranged for 9 hours per week. Each semester of K2 and K3 courses is set in proportion to the requirements of Shandong Provincial College Entrance Examination (Spring Examination). In the first semester of senior three, class hours can be arranged in sections due to professional skills examination. Professional elective courses of E1 and E2 are offered according to students' needs for further study and employment, and each course averages 2 class hours per week. Students who choose employment take an eight-week internship in a company. According to the relevant requirements for graduation of ordinary high schools in Shandong Province, students majoring in Tourism Service and Management shall have at least 144 credits for graduation, including 130 credits for compulsory courses and 14 credits for elective courses. Generally, a course is 1-2 credits per semester, and specialized courses are 2-4 credits.

Through the construction, it can be seen that all students of Tourism Management and Service major learn basic cultural knowledge and vocational cognition courses in the first semester of senior one. The students' future distribution, stratification and course selection will be laid a good foundation by this curriculum setting. From the second semester of Grade One to the first semester of Grade Three, the curriculum is mainly based on the spring entrance examination syllabus, and it

also includes social practice, which can meet the needs of most students for entrance examination. In the first semester of senior three, students can learn courses by themselves mainly according to their own will and learning situation. Students who choose to enter the university will take the bridging courses in the E1 class. This part of the course will lay a good foundation for students to study tourism management in colleges and universities. In this way, middle school and university courses are vertically integrated. Students who choose employment may choose to take E2 courses. They can improve their professional skills and prepare for employment by taking part in corporate internships in the second semester of the third year of high school.

5.3 Comparison of Curriculum Offerings between Comprehensive High Schools and Other Schools

By comparing the curriculum settings of comprehensive high schools, ordinary high schools and secondary vocational schools, the relationship between them will be found, and the following conclusions can be drawn.

1) In terms of the concept of curriculum design, the three types of schools aim to meet the development needs of modern society in China, pay attention to the all-round education of students in moral, intellectual and physical aspects, respect students' hobbies and encourage students' personality development on the basis of laying a foundation for students to achieve sustainable development in the future. Comprehensive high school and secondary vocational school courses provide students with life skills, vocational knowledge education. More attention has been paid to the cultivation of students' professional quality.

2) In terms of course content, all three types of schools offer basic courses, namely mathematics, Chinese, foreign languages, physical education and moral education. Comprehensive high school and ordinary high school in the first semester of grade one curriculum is basically the same. Before the division of subjects and stratification, both types of schools have offered career planning courses to guide students in choosing employment in the future. In the three years, the teaching contents of these two types of high schools mainly revolve around the entrance examination syllabus. Many contents and high proportion are the characteristics of practical courses in secondary vocational schools. Such schools pay more attention to the cultivation of students' vocational ability and the improvement of professional skills, so as to make full preparations for the employment of students in advance.

3) In terms of course difficulty, in order to meet students' learning needs of different majors and levels after entering university and lay a good foundation, ordinary high school students learn the most difficult content, especially mathematics, physics and other courses, which are highly logical, comprehensive and difficult. Comprehensive high schools and secondary vocational schools have similar difficulty requirements for mathematics, Chinese and foreign language courses. Comprehensive high school for the spring college entrance examination requires professional courses of higher difficulty requirements.

4) In terms of curriculum, the three types of schools are all three-year in length with 40 school weeks per year. Elective courses and school-based courses in general high schools and secondary vocational schools are maintained throughout the three years. Comprehensive high school does not have clear stipulation so it can be arranged by each school oneself. Most students in general high schools and comprehensive high schools continue to learn theoretical knowledge until the second semester of senior three. Students in secondary vocational schools practice courses throughout, especially in the third year of high school with enterprise practice and professional practice as the main, with less theoretical knowledge courses arranged.

6. Strategies and Suggestions for the Construction of General Vocational Integration

Curriculum

Comprehensive high school is the most ideal integration mode of general senior high school education and vocational education.^[9] However, comprehensive high schools in China are still in the pilot stage. The construction of general vocational integration curriculum needs constant perfection and improvement. On the macro level, the first step is to build a curriculum research network at all levels from the province to the school, constantly enrich the team of researchers, improve the construction of discipline teaching and research team, and change the phenomenon of “desertification” in comprehensive high school curriculum research.^[7] Secondly, the primary condition for the implementation of general vocational integration courses is the need for appropriate teaching materials. At present, there are no curriculum standards and textbooks for comprehensive high schools in China.^[8] The research of comprehensive high school textbooks should be supported by national policies, and the development and practice should be strengthened by research departments and schools. The third step is to strengthen the construction of comprehensive high school teachers, establish and improve the curriculum implementation management system and evaluation system. From the micro aspect, the following points need to be achieved: first, accurate positioning of the target of the course, clear the purpose of the course; second, the establishment of curriculum structure should be combined with reality, with strong hierarchy; third, update the course content in time to meet the needs of students in various aspects;^[10] fourth, a sound credit recognition system should be established to realize credit exchange among vocational qualification certificates, skill certificates and professional courses.

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