

# Research on the Path to Enhancing the Internationalization Ability of Vocational Education Teachers Under the Background of Hainan Free Trade Port Construction

Xiaoyan Li<sup>1</sup> & Shi Wang<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hainan Vocational University of Science and Technology, China

Correspondence: Xiaoyan Li, Hainan Vocational University of Science and Technology, Haikou, Hainan, China.  
E-mail:13648658808@163.com

Received: January 22, 2025; Accepted: February 25, 2025; Published: February 28, 2025

## Abstract

This study aims to explore the improvement path of vocational education teachers' internationalization ability under the background of Hainan Free Trade Port construction, in order to meet the demand for international talent cultivation in regional economic development. Using literature research method to sort out relevant theories and practical experiences at home and abroad, collecting data on the current status of internationalization ability of vocational education teachers in Hainan through questionnaire surveys and interviews, and using case analysis method to analyze typical cases to extract successful experiences. Research has found that vocational education teachers in Hainan currently have deficiencies in international perspectives, cross-cultural communication skills, and the ability to integrate international educational resources. To this end, it is proposed to strengthen international education and training, build international exchange and cooperation platforms, and improve teacher evaluation and incentive mechanisms. Through practical case verification, these paths can help enhance teachers' internationalization ability, thereby improving the quality of vocational education talent training, providing strong talent support for the construction of Hainan Free Trade Port, and also providing reference for the internationalization development of vocational education in other regions.

**Keywords:** Hainan Free Trade Port, vocational education teachers, internationalization capability, Upgrade Path

## 1. Introduction

In the current era of economic globalization facing headwinds and increasingly fierce international competition, China actively promotes all-round opening-up to the outside world. The construction of Hainan Free Trade Port, as a major national strategic deployment, carries the mission of exploring the development path of a free trade port with Chinese characteristics in the new era. Since the release of the Overall Plan for the Construction of Hainan Free Trade Port in 2020, a series of special policies have gradually been implemented, such as trade freedom and convenience, investment freedom and convenience, and cross-border capital flow freedom and convenience. This has attracted a large number of international enterprises to settle in, covering key areas such as tourism, modern service industry, high-tech industry, etc., promoting the transformation of Hainan's industrial structure towards high-end and internationalization. The upgrading and development of industries require a large number of high-quality technical and skilled talents with international perspectives, advanced technologies, and international rules. This poses unprecedented challenges to the quality and standards of talent cultivation in vocational education in Hainan. As a key factor in talent cultivation, the improvement of the internationalization ability of vocational education teachers is urgent.

In recent years, internationalization of vocational education has become an important trend in global education development. Vocational education institutions in various countries continuously innovate in curriculum systems, teaching methods, and teacher training through international cooperation and exchange. For example, Germany's "dual system" vocational education model has been widely recognized and borrowed globally, and many countries have introduced its advanced vocational education concepts and curriculum standards through cooperation with Germany to improve the quality of their own vocational education. At the same time, international organizations such as UNESCO and the World Bank are actively promoting the internationalization of vocational education, advocating for countries to strengthen international cooperation and exchanges in the field of vocational education. In this international context, in order for Hainan vocational education to occupy a place on the international stage, enhancing the internationalization ability of teachers is an inevitable choice. This will help Hainan vocational

education better integrate into the global vocational education system, learn and draw on international advanced experience, and improve its competitiveness.

At present, there are many shortcomings in the internationalization ability of vocational education teachers in Hainan. On the one hand, in terms of language proficiency, the majority of teachers' foreign language proficiency is insufficient to meet the needs of international teaching, making it difficult for them to smoothly use foreign languages for professional course teaching, and to engage in in-depth academic exchanges and cooperation with international peers. On the other hand, in terms of professional knowledge and skills, many teachers have limited understanding of international advanced industry standards, technical specifications, and professional qualification certification systems, making it difficult to integrate cutting-edge international knowledge and skills into curriculum content in their teaching. In addition, due to the lack of opportunities and platforms for international exchange and cooperation, teachers have a relatively narrow international perspective, weak cross-cultural education awareness and ability, and cannot effectively cultivate students' international competitiveness. These problems seriously constrain the development of vocational education in Hainan under the background of the construction of the free trade port, and it is urgent to enhance the internationalization ability of teachers through effective means to meet the needs of vocational education development in the new era. Therefore, it is of great practical significance and urgency to conduct in-depth research on the improvement path of vocational education teachers' internationalization ability under the construction of Hainan Free Trade Port.

## **2. The Demand for Internationalization Ability of Vocational Education Teachers in the Construction of Hainan Free Trade Port**

### *2.1 Talent Demand for Industrial Upgrading and International Cooperation*

With the promotion of the construction of Hainan Free Trade Port, the tourism industry, modern service industry, high-tech industry and other fields are flourishing, and many international enterprises have settled in, continuously upgrading the industrial structure. The demand for talent in these industries is not only reflected in professional skills, but also requires an international perspective and cross-cultural communication ability, which can adapt to the working environment and business needs of international enterprises. For example, in international tourism services, practitioners need to understand the cultural customs and tourism consumption habits of different countries and regions, and have fluent foreign language communication skills in order to provide high-quality services for international tourists. As leaders in talent cultivation, vocational education teachers must possess corresponding international capabilities in order to cultivate international talents that meet the needs of the industry.

### *2.2 Requirements for the Development Trend of Internationalization of Education*

Internationalization of education has become an important trend in global education development, and the construction of Hainan Free Trade Port has accelerated the implementation of this process in the local vocational education field. International educational exchanges and cooperation are becoming increasingly frequent, including the introduction of high-quality educational resources from abroad, the implementation of international cooperative education projects, and students' overseas internships and employment opportunities. This requires vocational education teachers to participate in the planning and implementation of international education projects, effectively communicate and cooperate with foreign educational institutions and teachers, master advanced international vocational education concepts and teaching methods, and integrate them into daily teaching. For example, in the construction of the curriculum system for international cooperative education, teachers need to draw on the curriculum standards and teaching models of similar majors abroad, and carry out localization transformation based on local conditions to ensure that the students trained have both international competitiveness and the ability to adapt to local industrial development needs.

## **3. Investigation on the Current Situation of Internationalization Ability of Vocational Education Teachers in Hainan**

### *3.1 Survey Design*

This study used a combination of questionnaire surveys and interviews to conduct a sampling survey of teachers from multiple vocational colleges in Hainan. The questionnaire covers basic information of teachers, international communication experience, foreign language proficiency, cross-cultural communication ability, international education resource integration ability, as well as their needs and suggestions for improving internationalization ability. The interviewees include management personnel, key teachers, and industry enterprise representatives from some vocational colleges, aiming to gain a deeper understanding of the performance of teachers' internationalization ability in practical education and school enterprise cooperation, as well as the existing problems and challenges.

### *2.1 Analysis of Survey Results*

#### 1) Relatively narrow international perspective

The survey results show that most teachers do not pay enough attention to the development trends and cutting-edge technologies of international vocational education, and have limited channels to obtain international education information. They mainly focus on domestic education websites and academic journals, and rarely actively follow the websites of well-known foreign educational institutions, industry associations, and international academic conference information. This leads to insufficient understanding of new concepts, models, and methods in international vocational education by teachers, making it difficult to integrate international elements into teaching and limiting the expansion of students' international perspectives.

#### 2) Cross cultural communication skills need to be improved

Although some teachers have a certain foundation in foreign languages, there are still communication barriers and cultural misunderstandings in actual cross-cultural communication scenarios, such as academic exchanges with foreign experts and teachers or participation in international cooperation projects. Teachers' abilities in cross-cultural communication etiquette, sensitivity to cultural differences, and multicultural integration teaching are relatively weak, which cannot effectively guide students to engage in cross-cultural communication and cooperation, affecting students' adaptability and competitiveness in the international environment.

#### 3) Insufficient ability to integrate international educational resources

Many teachers lack experience and ability in the development and utilization of international educational resources. The participation and operational ability of teachers are relatively low in terms of how to introduce high-quality foreign course resources, carry out substantive cooperation and exchange projects with foreign universities, organize students to participate in international skills competitions and overseas internships. This makes it difficult for schools to fully integrate international educational resources and enhance the internationalization level of talent cultivation in promoting the internationalization of education.

## **4. The Path to Enhancing the Internationalization Ability of Vocational Education Teachers under the Construction of Hainan Free Trade Port**

### *4.1 Strengthen International Education and Training*

#### 1) Conduct Training on International Educational Concepts and Methods

Regularly organize teachers to participate in training courses and seminars on international educational concepts, teaching methods, and curriculum design, invite foreign education experts and scholars to give lectures in Hainan, introduce advanced international vocational education models such as Germany's dual system and Australia's TAFE system, and explore how to apply these concepts and methods in teaching based on the industrial characteristics of Hainan Free Trade Port and the actual situation of vocational education. Through case analysis, group discussions, simulated teaching, and other forms, teachers can gain a deep understanding and mastery of internationally advanced teaching strategies such as project-based teaching and action oriented teaching, in order to improve the internationalization level of classroom teaching.

#### 2) Strengthen Foreign Language Proficiency and Cross-Cultural Communication Training

Enhance teachers' comprehensive foreign language application ability, offer specialized foreign language training courses, including business English, professional English, foreign language oral communication, etc., provide tiered teaching and personalized counseling based on teachers' foreign language proficiency, ensure that teachers can proficiently use foreign languages for academic exchange, course teaching, and international cooperation negotiations. At the same time, we will strengthen cross-cultural communication training by offering cross-cultural communication courses, organizing cultural experience activities, and conducting cross-cultural communication case analysis to enhance teachers' awareness, understanding, and adaptability to different cultures. This will enable them to effectively handle cultural differences in teaching and international communication, avoid cultural conflicts, and create a good cross-cultural communication atmosphere.

### *4.2 Building an International Exchange and Cooperation Platform*

#### 1) Promote Teachers' Overseas Exchanges and Study Visits

Actively establish friendly cooperative relationships with well-known vocational colleges and educational institutions abroad, select teachers to conduct short-term visits, further education, and training abroad, participate in research and practice of international education projects, and gain a deep understanding of the experience and practices in teaching management, curriculum design, and practical teaching models of foreign vocational

education. During overseas exchanges, teachers can establish connections with foreign peers, expand their international educational network resources, and lay the foundation for subsequent international cooperation projects. For example, a vocational college in Hainan has partnered with a vocational college in Australia to send a certain number of teachers to the school for a three-month study visit each year, to learn about its practical teaching system and international student training model in hotel management. After returning to China, the teachers have applied their experience to the teaching reform of the school and achieved good results.

## 2) Promote International Cooperation in Education and Project Exchange

Encourage vocational colleges to carry out international cooperation programs with foreign universities to jointly cultivate international talents. In the process of cooperative education, teachers can participate in various aspects such as project planning, curriculum development, teaching implementation, and student management. They can form teaching teams with foreign teachers to jointly teach and guide students, and enhance their internationalization ability through actual cooperative projects. In addition, actively organizing teachers to participate in international education exhibitions, academic conferences, international skills competitions and other activities, showcasing the school's educational and teaching achievements, understanding the latest development trends and industry dynamics of international vocational education, and conducting extensive exchanges and cooperation with international peers to broaden teachers' international perspectives and professional fields. For example, a vocational college in Hainan has partnered with a vocational college in Singapore to launch a Sino foreign cooperative education project in animation design. The teachers from both sides have jointly developed a curriculum system that integrates international advanced concepts and local cultural characteristics. Through online teaching, teacher exchange, and student exchange, high-quality educational resources have been shared and complemented, and teachers have continuously improved their international teaching ability and professional level during the project implementation process.

### 4.3 Improve Teacher Evaluation and Incentive Mechanisms

#### 1) Establish an Evaluation Index System for Internationalization Capability

Construct a scientific and reasonable evaluation index system for the internationalization ability of vocational education teachers, including their international perspective, cross-cultural communication ability, international education resource integration ability, and participation in international cooperation projects, and set corresponding quantitative and qualitative evaluation indicators. For example, in terms of international perspective, teachers' understanding of international vocational education dynamics, frequency and achievements of participating in international academic exchange activities can be examined; In terms of cross-cultural communication ability, it can be evaluated through teachers' foreign language proficiency test scores, teaching evaluations of cross-cultural communication courses, and performance in international communication activities; In terms of the ability to integrate international educational resources, it can measure the participation of teachers in international cooperative education projects, the quantity and quality of introducing foreign curriculum resources, and the effectiveness of organizing students to participate in international exchange activities. By establishing a clear evaluation index system, teachers can have a clear understanding of the direction and requirements for improving their internationalization abilities, providing guidance for their self-development.

#### 2) Implement Incentive Measures to Encourage Teachers' International Development

Establish a special reward fund for enhancing teachers' internationalization ability, and provide material rewards and spiritual recognition to teachers who have outstanding performance in international teaching, research, international exchange and cooperation, such as awarding honorary certificates, bonuses, priority promotion of professional titles, and providing more training and development opportunities. In terms of professional title evaluation, performance assessment, and excellence evaluation, we will increase the weight of teachers' internationalization ability and achievements, and regard teachers' participation in international exchange projects, publication of international academic papers, and obtaining international professional certifications as important evaluation indicators to motivate teachers to actively improve their internationalization ability and participate in international education cooperation and exchange activities. For example, a vocational college in Hainan stipulates that teachers who publish a paper in an international academic journal will receive corresponding bonus points in their professional title evaluation; Teachers who successfully introduce and implement an international cooperative education project will be given additional rewards in performance evaluation and given priority consideration in the evaluation of excellence. Through these incentive measures, the enthusiasm and initiative of teachers to enhance their internationalization abilities have been effectively mobilized.

## 5. Case Analysis

Taking a key vocational college in Hainan as an example, the school actively explores the path of improving the internationalization ability of vocational education teachers under the background of the construction of Hainan Free Trade Port, and has achieved significant results.

The school first strengthened the international education and training of teachers, and cooperated with well-known education and training institutions at home and abroad to carry out a series of training courses and workshops on international education concepts and methods, foreign language proficiency, and cross-cultural communication. Through these trainings, teachers' international education concepts have been updated, and their foreign language proficiency and cross-cultural communication skills have been significantly improved. For example, a teacher majoring in automotive maintenance applied project-based teaching methods to course teaching after completing international advanced vocational education training. They designed teaching cases based on real automotive maintenance projects, allowing students to master professional skills and teamwork abilities in practical operations. At the same time, they guided students to write project reports and technical documents in English, cultivating their foreign language application ability and international engineering thinking.

At the same time, the school actively builds an international exchange and cooperation platform, establishing friendly cooperative relationships with multiple vocational colleges in countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom, and Singapore, and carrying out projects such as teacher overseas exchange visits, international cooperative education, and student overseas internships. Every year, the school selects 10-15 backbone teachers to visit foreign cooperative colleges for a period of 3-6 months, to deeply learn advanced vocational education models and practical teaching experience abroad. After returning to China, these teachers actively participated in the school's teaching reform and international cooperation projects, introducing advanced foreign concepts and technologies into their teaching. For example, a teacher majoring in tourism management learned advanced experience in tourism service quality management and tourism cultural experience teaching from German vocational colleges during his study visit to Germany. After returning to China, he and his team of teachers jointly developed a tourism management curriculum system with an international perspective, introduced German tourism enterprise quality management standards and case teaching methods, and trained students who were highly praised by employers in international tourism service positions.

In addition, the school has also improved the teacher evaluation and incentive mechanism, established an international ability evaluation index system, and incorporated the improvement of teachers' international ability into their personal development plan and performance evaluation system. A special award fund for international development of teachers has been established to recognize and reward teachers who have made outstanding achievements in international teaching, research, international exchange and cooperation. Through these measures, the internal motivation of teachers to enhance their internationalization ability has been stimulated, and a good atmosphere for the international development of teachers has been formed.

With the efforts of the school, the internationalization ability of teachers has been significantly improved, providing strong support for the internationalization development of education in the school. The school's international cooperative education programs continue to expand, effectively cultivating students' international perspectives and cross-cultural communication abilities. Graduates' employment competitiveness in international enterprises and institutions in Hainan Free Trade Port has significantly increased, providing a large number of high-quality international technical and skilled talents for the construction of Hainan Free Trade Port.

## 6. Conclusion and Prospect

This study analyzes the demand for internationalization ability of vocational education teachers under the background of the construction of Hainan Free Trade Port, and uses survey research methods to reveal the current situation and existing problems of teachers' internationalization ability. It also proposes ways to enhance internationalization education and training, build international exchange and cooperation platforms, and improve teacher evaluation and incentive mechanisms. The effectiveness of these paths has been verified through practical cases, which can effectively enhance the internationalization ability of vocational education teachers, promote the internationalization development of vocational education in Hainan, and cultivate more international talents that meet the needs of industrial development for the construction of Hainan Free Trade Port. In the future development, Hainan vocational education should continue to increase its support for the improvement of teachers' internationalization ability, continuously optimize the improvement path and measures, strengthen international exchanges and cooperation, enhance the overall level and international influence of vocational education, provide solid talent guarantee and intellectual support for the construction of Hainan Free Trade Port, and also contribute Hainan's experience and wisdom to the internationalization development of vocational education in China.

**Fund Project:** Hainan Vocational University of Science and Technology Research Fund (Key Project No.: HKKY2024-ZD-22).

### References

- Du, Z. (2024). The realistic dilemma and implementation path of local internationalization of higher vocational education. *Journal of Wuhan Metallurgical Management Cadre College*, 34(04), 78-82.
- Fan, Q. (2023). Research on institutional confidence education for college students in Hainan under the background of free trade port [Doctoral dissertation, Guizhou Normal University].
- Geng, Z., Shi, G., & Han, N. (2024). Research on the path of enhancing the ability of teachers in vocational colleges in the new era. *Mechanical Vocational Education*, (07), 20-23.
- Qi, Z., & Wu, S. (2024). Building a strong vocational education country: Connotation, multiple logic, and promotion path. *Journal of Southwest University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 50(01), 165-176.
- Sun, L. (2024). The enlightenment of Germany's "dual system" on the development of our school's education. *Knowledge Library*, 40(24), 164-167.
- Yin, Y. (2025). Exploring the high-quality development of the "dual teacher" teacher team in vocational education under the background of an education strong country. *Vocational and Technical Education*, 46(01), 57-63.

### Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).