

China
Xinjiang Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project
Social Analysis Report
(Abstract)

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1. Brief Introduction

As it was pointed out in the “Second Meeting by the Central Government on Work in Xinjiang” on May 28-29, 2014, “Employment First” shall be adhered to for enhancing the employment capacity and guiding the people of all ethnic groups to go to cities for orderly employment, local employment and employment of proximity, or returning home for entrepreneurship. Employment, in particular the employment of minority youth, is the long-standing key factor affecting economic and social development as well as long period of stability in Xinjiang. Among them, vocational education is one important path to enhance the employment capacity. The development of vocational education in Xinjiang not only requires the efforts of the ethnic groups in Xinjiang, and the assistance from the central government and other provinces and cities, but also needs to mobilize all the other forces which can be mobilized to achieve this goal. This is the important background of the "Xinjiang Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project Funded by World Bank Loan" (Xinjiang TVET project) .

The project aims at improving the overall quality of vocational education through a series of reform, and promoting the balanced development of Xinjiang vocational education through autonomous-level policy openness and project management etc. The unit in charge of the project is the Education Department of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, and the implementation units are Xinjiang Engineering College, Xinjiang Agricultural Vocational & Technical College, Xinjiang Vocational & Technical College of Light Industry, College of Xinjiang Uyghur Medicine and Urumqi Vocational University. The project includes five components, i.e. strengthen Linkage between School and Industry, update curriculum, building up high quality teams, improve external support to other schools and local communities and upgrade facilities and equipment. The Project will be implemented in five years between 2015 and 2020, and the total investment is CNY636.625million yuan. The loan from the World Bank is US\$50 million, accounting for 48.69% of total project investment, and the domestic counterpart fund is CNY326.625 million yuan, accounting for 51.31% of total project investment.

This report is the social analysis report for the Project, which include following sections, project background; the major affected groups; social analysis activities; views of key stakeholders; the issues raised in the survey; and suggestions and conclusions.

2. Project Background

Although Xinjiang has made great progress in training of highly-skilled labors, there is still a considerable gap compared with the national average level. In 2009, the average of highly-skilled

labors in the nation is 24.7% compared with only 18.9% in Xinjiang, and the difference is 5.8%. According to the national and Xinjiang's "*Personnel Development Planning Program (2010-2020)*", the national proportion of highly-skilled labors will reach 27% in 2015 while Xinjiang's target will be 22% with the difference being 5%. However, by 2020, the national proportion is planned to be 28%, and target for Xinjiang is also set to 28%. It will be a long way for Xinjiang vocational education to make up the gap of 5-6% in a short period of time and realize synchronous development with the national vocational education. Xinjiang is in a phase of accelerated industrialization and urbanization, requiring a large number of highly-skilled labors. But the current level of vocational education in Xinjiang could not meet this demand.

In 2000, the figure of full-time students in the ordinary colleges and universities of Xinjiang was 74,063, and by 2012, it increased to 284,172, an increase of 3.8 times (data source: *Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook 2000-2013*). In 2013, there were 19 higher vocational schools in Xinjiang with enrollment of 31,444 students, 6.8% higher than the previous year; 26,566 graduates, 18.6% higher than the previous year; and 89,043 full-time students, 4.00% higher than the previous year. This shows a rapid growth in the number of students in Xinjiang's higher vocational education, and also reflects the importance attached by the government to vocational education and training of highly-skilled workers.

Along with such change, the number and proportion of minority students also grew rapidly among student community. In 2000, the number of minority students in Xinjiang ordinary colleges and universities was 31,989. By 2012, the number had reached to 106,893 with an increase of 3.3 times. The proportion of minority students in the total students had also increased from 43.19% in 2000 to 58% in 2012. However, between 2000 and 2010, the proportion of full-time minority students had decreased from 43.19% to 35.89%, a decrease of 7.3%. Such change indicated that although the number of the minority students had increased during those ten years, the growth rate was significantly lower than the growth rate of total student population. This trend changed in 2012, and the proportion of minority students increases to 58% the total full-time students of ordinary colleges and universities (data source: *Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook 2000-2013*), which shows a rapid growth in both size and proportion of minority students in recent years. The survey of 5 project schools also confirmed that both size and proportion of minority students are on the trend of further increase in future.

The number of teachers in the ordinary colleges and universities of Xinjiang has also increased visibly since 2000. There were 7924 teachers in 2000, and 17570 in 2012, an increase of 2.2 times. In comparison, the growth rate of teacher population was significantly lower than that of student population. In 2012, there are 8202 faculty members in Xinjiang vocational schools, including 5536

full-time teachers, and the proportion is 67.4% (data source: *Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook 2013*). In general, there is a relatively stable team of teachers for the higher vocational education in Xinjiang while some prominent problems exist in the structure. First, the proportion of ethnic minority teachers is low. Except for colleges with strong professional and prominent nationality features like the College of Xinjiang Uyghur Medicine, the proportion of ethnic minority teachers in most colleges is less than 30%. Secondly, the proportion of bilingual teachers is low, and in most colleges the proportion is less than 30%. In addition, the proportion of the teachers having both teachers' qualification and professional qualification is also low too, and there is no unified standard for that.

As a result, Xinjiang higher vocational education has seen visible improvement in school conditions, which is reflected in per student housing area and administration and teaching purpose, teaching and scientific research equipment as well as book collection etc. Higher vocational colleges have also established training and practice bases, and created good conditions for practice and employment of students through school-enterprise cooperation. However, in spite of such improvement, many vocational colleges are still facing with insufficient teaching facilities, inadequate practice and training bases, and obsolete and incomplete books and reference materials, which are becoming the main obstacle to improve the students' professional skills, and restrict the development of higher vocational education in Xinjiang. The most obvious is that the minority students face serious shortage of software and hardware conditions in Chinese learning, including language lab, multimedia classroom and books, audio and video data as well.

3. Major Affected Groups

Among five project schools, there are 2519 faculty members, including 775 minority teachers, which account for 30.7% of the total teachers. Specifically, there are 190 minority teachers or 80.5% of the total teachers in College of Xinjiang Uyghur Medicine (236). For other four schools, the proportion of ethnic minority teachers ranges from 23.5% in Xinjiang Engineering College to 30.4% in Urumqi Vocational University. In those 5 schools, there are 105 full-time Chinese teachers, accounting for 4.1% of the total number of teachers. Xinjiang Agricultural Vocational & Technical College sees the least number, which is only 8, accounting for 1.9% of the total number of teachers. Xinjiang Engineering College sees the largest number, which is 36, accounting for 6.3% of the total number of teachers. It is clear that there are insufficient number of the full-time Chinese teachers among five project schools, which makes it difficult to meet the demand of preparatory Chinese language teaching in those schools. At present, project schools try to solve this problem by engaging some external teachers to solve this problem, ranging from 20 to 30 in each school.

There are a total of 56,708 students in 5 project schools, including 24,670 minority students or

44% of the total number of students 43.4%. College of Xinjiang Uyghur Medicine sees the highest proportion of minority students (3237), which is 97.5% of the total number of students. Xinjiang Vocational College of Light Industry Technology sees the lowest proportion of minority students (4235), which is 29% of the total number of students. The number of minority students in those schools has increased by 1.5 to 2.2 times since 2010. In descending order, they are Xinjiang Agricultural Vocational & Technical College, Xinjiang Engineering College, College of Xinjiang Uyghur Medicine, Urumqi Vocational University and Xinjiang Vocational College of Light Industry Technology.

In addition, among minority students, the poverty ratio is significantly higher than the average, ranging from 45% to 90%. Those students are mainly from four prefectures in southern Xinjiang (Hotan, Kashgar, and Akesu Cities as well as Kizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture) and the pasturing area in northern Xinjiang (Altay, Tacheng, and Yili Cities). Those cities or prefectures are also the areas where the state-level poverty counties concentrated in Xinjiang; and 25 out of 27 state-level poverty counties in Xinjiang Region are located in these areas. The proportion is as high as 92.5%. Besides Xinjiang Vocational College of Light Industry Technology, the employment rates of minority students in the other four schools are mostly about 80%, which is 10-15% lower than the average level of those schools. The employment rate of minority students in Xinjiang Vocational College of Light Industry Technology is only 38.5%.

Among those five schools, 4701 freshmen of ethnic minorities, about 70% of total freshmen of ethnic minorities, are required to receive Chinese preparatory education due to limited language capacity. According to the future development trend, the preparatory education will continue in the short term, and the students receiving preparatory education may also further increase. There are two reasons: on the one hand, the size and the proportion of minority students are on the increase, and the number of minority students who use their native language for entrance examinations increase quickly in some schools; on the other hand, the level of Chinese for many bilingual students is low at enrollment and they also need to receive the preparatory Chinese language education. As mentioned before, all project schools are short of teachers in teaching preparatory Chinese language (including both full-time and externally-engaged teachers). The ratio of teachers to students is quite low, mostly between 1:25 - 1:30, which is not conducive for minority students for Chinese learning, and the annual passing rate of minority preparatory college students is only 25-30% in MHK test; moreover, those students are generally poor in Chinese listening, speaking, reading and writing.

4. Social Analysis Activities

The survey team consists of 20 persons (excluding the students), including 7 minority

researchers and 5 female researchers. In the survey, the investigation methods such as questionnaire, interview and meeting are used.

Questionnaire: total 2131 questionnaires were sent out and 2131 recovered, the effective rate is 100%. The questionnaires for teachers are 400 copies, including 135 questionnaires for the minority teachers, accounting for 33.75% of the total. The questionnaires for students are 1731 copies, including 688 questionnaires for the minority students, accounting for 39.7%. The number of questionnaire copies for minority teachers and students basically reflects the ratio of minorities to Han people in the teachers and students of those project implementation units.

Meetings and interviews: totally 33 meetings were held in five schools, with 4 to 5 meetings planned per school, including 1 meeting on teaching and scientific research, 1 meeting on grassroots students work, 1 meeting of students, and 1 to 2 meetings on school-enterprise cooperation respectively. Total 292 students and teachers participated in the meetings, including 117 ethnic minorities, i.e. 40% of the total number. Total 96 female students and teachers participated in the meetings, accounting for 32.8% of the total participants. Total 66 persons were interviewed, including 51 minority students and teachers, accounting for 77.2% of the total interviews. Total 29 female students and teachers were interviewed, accounting for 43.9% of the number of interviews.

The discussion and interview transcripts of 270 thousand words have been prepared, in addition to 375 copies of electronic documents and 60 copies of paper documents. We have communicated with the project implementation units for supplementing any missing or ambiguous information in sorting out the data and preparing the report.

5. Attitude of Project Stakeholders

We did a survey on the attitude of teachers and students to the project. Only 2% of the teachers expressed public opposition to the project while no students did so. Only 1% of teachers said they did not care about the project while 11% of students did so. 97% of teachers and 89% of student express their welcome to the project funded by World Bank loan, which shows that the World Bank-funded project in general is recognized and supported by most teachers and students. We also made a survey on the channels through which the teachers and students collecting the information about the World Bank-funded project. The main channels for teachers include the documents issued by the school, the notification from the leadership and the colleagues, which account for 85%. The students were informed of the project mainly by the teachers, classmates, leadership and network, which account for 88%. This shows that those schools succeed to some extent in the publicity of the project funded by the World Bank loan, and most of the teachers and students have obtained the relevant information, which ensure the right to learn the truth of students and teachers.

The project may also bring some negative impact on the teachers and students, including the

impact of project investment (including the school-raised funds and repayment of the interest of the World Bank loan) on the faculty income, the impact of infrastructure works on the life, work and learning (e.g., dust and noise pollution, travel inconvenience and so on), the school's debt risk and the lack of respect of the foreign construction personnel to the living habits of local ethnic minorities. The teachers and students expressed their understanding to those potential negative impacts, but hoped to create a mechanism of public participation including all the students and teachers, and avoid these problems in the project construction as far as possible.

6. Problems Found Out in Survey

We carried out in-depth investigation in 5 project schools in accordance with project design and terms of reference, and found some universal problems. These problems will have an impact on whether the students and teachers could be benefited from the project or the degree of benefits, which will also have an impact on the project's economic and social benefits.

For the student group, those problems are mainly reflected in two aspects, one is the quality of Chinese language learning for preparatory students, and the other is the internship and employment of students.

Chinese language learning problem of preparatory students: the preparatory students are usually poor in language level, which not only has a negative impact on their passing rate of MHK examination, but also seriously affect their professional knowledge learning and employment. They are reflected specifically in the following aspects: 1) there is wide disparity in terms of language capacity among minority students, but existing mode of teaching does not reflect the principle of "teaching students in accordance with their aptitude"; 2) serious shortage of Chinese-language teachers, which leads to too large class size and low ratio of teachers to students, and the teaching effect is not ideal; 3) very poor language learning conditions (such as lack of language lab and multimedia classroom) and a serious shortage of teaching equipment, obsolete Chinese teaching material, teaching methods and ideas; 4) the environment for minority students in Chinese learning environment needs to be improved, and "mute Chinese" problem is serious; 5) the interlink between preparatory Chinese language learning and professional Chinese learning is not smooth.

Student internship and employment problems: some internship, training and employment problems also exist in the student community generally, and some of them are especially prominent among the minority students, which is reflected in the following aspects: 1) students training and internship is not standard yet, and it is common that "the content of the internship is not in the field of their major"; 2) lack of training and practice bases, experimental or training equipment is inadequate and obsolete, which fails to meet the demand of professional development and training needs, and is not conducive to improve students' professional skill; 3) the school-enterprise

cooperation create conditions and employment for students, but the enterprises are not very enthusiastic to receive students as intern; 4) The internship and employment of minority students is of difficulty, and their environment of internship and employment is not ideal; 5) the employment guidance courses are not well-targeted, particularly in the areas of guiding the minority students to establish a correct concept of employment.

In addition, the students also raised three other questions worthy of attention. 1) The structure of curriculum types is not very reasonable and the cultivation of students' comprehensive quality needs to be strengthened; 2) teaching materials and teaching methods are obsolete and fail to conform to the regional characteristics in Xinjiang; 3) the linkup between the adjustment in major and curriculum and the demands from the enterprises and market is not close enough.

The problems raised by the teachers mainly are concentrated in two aspects: one is the teachers' development opportunities, and the other is the faculty structure and school management.

The problem of teacher development opportunities: the development opportunities of the teachers include studying for a degree, training, visiting and so on, and the existing problems are: 1) there is equal opportunity of training, further study or studying for a degree for all teachers, but the minority teachers and female teachers are tend to be encumbered due to personal concerns; 2) for the teaching-supporting staff and basic-education teachers, their development space is limited and growth potential is non-smooth; 3) many problems exist in the transformation from "theory-type personnel to practical-type personnel" and from "practical-type personnel to theory-type personnel", which are not conducive to the team building of the teachers having both teachers' qualification and professional qualification.

The problem of faculty structure and school management: the main problem existing in faculty structure is a low proportion of minority teachers and bilingual teachers, which is not conducive to the management and cultivation of minority students, and fails to match the growth trend of minority students' size. The problems existing in school management are mainly embodied in three aspects: 1) lack of selection, appointment, evaluation and assessment mechanism for the teachers having both teachers' qualification and professional qualification; 2) the incentive mechanism for teachers participating in and promoting school-enterprise cooperation is not clear; 3) the management of externally-engaged part-time teachers is not standard, and it is difficult to implement the existing regulations. Since many external teachers are Chinese language teachers, such a problem will have a significant adverse impact on Chinese language learning effect of the minority students.

It is the bounden duty of vocational education to serve local society, which is also the aspect that the World Bank funded project hopes to improve. In this regard, the problems exist in those 5

project schools include weak initiative, lack of smooth communication and systematic planning. The programs of those schools serving the society lack of close cooperation with the economic and social development of Xinjiang, especially with the modernization construction of the agricultural and pastoral areas in southern and northern Xinjiang.

7. Proposed Measures

Centered on those five subprojects under the "Xinjiang TVET project", we found many problems worthy of attentions. We suggest that the PMO and the project schools should pay attention to these problems, listen to the teachers and students, and establish an effective mechanism for consultation and public participation. These problems, the "*Social Impact Assessment Report*" proposed a series of corresponding measures. At the same time, feedback on these suggestions were collected from PMO and project schools based on discussions with affected students and teachers, and listen to their views on these measures through interviews and network communication. On such basis, changes were made on the proposed measures in order to ensure they are in line with the actual conditions of project schools, and accepted by teachers and students there. In fact, these recommendations have been incorporated into the project design, and some of them have been arranged in the project activity.

Some problems found in the survey are mainly related to the minority students and teachers, which may have adverse impact on the potential benefits to be shared by minority students and teachers from the Project. In order to ensure equal benefits to be shared by minority students and teachers from the Project, it was recommended that an Ethnic Minority Development Plan (EMDP) should be prepared based on the current situation in Xinjiang, and special problems the minority students and teachers are facing. Following the requirements of the World Bank, EMDP should cover the improvement of minority students' education quality (especially the preparatory language education quality), increase of minority students' employment rate, and improvement of the minority teachers' development mechanism and so on. The "*Social Impact Assessment Report*" also proposed to engage a consulting unit to conduct social monitoring during the implementation of EMDP to ensure the full implementation of the Plan. Those recommendations have been taken seriously by the PMO and five project schools, and an EMDP has been prepared by each project school.

8. Conclusions

In summary, the Project positive benefits with limited potential negative effect. For the potential negative impacts, such as construction disturbance efforts will be made to avoid or minimized. For those impacts could not be avoided, mitigation measures will be taken to address such impacts. The positive benefits include both direct and indirect benefits. The direct positive

benefits mainly reflect on the improvement of education quality and school condition for both teachers and students in five project schools. The indirect benefits refers to the development of Xinjiang vocational education and its role in promoting the development of economy and society in Xinjiang.

Concerning the project schools, the World Bank-funded project provides a new opportunity for understanding the existing problems in the development of those schools, exploring a way of vocational education in line with Xinjiang's economic and social development needs in order to eventually realize the scientific development of the schools. Under the Project, the teachers may reach better teaching and living conditions and environment, and more opportunities for realizing self-development through further study, training, visiting and studying for a degree, and having better conditions to enhance their ability of teaching and scientific research, in addition to have more opportunities to participate in school-enterprise cooperation and become a teacher having both teachers' qualification and professional qualification. The students can have better learning conditions, enjoy the achievement of teaching and curriculum reform, and receive service provided by a teaching team and management team of higher level. It is especially important that the students can receive more professional and comprehensive training through the development of the school and teachers, and in this way, the students will learn more professional skills in line with the demand of the society and the enterprises, obtain more stable and higher-quality employment opportunities.

The World Bank-funded project will also help Xinjiang vocational education to adjust and innovate in the system, policies, mechanisms and concepts, establish a modern vocational education system which adapts to Xinjiang regional and social background, especially to the requirements of economic and social development in Xinjiang. This will also effectively enhance the basis and conditions of Xinjiang in highly-skilled personnel training, improving the training size and quality of highly-skilled personnel, and creating conditions for labor force transfer in Xinjiang agricultural and pastoral areas, and for the improvement of knowledge level and technical ability of the population there. In fact, the Project creates conditions also for the population of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang to increase their economic income (especially the population of ethnic minorities), which is conducive to narrowing the gap in the economic and social development between different ethnic groups. In the context of accelerating industrialization, urbanization and modernization of agriculture and animal husbandry in Xinjiang, the development of vocational education will effectively promote the transformation of the production and life style, social structure and cultural values of the ethnic groups, and promote the development of minority community to achieve common development and prosperity of all ethnic groups.