

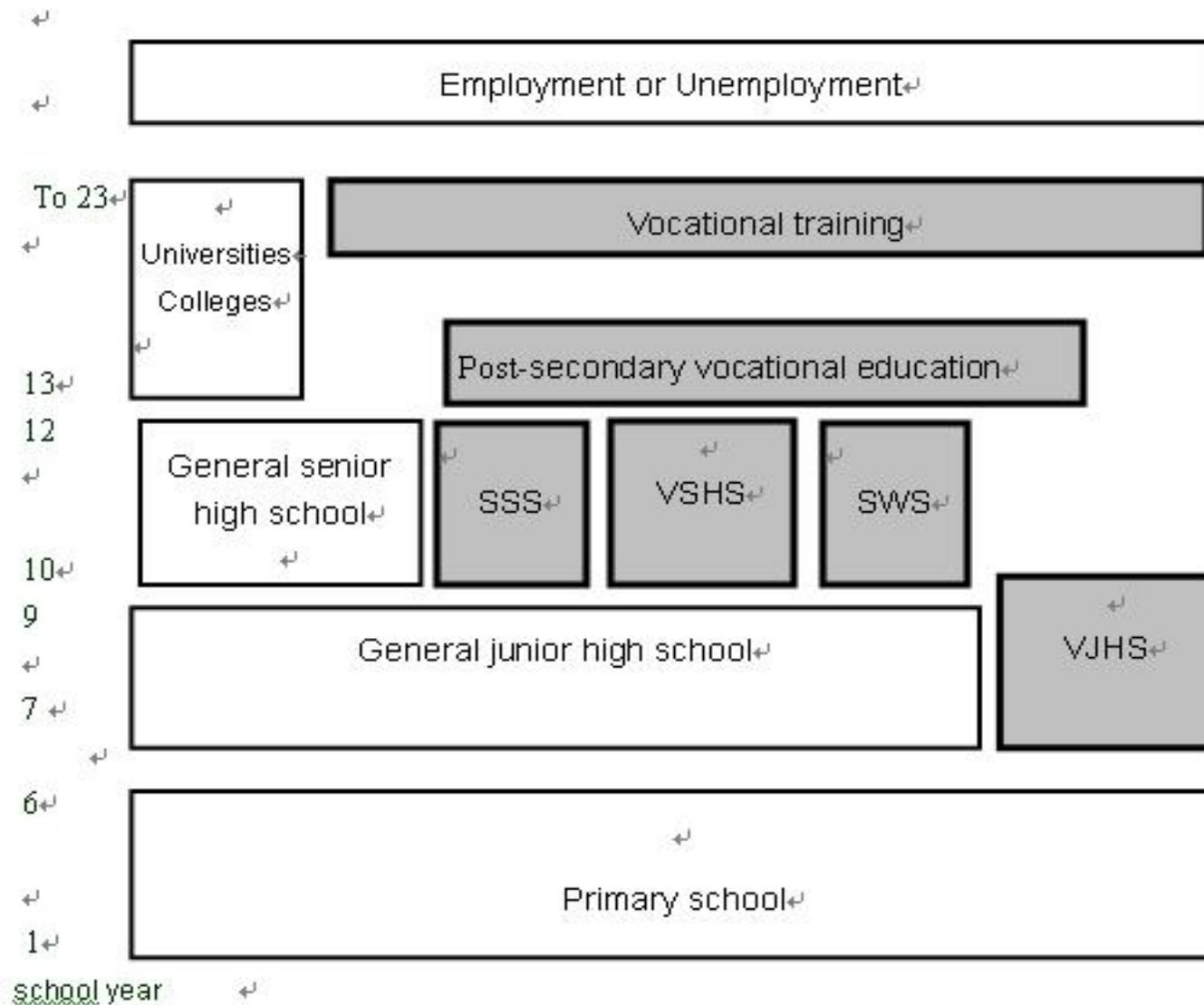


# **Issues and Problems in Current Development of TVET in China**

**Prof. Dr. Weiping SHI**

**Institute of Vocational and Adult Education  
East China Normal University, Shanghai, China  
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# TVET System in China





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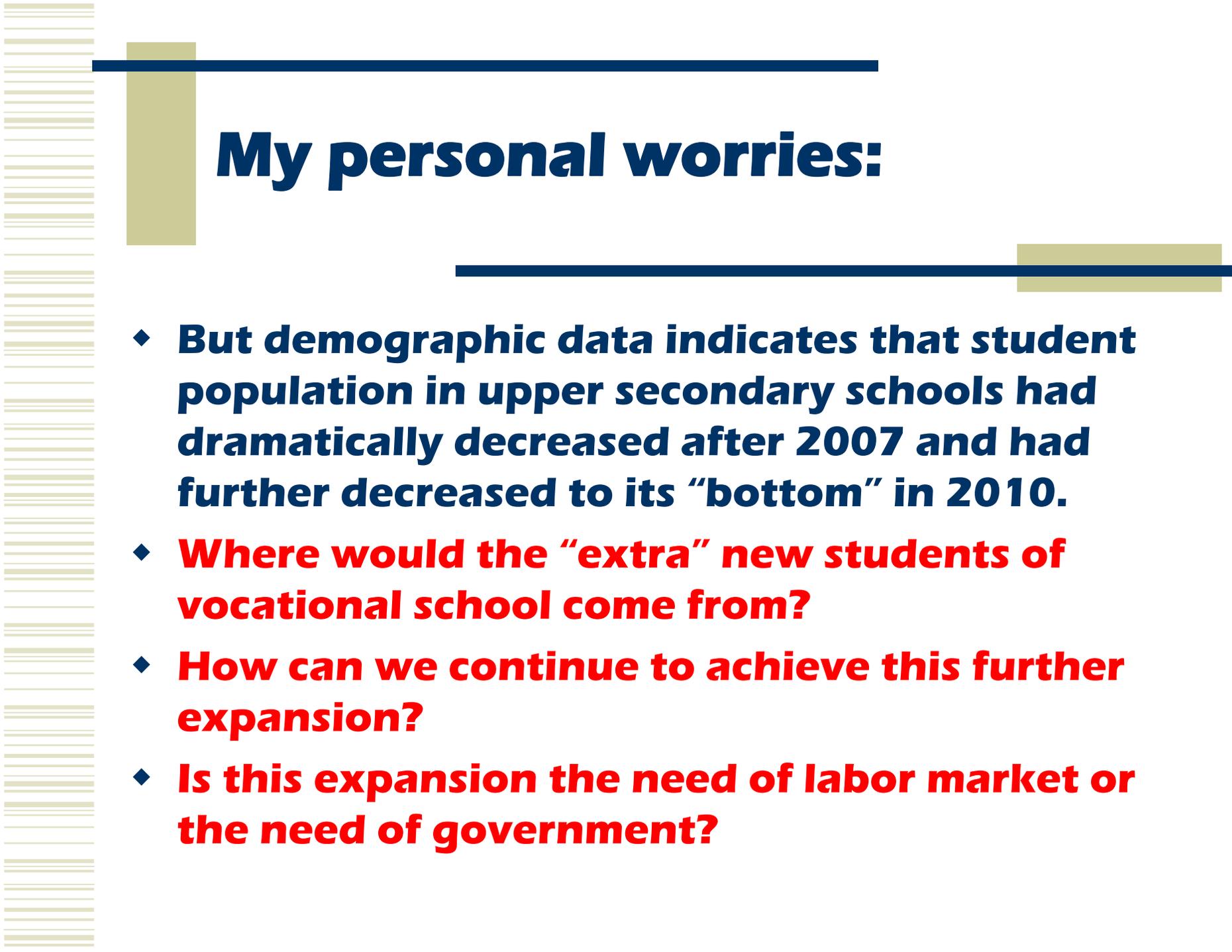
# **I. Great Expansion of Secondary Vocational Education versus Shortage of New Student Resources**

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- ◆ **3 strategic priorities in national education development in China**
  - ◆ **To stabilize basic education**
  - ◆ **To improve higher education**
  - ◆ **To further develop vocational education**
- — **By the means of increasing the size of secondary education to achieve the balanced development of vocational education against general education**

# Great Expansion of Secondary Vocational Education Since 2005

◆ Year	New Enrol.	Increased No.
◆ 2005	6,556,600	+894,600
SGE	8,777,300	+562,200
◆ 2006	7,478,000	+921,600
SGE	8,712,100	- 65,000
◆ 2007	8,100,200	+622,000
SGE	8,401,600	- 310,500
◆ 2008	8,121,100	+20,900
◆ SGE	8,370,100	- 31,500
◆ 2009	8,736,100	+615,000
◆ SGE	8,303,300	- 66,800



## **My personal worries:**

- ◆ **But demographic data indicates that student population in upper secondary schools had dramatically decreased after 2007 and had further decreased to its “bottom” in 2010.**
- ◆ **Where would the “extra” new students of vocational school come from?**
- ◆ **How can we continue to achieve this further expansion?**
- ◆ **Is this expansion the need of labor market or the need of government?**



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## **II. Balanced Development of Secondary Vocational Education Against General Education Versus the Freedom of Parental Choice of School**

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- ◆ **The real intention of Government for great expansion of secondary vocational education is to have half of the upper secondary school age group choose vocational education, so as to achieve the balanced development of vocational education against general education.**
- ◆ **But the most parents in China are not ready to follow, especially so when they have other choices for their children.**

# Social Psychology of Chinese Parents

- ◆ Most parents in China, especially those in economically developed regions, wish their children go to college after they graduate from high school. They should at least go to vocational college if they could not go to the university.
- ◆ Even the parents whose children are not doing well in their academic study, usually do not have the intention to let their children enter the labor market at the age of 18.
- ◆ Further more, vocational colleges are now so easy to enter after more than 10-year fast development of mass higher education, which re-enforce this parental choice for their children.
- ◆ **Thus, “employment-oriented” vocational school becomes the “last choice” of these parents.**



## **My personal opinion:**

- ◆ **When we want to expand the size of vocational education, we should check**
- ◆ **the change in national demographic chart**
- ◆ **the change of national industrial structure**
- ◆ **the real needs in labor market**
- ◆ **the parental choice of school for their children**
- ◆ **the needs of career development for students**
- ◆ **It is not a one-side decision!**

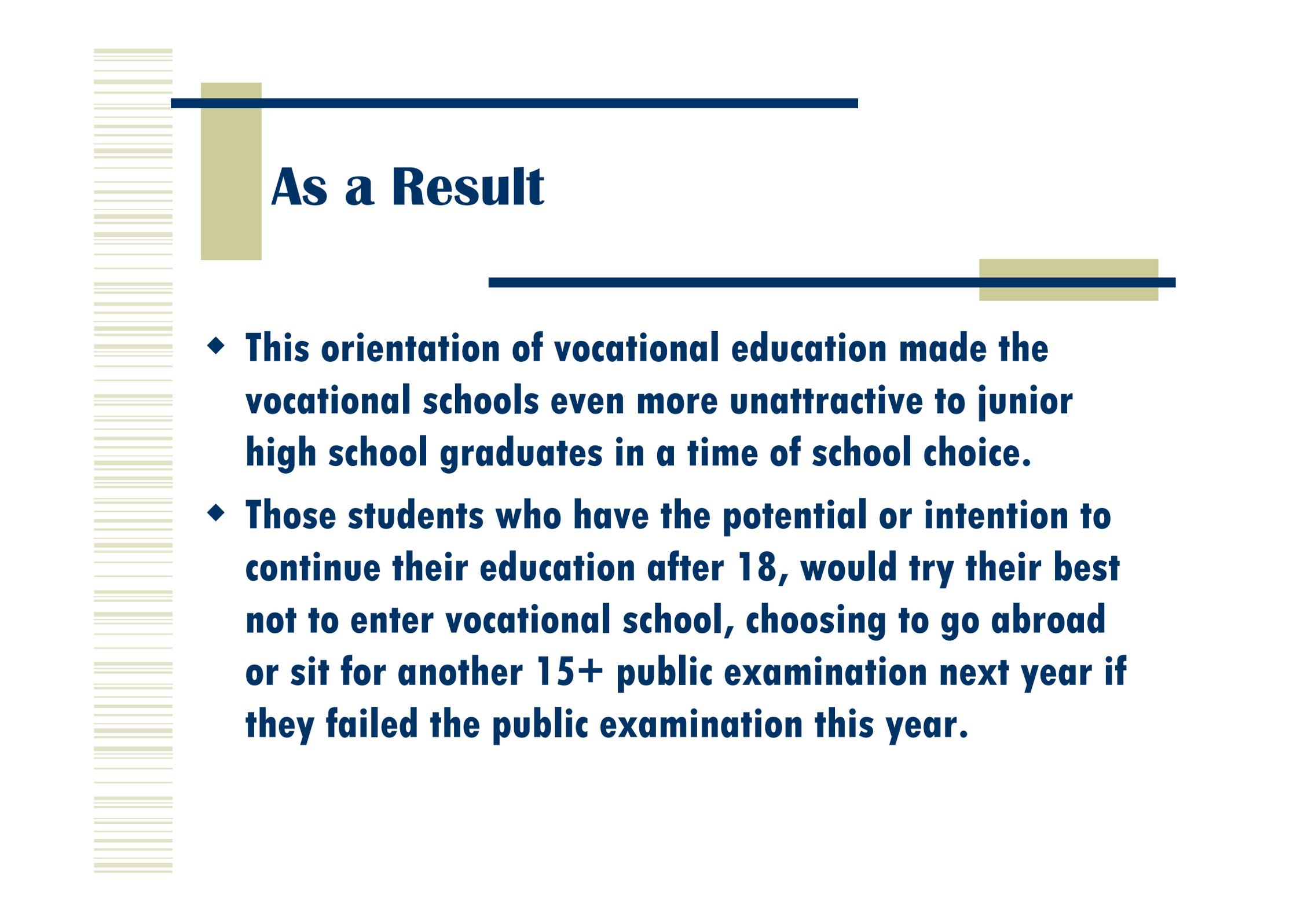


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### **III. Government's "Employment-Oriented" Training Versus Vocational School Students' "Needs for Further Education"**

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- ◆ **Government thinks that vocational education is employment education and training.**
- ◆ **Government demands that vocational schools should be "employment-oriented" to well prepare their students for the labor market.**



## **As a Result**

- ◆ **This orientation of vocational education made the vocational schools even more unattractive to junior high school graduates in a time of school choice.**
- ◆ **Those students who have the potential or intention to continue their education after 18, would try their best not to enter vocational school, choosing to go abroad or sit for another 15+ public examination next year if they failed the public examination this year.**



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## **My personal comments:**

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- ◆ **“Vocational education” is not all about “employment education”.**
- ◆ **Vocational schools should be multi-functional.**
- ◆ **Vocational school should be employment-oriented, but it is equally right for vocational school to prepare their students for vocational colleges if they wish to and up to.**

## **IV. To Strengthen the Literacy and Numeracy in Vocational School Versus Students' Poor Foundation of Learning**

- ◆ **New tendency in vocational school curriculum reform:**
- ◆ **To strengthen the literacy and numeracy in vocational schools,**
  - for the better development of students' career**
  - For the better foundation of further vocational learning**
- ◆ **To add the course time, to have unified testing, to increase the degree of difficulty in learning contents.**

## **Naked facts and truth:**

- ◆ **Mathematics, foreign language, Chinese language are rated as most hated 3 subjects of learning in vocational school by majority of students.**
- ◆ **Only the low achieving students in these subject would go to the vocational school. So these are the subjects they least want to learn in vocational school.**
- ◆ **These subjects always remind them of their bitter past in 9-year compulsory education, which made them feel humble in class.**
- ◆ **If the way of re-enforcement of literacy and numeracy is not proper, this could only result in more and more students in vocational school tired of learning.**

# My personal view:

- ◆ **More important in vocational curriculum reform is to change the contents of learning and the way of teaching.**
- ◆ **Let students feel the contents are interesting to learn, the process of learning is enjoyable, and learning can be paid with good results.**
- ◆ **Thus, literacy and numeracy should be taught with job skills and life skills or in relevant with the world of work and the world of life.**
- ◆ **To change teachers' view of teaching, behavior of teaching and way of teaching are crucial in this curriculum reform.**

## V. Government Plan to Strengthen the Practical Skill Training Versus Poor Foundation for its Implementation in Vocational Schools

- ◆ **Employment-oriented vocational education needs to strengthen the practical skill training**
- ◆ **To strengthen the practical skill training, we need skill training facilities and “skilled” skill trainers**
- ◆ **Government have already invested huge mount of money in the construction of vocational school practical training facilities and the in-service training for vocational school teachers.**
- ◆ **But it's still not sufficient!**



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## **Now it is still common to see in vocational schools:**

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- ◆ **Teachers who teach job skills are lack of the working experience themselves**
- ◆ **Practical skill training facility in vocational school is not sufficient to achieve its purpose, which is especially so after the great expansion of vocational school education**
- ◆ **School learning is not well integrated with workplace learning, for the industries are not very much supportive in this integration.**

# My personal view:

- ◆ Chinese TVET system is school-based, which will not be changed in certain period of time. In this system,
- ◆ no matter how “modern” is the learning content, it is no easy for vocational school to keep up with the knowledge and skill change in workplace
- ◆ no matter how “skilled” are vocational school teachers, it is difficult for them to keep up with the new development in workplace
- ◆ no matter how “advanced” are the training facilities in vocational school, it would soon be out-of-date.
- ◆ **These are the “born weakness” within the system! The only way to solve the problem is to develop partnership with the industry and trade. Modern apprenticeship or “dual system” might be a good solution!**

## **VI. “Key Vocational Schools/Colleges” Versus “Model Vocational Schools/Colleges”**

- ◆ **In past 3 years, more than 100 “Model Vocational Colleges” have been selected and another 1000 more “Model Vocational Schools” will be added in 3 years, with huge funding from the central and regional government for their construction.**
- ◆ **It is now quite confusion in the conceptualizing “model vocational school/college”**
- ◆ **Government want to have 100 “first class” vocational colleges and 1000 “first class” vocational schools in China after their construction, with better teaching staff and better learning facilities compared with other vocational schools/colleges.**

# My personal view:

- ◆ Obviously, this innovation is to “produce” special first-class “key” vocational schools/colleges rather than “model vocational schools/colleges”.
- ◆ We all know that **once it becomes special, it would lose the value as role model for others.**
- ◆ So “model vocational schools/colleges” should not be **special**, they should be a “model” in successfully solving the **common** issues and problems in current development and reform in most of vocational schools/colleges in China.

## **VII. “Formal” Versus “Informal” in Vocational School Education**

- ◆ **There is a strong market demand of development for informal vocational training in current China**
  - 1. vocational training for unemployed workers**
  - 2. employment training for “NEET” group in local community**
  - 3. skill training for huge mount of migrant workers from rural areas**
  - 4. upgrading skill training for company staff.**

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- ◆ **Chinese government has now made great effects to “push” informal training in vocational schools and colleges.**
  - ◆ **To encourage the vocational schools and colleges to provide informal training for adult learners.**

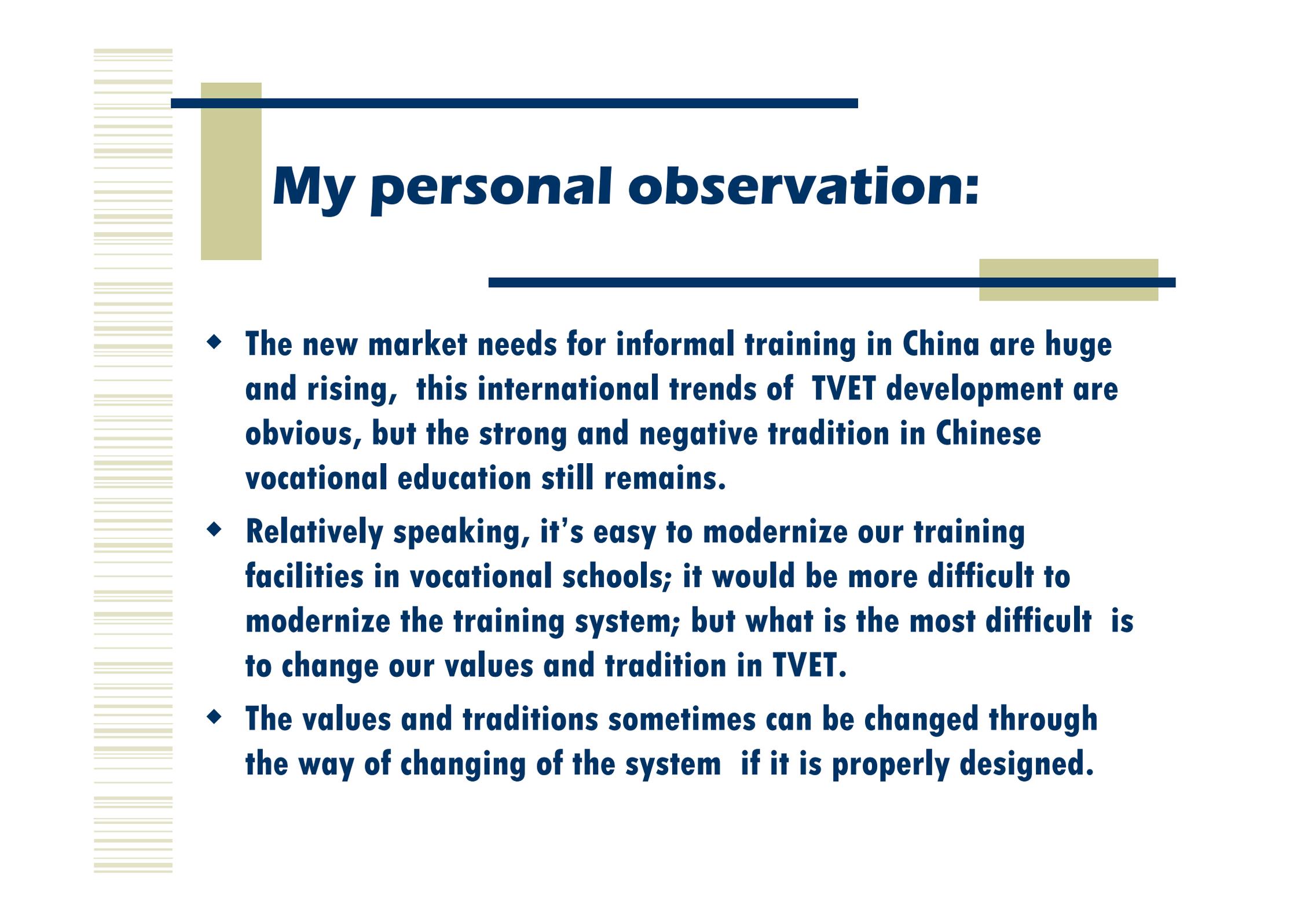


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## **How do the vocational schools and colleges respond?**

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- ◆ **Most of vocational schools and colleges still value the formal education much more than informal training.**
- ◆ **They still mainly focus on the formal education of full-time students immediately coming from junior high school graduates while taking informal training of adult vocational learners as their “by-products”.**
- ◆ **They are more ready to take full-time students from junior high schools and reluctant to take adult learners even in a time when vocational schools are lack of new students from traditional channel of resources.**



## **My personal observation:**

- ◆ **The new market needs for informal training in China are huge and rising, this international trends of TVET development are obvious, but the strong and negative tradition in Chinese vocational education still remains.**
- ◆ **Relatively speaking, it's easy to modernize our training facilities in vocational schools; it would be more difficult to modernize the training system; but what is the most difficult is to change our values and tradition in TVET.**
- ◆ **The values and traditions sometimes can be changed through the way of changing of the system if it is properly designed.**

## **VIII. “Highly-Skilled Workers” Versus “Technicians” in the Training Target for Vocational Colleges**

- ◆ **Vocational colleges in China used to train technicians while secondary vocational school training skilled workers. Their difference in training targets were very clear.**
- ◆ **Now this difference in training targets become quite blur between the two kinds of institutions.**
- ◆ **This is especially so when “highly-skilled workers” became the “official training target” of vocational colleges at the beginning of this new century.**

# What are the highly-skilled workers?

- ◆ No convincing definition or explanation so far, either from the government or the academic world.
- ◆ In order to be “employment-oriented”, vocational colleges more focus on the job skill training rather than the technical training for their students.
- ◆ As a result, the vocational college is now more and more like vocational school if you check their curriculum.
- ◆ **What worries me most, technical education or technician training is now not only missing from vocational colleges, but missing from our whole education system as well!**

# My personal worries:

- ◆ **In a structure of human resource, we need technicians; for a nation to rise, we need technicians!**
- ◆ **What is most wanted human resource in current social and economic development in China?----Technicians!**
- ◆ **What is the weakest in our history of education since Confucius time? ----Technical education or technician training!**
- ◆ **I do not much care if vocational college would change its training target or not, but I do care there should somewhere in our education system providing technical education or technician training! Where are they now???**



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## **Conclusion: Philosophy of TVET Development and Reform**

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- ◆ **In a national development and reform of TVET, we should know where we come from, where we are and where we should go?**
- ◆ **But what we should do sometimes not necessarily is what we can do. We have to check the conditions for such change.**
- ◆ **In world of TVET, if we want to change something, it's better to have comprehensive solutions rather than one-side solution.**
- ◆ **“Development” always goes with “reform”. But the real reform is not just solve the problems we faced, more important is to form a kind of new system and mechanism which could prevent the solving problem re-occurring or coming back again when the reform is over.**

***Tel/Fax: +86-21-62232630***

***Mobile: +1592 100 1669***

***E-mail: [wpshi@ses.ecnu.edu.cn](mailto:wpshi@ses.ecnu.edu.cn)***

**Thank you**  
**谢谢大家!**

