

SWTO Analysis on the Establishment of Social Institutions by University Teachers

LU Lin^{[a],*}; LI Jiahui^[a]

^[a]School of culture and social development, Southwestern University, China.

*Corresponding author.

Supported by Chongqing Municipal Commission of Education. This topic is the result of educational reform research project “research on the system of cultivating practice ability of Full-time Master of social work program practice ability research system research”.

Received 8 December 2013; accepted 6 February 2014

Abstract

This paper adopts the SWOT analysis method, namely the Strength- Weakness- Opportunity- Threat model. It analyzes and judges the external environment, internal state and a series of conditions of social institutions founded by university teachers, to identify the internal strengths and weaknesses, the external opportunities and threats to determine the corresponding development strategy.

Key word: University teachers; Social institutions; SWOT

LU Lin; LI Jiahui (2014). SWTO Analysis on the Establishment of Social Institutions by University Teachers. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 6(2), 78-83. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/j.hess.1927024020140602.3981>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/j.hess.1927024020140602.3981>

INTRODUCTION

In 2012, the Ministry of Civil Affairs and organizations jointly issued the “2011 - 2020 long-term plan on the construction of professionals of social works”. It clearly stipulates the private social work agencies into the scope of government support, and puts forward the principle of “relying on foreign high- level universities and exemplary occupation colleges, step up efforts to train all kinds of talents in social work management”.

In 2013, the government purchased service would amount to over 100 million RMB, service projects of social organizations will be more than 500. In Hong Kong, with a population of only 7 million, more than ten thousand civil organizations undertake a large number of social management and service functions. The increase of government purchasing social organizations reduces university teachers’ worries on the operating funds of social organizations. They also feel the huge demand space of social institutions and professional service, and the good social environment from governmental support. The operation mode of government purchasing service projects is beneficial to the professional teachers to contribute in social works. The rapid development of the market economy has provided a broad space for university teachers to take part in social work. It needs all parties to explore in practice to make it grow sturdily. In August 2012, China Association for Social Work Education held the “seminar on University Teachers’ leading social services”. Many teachers participating in practical social work attended the meeting and expressed their views. They came into the consensus: It is good for the government to purchase social services. The education sector should seize the opportunity of development. But as for the educational circles’ universal participation in agencies, and whether they are willing to take the leadership in agencies, they have many concerns. “It is not only an opportunity, but also a trap”- this is the expression of teachers’ towards the problem. This paper explores the strengths and weaknesses for university teachers to establish social institutions, and try to put forward relevant suggestions.

1. INTERNAL STRENGTHS

1.1 Social Organizational Strengths

University teachers have an obvious strength that they have the majority of students of Social Work Departments as a backing. They do not need to worry about the

problem of continued professional training and ascension of professional social work. College resources are the strength of mechanisms' sustainable development. They have close contact with universities and other institutions of society, with the Municipal Commission, and the Social Work Education Association as platforms, it is convenient to exchange information with colleges and universities and society from all walks of life at home and abroad, which is its unique strength. The teachers should make good use of this strength to achieve something in social work institutions.

1.2 The Strength of Mobilizing Resources

The team is strong, including: Teams of higher education experts, teams of volunteers, teams of community full-time workers. In colleges and universities, they have unique advantages in human resources. They have double identities as teachers of training social work talents and social work personnel, which is conducive to the field investigation and the promotion of the theory. Especially, they have rich human resources such as professionals and volunteers. In the case of limited funds, the civil service is influenced by lack of manpower. College background institutions have the university teachers and students' support. The volunteer resources are more abundant, and the teachers also promote the profession's social influence.

1.3 Professional Strength

Teachers, as the founders of the social work institutions, have their own unique professional strength, thus guaranteeing the nature and characteristics of professional social work services. They have internalized the social value, the basic concepts and ideas, becoming part of organization culture and soft power. Secondly, the professional teachers are equipped with professional social knowledge and sharp angle, which also become the basis for institutions to maintain business advantages, core competitiveness and sustainable development. The mode of operation of government purchasing service projects is beneficial to the social work teachers. The specialty includes project planning, application writing, especially aspects involved in the analysis of the social problems, the target analysis, stakeholder analysis, strategy analysis and choice, the logical frame and design etc..

1.4 High Social Awareness

"The professional resources of universities and the occupational nature of university teachers are conducive for social institutions to obtain the trust of the government and that of the civil society." Some institutions with college background directly nominate university names or names homonym as the organization names, and contact other institutions in the name of the Department of social work, which can establish a solid image for the institution in a relatively short period of time.

2. WEAKNESSES

2.1 Lack of Operation Management Ability

At the beginning of their birth, the institutions founded by social work profession are facing "double supervision" (double management from social work department and the college). In the process of operation, the strong administration will limit the independence. The social institutions are easily to reduce to ordinary places for students' practice, or a subsidiary of the college. In addition, in this mode, the management personnel are composed of professional teachers in college. The teachers themselves must bear the teaching task. It is difficult for them to devote to the organization management. Therefore, due to lack of full-time management personnel, it will face the lack of operational management. Although the private social work institutions are non-profit organizations, they also need to make profit to maintain the operation of institutions, to pay wage and welfare, as well as to carry out the activities. This requires teachers to ask the society, enterprises, and the government to purchase service project, or to be sponsored by the application foundation, to raise funds, or to integrate various social resources. But the teachers engaged in educational work. Their ability may be insufficient to operate an institution or organization. In the business process, it is difficult for them to handle the relation between the organization and the government, the organization and the school.

Project development and activities are the embodiment of its vitality and the value. Therefore, the appropriate projects are the foundation for its survival. On the one hand, the institutions founded by social work department lag behind in project development due to the lack of design personnel (Wang, Gan, & Sheng, 1995); on the other hand, the existing project management personnel can't develop appropriate social work projects due to lack of experience and energy. This has become a bottleneck restricting the development of institutions, affecting the realization of organization goals.

2.2 The Ambiguous Location of Occupation Role

Since the foundation of the social service institutions, university teachers have a new status, which may lead to mutual interference and influence. University teachers may have great ideals of the profession engaged in educational work. But as a management, they may be affected by the conflict between professional ideal and practical utility, leading to greater ethical dilemma for university teachers. Their job is education and scientific research. For them, it may be part-time behavior to establish social service institutions. Therefore, after heavy daily work of the universities, it is a big problem whether they have the energy to complete the job and ensure the quality of the social work. They should play the role of planners, project applicators, and resource holders, responsible person for build relationships with users,

employers, legal persons, institution administrators, staff and service evaluators, accountability for expected events and processing a variety of business (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). In addition, they make policy recommendations and resources effect explanations, etc. It is visible that it is far more complex for leading institutions than the role of teachers in schools. It is excessive for university teachers to lead the institutions. It will put them in the depleted state. In the process of founding social institutions, its risk is huge.

At the same time, the students become formal employees into the institutions. Their roles change from students into staff. As teachers, they provide social work practice platform for students, which will turn what they have learned into practice, giving the students opportunities of fully explore and training. Even if the student is not doing well in practice, he could be forgiven by the mentor teachers. But as the subordinates, students are as the soldiers on the battlefield. There is no time for practicing. They should bear some responsibility for organization operation. Therefore, both teachers and students will face the problem of how to handle the relationship between role transformations. If both sides cannot change the corresponding roles, and handle this relationship properly, it will bring the negative influence on organization operation.

2.3 The Lack of Independent Choice

If the social institutions can be used by any outside force, and have no their own values to independently response to outside force, it is harmful for the development of the whole social work. Universities and other relevant government departments should reduce the interference on social work agencies. Since the social work institutions are legally independent, they should give teachers complete freedom. At the same time to ensure the project funds in place in time, in order to facilitate the social work institutions to have independent rights to carry out service activities and normal operation. At the same time, when set targets for social work institutions, on the basis of safeguarding the interests of universities, it should have certain flexibility. The social work institutions should not bothered by various interests. The social work activities are not to for indicators nor for showing off. If so, it will reduce the professional quality and service level. Therefore, the social organizations are based on the spirit of contract. They should keep professional value; keep the maintenance of organization autonomy to win the respect.

2.4 Weak Support

The author understands that some university teachers get through untold hardships to set up social institutions. After the foundation, they are busy looking for projects, building up the teams, cooperating with other organizations and providing services. Some teachers even use their own money to fill the hole of government funds.

Service projects are very fruitful, while the operations are fine, but the founders have a lot of regrets, including rare participation of colleagues and less school support. According to the author's observation and understanding, most of the colleagues of university teachers leading social institutions never participate in the activities. It is unable to integrate more resources. It is difficult to support institutions to carry out service activities. The universities teachers spend much time and make so much sacrifice to the agencies and to the students training and discipline construction. But they get less support and return from the school and the system. Although each university is advocating the mode of industry-academy, most of them are understood as science and enterprise horizontal technical support. Teachers in colleges and universities fund social institutions to undertake the civil government purchase, while the government and the universities stand very supportive, but real help and support is very limited. University teachers have research missions. It becomes a burden for them to set up social institutions to undertake the government purchase. In addition, there are differences between the expectation and evaluation of school, the current education system and university teachers (in fact also includes more social work colleagues).

2.5 The Low Efficiency of Institutions

For a long term, universities have run under the system in the era of planned economy. Its institutions will inevitably paint with the brand of the planned economy. The thought of "waiting, relying, asking for" will dwell among social organizations. The social organizations become mere formality. There is a serious shortage of power to establish social institutions.

3. OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 The Catalysis of Social Structure Transformation

Social transformation stage is prone to social problems and social unrest. The changes of social structure will cause the diversity problems. From a historical point of view, developed and developing countries' experience shows that, the social transformation is a process for social structure transformation, modernization, industrialization, and urbanization. It is also a stage of social problems and social unrest, facing the problem that social contradictions have become increasingly prominent. Our social problems are brought by market economy, such as unemployment and wealth gap. Many problems such as the diversification of people thought, the peasants poured into the city, the children of migrant workers, the lonely old man and the left-behind children, vulnerable groups' spiritual needs, structure reconstruction of children who lost their family, create the actual demand for social work institutions to carry out social affairs.

3.2 The Promotion of Policy Documents

The 18th CPC National Congress report pointed out “to improve the scientific level of the social management, to strengthen the law, system, ability, and talent and information construction of social management”. In the file of “social work plans”, it pointed out “to reform the social work education training mode; to improve the proportion of practice teaching in school education; to establish the practice system of social work professional teachers’ participation in social work, to strengthen the training of double-identity teachers”. Together with other relevant provisions, they further promote the university teachers’ involvement in social work institutions, which is conducive to the development of the organic combination of social work service projects and social work professional training, thus improving the level of social service quality.

3.3 The Need for Professional Development of Social Institutions

The development of private social work institutions of our country still has some problems. Compared with the growing demand for social services, there is still a big gap. Firstly, lack in professional service; the quality is low, many workers are less proficient without social work professional background, lack of social work knowledge and skills; most of the institutions are set up lately in the immature stage; some service measures are ineffective.

Secondly, the development is not balanced. Due to the development of different regions, the development of social institutions is uneven. There is a huge gap between coastal area and inland. In this case, it is an opportunity for teachers in colleges and universities.

3.4 The Deficiency of Existing Organizations

The social work institutions with the enterprises as the background have the following characteristics. The financial resources are more abundant, without much difficulty in the flow of funds. The resource integration capability is good; but lack of professional background, social work philosophy, and values, lack of professional services, the social organization identity is low, management problems. And social institutions under street offices’ indirect management: Social workers’ treatment is stable; the staff turnover rate is low; the steering performs is better; the integration of resources is better, the source of funds is sufficient; but administrative intervention is too much, lacking of independence. For the part of the outsourcing services, it is difficult to ensure the timely availability of funds. The social workers’ low treatment is also a big problem. Social work institutions led by university teachers have the strengths of rich professional knowledge, abundant human resources, rapid social worker development and high evaluation on the mechanism. As shown in the Table 1:

Table 1

Mode	Strength	Weakness
Social institutions with university background; lead by university teachers; social institutions registered by university teachers	1. rich professional knowledge; 2. Rich human resources, low staff outflow; 3. fast social worker development, high recognize	1. difficult to handle the contraction among street offices and community management; 2. difficult to conduct resource integration
Social institutions with enterprise background: Registered by enterprises, like FH social work institution	1. Strong funding capacity, less difficulties in funds; 2. strong resource integration	2. lack of values, professional background, social service ideas; 2. low identity of social workers; 3. management problems
The street offices provide place; in charge of coordination of resource; introduce into professional social institutions	1. good resource integration; 2. stable payment for social workers, low staff outflow rate; 3. good administration, fast development; 4. sufficient funds, support from street offices	Too much administrative interference for carry out professional services
Institutions registered by the street offices; the street offices are in charge of services, recruitment, and funds operation	1. Sufficient place and funds; 2. stable payment for social workers	1. unable to provide professional service; 2. rely on the governments, lack independence
Outsourcing part service		1. insufficient funds; 2. low payment for workers

Source: Youth project of the scientific research project in Universities in Guangzhou "the study on Guangzhou community work mode under the background of government purchasing services" (10 B0 59).

Therefore, it has important significance to our country’s social work for making full use of teachers in colleges and universities and playing the social service functions.

4. EXTERNAL THREATS

4.1 It Is Difficult To Gain Market Share

There is a lack of clear policy framework for the cooperation among Chinese inland universities, community groups, and governments. For the universities,

they are very easy to be influenced by different interests or values. Although social services have been put forward for many years, it is still difficult for social institutions founded by teachers in colleges and universities to get access to market share and funding. The social institutions led by university teachers can effectively use many resources in a university, such as the student management departments' practice funding. But the amount of funds is limited. Therefore, institutions are facing the problem of insufficient funds. At present, besides the school support, many of its activities are carried out by their own funds. Especially before officially registered, it can not apply for funds support from the society as the independent legal person. The problem of lack of funding has seriously hindered the further development. The government's funds for purchasing services are limited; it is not reasonable for funds note covering the operation fee; the funds can not be paid in time; it is difficult to hire professional personnel; staff mobility is huge; the market competition of the project is not standard; the government's inspection and assessment is less scientific; the support of universities is not enough; the social work system is not perfect; and some people don't understand or show suspicion, etc.. They face the pressure from the government and the market. They face the challenge of suspect of people on the professional identity and service quality. They need more social marketing means and strategies.

4.2 Low External Professional Identity

It needs further theory clarification and practice proof to explain the role of social work in the process of building

a harmonious society and to explain how to play its due role. Quite a lot people still don't know what is the social work. They don't know any social work institutions, let alone participate in the service activities. Although, some coastal residents know social work, also know the communities' social work organizations, they have no idea about the functions and what services they can enjoy in social work institutions (Wen, 2012). How to set up a professional social work institution? What should the teachers do as the managers? For the Universities, it is not easy to build independent intellectual home for they swing between the enterprise and the administration. Can colleges and universities develop talents meeting the requirement of social progress? Whether to develop the social work localization? The tendency of administration and commercial of social institutions- this series of problems need further thinking and exploration.

5. SUGGESTIONS

From the above analysis, it is visible that university teachers' participation in social work institutions is conforms to the trend of social management and construction. As a new thing and a new form of social organization, there are many specific practices that need further discussion and research. There are much strength and weaknesses, many opportunities and challenges for teachers in colleges and universities to establish social institutions.

Table 2

	Strength	Weakness
Internal strength, External factors	Social organizational strength Resource allocation strength Professional strength High identity recognize	Poor operation and management Ambiguous identity Lack in independent right Lack strong support Low efficiency
Opportunity	SO	WO
The catalysis of social structure transformation The promotion of policy documents The need for professional development of social institutions The deficiency of existing organizations	The leverage effect (strength+ opportunity) organizations must capture the opportunities in time to seek greater development; make full use of the opportunities and strengths	Inhibitory (opportunity + weakness) internal resources environment provides opportunities that the institution can not overlap, institutional advantages also will not play. In this case, you need to provide an additional resource, in order to promote the change of internal resource disadvantage into advantage, which cater to or to adapt to the external opportunity.
Threat	ST	WT
It is difficult to gain market share low external professional identity	Vulnerability (strength + threat) environmental conditions pose a threat to the strengths, the situation is not good. In this case, institutions must overcome the threat, in order to give full play to the strength.	Problem (weakness + threat) weaknesses of internal institutions and external threats make institutions face severe challenges, if not handled properly; it will cause a direct threat to the institutions' existence.

Seen from the table analysis, social institutions led by college teachers should use its internal strengths to develop the external opportunities. They should make full use of the opportunities and strengths. The author thinks that we should use leverage strategy: First, organizations must capture the opportunities in time to seek greater development. Secondly, institutions need to provide additional resources in order to promote the change of internal resource weaknesses into strengths, to cater to or to adapt to the external opportunities. In terms of strengths, they have the students of Social Work Department as a backing. They have professional knowledge and sharp angle; in term of weaknesses, they are lack of management experience; in opportunities, it meets the needs of our social construction, can effectively meet the development of the times; in terms of the threats, university teachers need to upgrade capacity to develop service brand, to avoid the previous case mortar, and to grasp the convenient conditions. Teachers in colleges and universities need to make full use of strengths, to make up for the weaknesses, to seize the opportunities, to meet the threats, promoting the rapid healthy growth, and the construction of harmonious society with high quality service. According to the relevant problems, we put forward some suggestions:

(a) In the process of founding the institution, it is better to invite colleagues to participate in social work, to promote the formation of jointly participation and cooperation, to share the responsibility and reduce the pressure of the leaders, to expand benefited range, to cultivate a high level of social work professionals as soon as possible, then to turn over the service mechanism to professional social service personnel. It is important to form the mechanism and the system of close cooperation between schools and practice institutions.

(b) To broaden the thinking, and to expand funding channels. Using a variety of social marketing tools and strategies, get more market share and funding. The teachers can expand the social credibility through the propaganda. They can provide social services to some large and medium-sized enterprises, and charge reasonable fee, or accept the enterprises and individual citizens' donation through legal means, and announce the use of public funds. Teachers can also apply for funding support through a number of channels, promoting the diversification of social work institutions' funding sources, to ensure the independence in operation.

(c) The innovation of management mode. The teachers should clear direct operation or entrusted operation. If choosing the direct management, the author thinks that the institutions must establish the corresponding management system, such as the personnel management system, financial management system, file management system, project item management system, and evaluation system to guide the future direction of development. It

is important to clear agency staff positions, choosing the professional social workers to do professional things, together with relevant administrative personnel, marketing personnel, to build the service brand: To find the lifeline and link these many trivial things into a line of service, to identify the institution. Make sure the service is in the leading position in the similar services, while showing differences and characteristics.

REFERENCES

- Comprehension. China's local governments to purchase services (EB/OL). The government procurement information network.
- Jiang, L.. Recognize the situation, clear tasks, and create a new situation in the construction and management of social organizations [DB/OL], Chinese social network. Retrieved from <http://www.chinanpo.gov.cn>
- Kahn, R. L., Wolfe, D. M., Quinn, R. P., Snoek, J. D., & Rosenthal, R. A. (1964). Organizational stress: Studies in role conflict and ambiguity. In D. Katz, & R. L. Kahn (Eds.), *The social psychology of organizations*. New York: Wiley.
- Lai, Y. B. (2008). The development of social organizations: Problems and measures. *The Study Society*, (5).
- Research on Guangzhou communities' work model under the background of government purchasing services by scientific research projects in Universities in Guangzhou youth (10 B0 59).
- Shi, B. N. (2006). Institutional factors and professional identification - Social work occupation strategy. *Journal of East China University of Science and Technology (Social Science Edition)*, (4).
- Social work system and mode study with China characteristics (09JZD0026). Beijing University-Research on social work education of China social work research Centre of Hong Kong Polytechnic University.
- Sun, W. L. (2006). The Central Party school project: The main problem of the development of the non-governmental organizations and Countermeasures. *Society*, (12).
- Sun, W. L. (2009). The development status, problems and suggestions of social organizations in China. *Chinese Cadres Forum*, (8).
- Wang, B. G., Gan, J. (1995). SWOT marketing strategy analysis model. *System Engineering Theory & Practice*, 15(12), 34-40.
- Wang, M. (2007). Development and policy China NGO analysis. *Public management review*, (1).
- Wen, J. (2012). Chinese predicament and outlet of the development of social organizations. *Journal of Jiangsu Administration Institute*.
- Zhou, W. (2011). Reflections on college-background social organization construction-taking the Whitney society in Dongguan city job service center as an example. *China Social Work*, (7).