

Research on Establishing a Vocational College Employment and Education Community

Wang Hu^{1,*}, Yao Chen², Chengyi Xu¹

¹ Nantong Vocational University, Nantong, Jiangsu, China

² Nantong Open University, Nantong, Jiangsu, China

*Corresponding Author.

Abstract: This study endeavors to empower graduates in achieving personal fulfillment through employment, elevating the caliber of practical education, and fostering societal equilibrium. Employing a thorough literature review, it surveys the current landscape of research on vocational college employment and education communities. Utilizing social research methodologies and interviews with frontline employment service providers, it identifies deficiencies in the construction process across work planning, key actors, and target groups. The study proposes a strategic framework for establishing a vocational college employment and education community. It advocates firstly for refining the framework of employment and educational services, secondly for fostering collaborative efforts among key actors in employment and education, and lastly for enhancing the targeted approach to employment and educational initiatives, thereby comprehensively advancing educational outcomes and employment standards.

Keywords: Vocational Colleges; Employment, Education Community; Construction

1. Introduction

“Strengthening the priority of employment policies, enhancing the mechanisms for promoting employment, and facilitating high-quality and full employment” [1-2] constitute pivotal measures in China’s implementation of its employment-first strategy. Driving the full and high-quality employment of graduates from vocational colleges is not only fundamental to livelihoods but also serves as an inexhaustible wellspring for the advancement of vocational education at a high quality and level. By constructing an

employment and education community, we aim to address current deficiencies in work planning, key actors, and target groups, thus comprehensively enhancing educational outcomes and employment quality.

2. Analysis of the Necessity of Establishing an Employment and Education Community in Vocational Colleges

Employment represents a cornerstone of livelihoods, where the employment of graduates impacts not only their personal growth and development but also influences family happiness, societal stability and prosperity, and even the future of the nation itself. Enhancing the robust and high-quality employment of graduates from vocational colleges not only facilitates their personal fulfillment but also enhances the practical educational standards of these institutions, fostering societal stability. [3]

2.1 Facilitating Personal Fulfillment for Graduates

Employment serves as the primary conduit through which college students translate theoretical knowledge and professional skills into practical capabilities. Through employment, students can achieve stable income, attain economic independence, and lay a solid foundation for future life. Moreover, in their roles, students continuously strengthen their understanding of theoretical knowledge and mastery of professional skills, deepening their expertise within their field and aligning themselves with the developmental currents of the times, thereby realizing personal fulfillment through grounded work.

2.2 Enhancing the Quality of Practical Education in Vocational Colleges

The employment status of graduates serves as a comprehensive assessment of vocational

colleges' talent development programs, faculty strength, and educational quality, bearing crucial witness to the educational standards of vocational colleges. On one hand, analyzing data such as graduate employment rates, satisfaction levels among graduates, and employers provides valuable insights for vocational colleges to dynamically adjust their program and curriculum offerings, continually optimizing the training schemes for high-quality technical and skilled professionals. On the other hand, through understanding graduate employment outcomes, vocational colleges can stay informed about current market demands, enhance the quality of industry-education integration and school-enterprise cooperation, encourage teachers to engage in practical industry experience and educational research, and involve industry experts in teaching, all contributing to improving the practical education quality in vocational colleges. [4]

2.3 Promoting Social Stability

The influx of a large number of vocational college graduates into the job market, if not smoothly employed, can lead to anxiety, depression, and other emotional challenges that undermine personal well-being. Over time, this dissatisfaction may pose threats to social stability. Conversely, facilitating high-quality and full employment among graduates enables them to integrate into social life, engage in community activities, enhance their sense of social responsibility and belonging at work, and reduce social discontent and instability caused by unemployment. Furthermore, high-caliber graduates inject new vigor into enterprises, driving industrial upgrading, technological innovation, and thereby promoting sustainable economic and social development. [5]

3. Challenges in Constructing an Employment and Education Community in Vocational Colleges

As the nation increasingly emphasizes the employment of college graduates and the cultivation of high-quality technical and skilled professionals, vocational colleges are also recognizing the necessity of building an employment and education community. However, in practical implementation, challenges and deficiencies persist in three key aspects: work planning, key actors, and target

groups. Further clarification of strategies is needed to actively address these issues and advance practical solutions. [6]

3.1 Work Planning

There remains insufficient understanding among vocational colleges regarding the concept of an employment and education community, resulting in a lack of systematic planning in its construction. Firstly, current efforts in employment services predominantly focus on the first half of the graduation year, rather than initiating specialized, graded, and phased tasks from the students' enrollment, gradually instilling correct employment perspectives and solid theoretical knowledge and professional skills. Secondly, the lack of systematic understanding and foresight in employment services often leads to reactive responses to superior departmental demands, with personnel frequently engaged in redundant tasks and unprepared for foreseeable employment challenges. Thirdly, ineffective communication and coordination mechanisms among members and departments of the employment and education community fail to clearly allocate employment responsibilities to specific departments or individuals, impeding smooth operations and fostering phenomena such as blame-shifting and procrastination during the course of employment. Finally, the singular evaluation and supervision systems prevalent in vocational colleges often gauge the effectiveness of employment services solely based on graduate employment rates, neglecting the irreplaceable roles of the employment community in shaping graduates' ideological and political education, cultivating employment perspectives, and planning career paths.

3.2 Key Actors

The personnel responsible for employment services in various vocational colleges—including career advisors and graduation class coordinators—predominantly undertake the task of facilitating graduate employment. However, this centralized approach within vocational colleges means that other departments and personnel have limited understanding and involvement in employment services. This singular focus restricts the collective efforts of the entire institution, particularly in leveraging industry resources

from relevant leaders and professional educators to foster high-quality employment opportunities for graduates. Furthermore, the lack of industry-specific knowledge among career advisors and graduation class coordinators, coupled with insufficient proactive engagement in relevant training, results in inadequate awareness of national, provincial, and municipal employment policies. This shortfall hampers vocational colleges' ability to provide targeted and forward-thinking support for graduates, failing to address real issues encountered by graduates during their job search and employment processes. Moreover, frequent turnover among employment office and career advisory teams further disrupts the continuity of employment services within schools.

3.3 Target Groups

As the focus of the employment and education community in vocational colleges, graduates themselves face obstacles that hinder smooth employment transitions. Firstly, many vocational college graduates lack a proper appreciation of the importance of employment. Born after 2000, most students come from financially stable backgrounds where familial support is abundant. This often fosters a dependency mindset, leading graduates to lack a sense of urgency or crisis regarding timely employment. When faced with difficulties in finding suitable jobs, some may adopt a defeatist attitude or delay their job search indefinitely. Additionally, skewed career planning and employment perspectives, such as an excessive pursuit of high salaries, comfortable working environments, or stable positions, further constrain vocational college graduates' employment prospects. Secondly, vocational college graduates often exhibit deficiencies in relevant skills. Despite completing their studies, many struggle to effectively apply their knowledge and solve problems in real work settings. This can be attributed partly to outdated curriculum content and practical training in vocational colleges, which fail to align with actual industry demands. Moreover, some graduates lack initiative in mastering theoretical knowledge and professional skills, merely aiming to meet course requirements and pass exams without delving deeper into new theories or technologies.

4. Pathways for Constructing the Vocational College Employment and Education Community

In response to the aforementioned challenges, the strategy for constructing the vocational college employment and education community focuses on three main aspects, providing a theoretical foundation for its development and aiming to facilitate comprehensive and high-quality employment opportunities for graduates.

4.1 Strategic Planning: Enhancing the Employment and Education Service System

The core mission of vocational colleges lies in cultivating highly skilled technical talents adaptable to grassroots production, construction, management, and service sectors, thereby providing intellectual support and talent assurance for local economies to foster sustainable development. In terms of strategic planning, it is imperative to strengthen organizational leadership by establishing a four-tiered employment and education service network comprising the school, departments, colleges, and class coordinators. At the institutional level, the leadership team oversees overall planning, while the employment office coordinates and supervises, and career advisors and class coordinators at each college ensure specific implementation. This hierarchical division of labor clarifies responsibilities, ensuring a smooth pathway for students from enrollment through to graduation. Secondly, there is a need to establish a scientifically rigorous yet innovative curriculum system for employment and entrepreneurship. This curriculum should be responsive to contemporary developments, industry needs, and market demands, emphasizing the cultivation of students' professional ethics, norms, skills, and values. By integrating cutting-edge knowledge with theoretical and practical approaches, vocational colleges can effectively enhance graduates' employability. Thirdly, a scientifically sound system for assessing and supervising employment quality must be established. This system should dynamically adjust evaluation and supervision frameworks in accordance with national, provincial, and municipal policies, combining qualitative and quantitative measures, and integrating formative and summative assessments to comprehensively evaluate the

effectiveness of the employment and education community.

4.2 Key Actors: Mobilizing Collective Efforts in Employment and Education

To foster a synergistic “top-down coordination, collective participation” approach within vocational colleges, continuously advancing graduates towards more comprehensive and higher-quality employment, efforts focus on key actors: Firstly, establishing an employment leadership group is crucial, pooling resources from all key actors to form a collaborative “family-school-enterprise” employment and education community. [7] Career advisors and class coordinators play a pivotal role as bridges, actively engaging with parents to instill correct employment perspectives in students. Through school-enterprise partnerships and industry-academic integration, initiatives like teacher placements in enterprises and involvement of industry experts bolster collaborative efforts, collectively enhancing students’ competitiveness in the job market. Secondly, standardizing ongoing enhancements in employment service capabilities and reinforcing employment guidance skills through regular training sessions are essential. This includes timely updates on employment policies, regulations, career planning, and counseling theories. Such measures help students develop accurate self-awareness, industry insights, and job role understanding, providing tailored guidance and support based on individual needs during their job search and employment processes. Thirdly, establishing a robust support mechanism is vital, offering logistical, policy, and financial support to the employment and education community. This ensures stability among personnel involved and maximizes the proactive engagement of all key actors, thereby cultivating a coordinated, communicative, and mutually beneficial employment and education community.

4.3 Target Groups: Enhancing Targeted Employment and Education Support

The prosperity of the nation hinges on the vitality of its youth, particularly in fostering high-caliber technical talents crucial for skills inheritance, innovation, and industrial structure upgrading. Regarding target groups: Firstly, there is a need to strengthen education in ideological beliefs among students, integrating

core employment competency development throughout the entire talent cultivation process. Leveraging ideological and political education as the primary channel, reforms that unify “ideology and employment” courses aim to enhance the overall educational effectiveness. Innovating teaching modes and methods—such as classroom lectures, case studies, group discussions, and interactive games—encourage students to actively explore, thereby increasing the attractiveness and appeal of employment courses. This approach guides students to align personal values with the national rejuvenation and prosperity process. Secondly, enhancing students’ job-seeking and employment capabilities is imperative. Introducing contemporary elements into professional and employment courses, featuring insights from outstanding alumni, frontline workers, and industry experts, inspires students through real-life experiences. This strategy encourages students to embrace lofty ideals, solidify their grasp of professional theories and skills, and engage in practical endeavors. Departing from traditional homogenized employment guidance, personalized support tailored to individual student characteristics, professional traits, and industry features is essential. This approach ensures timely and targeted empowerment in employment and education, fostering effectiveness and relevance.

5. Conclusions

The establishment of vocational college employment and education communities is a long-term and systematic endeavor, requiring collective efforts from all sectors of society. In practice, continual optimization of work plans, enrichment of key actors, and enhanced service for target groups are essential. These efforts alleviate current challenges in constructing employment and education communities, thereby creating supportive platforms that facilitate comprehensive student development.

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