

Research on the Cultivation Path of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability for Vocational Education Normal Students in Guangxi Universities

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Abstract: *Currently, the cultivation of university students' innovation and entrepreneurship abilities is transitioning to an upgrading phase. Vocational education normal students (hereinafter referred to as "vocational normal students") are a vital component of the vocational education teaching force and a crucial force in nurturing highly skilled and innovative talents. To meet the demand for high-quality, professional, and entrepreneurial teachers for vocational education development, cultivating their innovation and entrepreneurship abilities is indispensable. Through a questionnaire survey on the current state of vocational normal students' innovation and entrepreneurship cultivation, this study identifies issues such as a lack of correct concepts, incomplete cultivation systems, and insufficient environmental support. From the perspectives of establishing correct cultivation concepts, improving the system, and optimizing the environment, the paper discusses strategies for cultivating these abilities. It aims to provide a reference for innovation and entrepreneurship education reform in normal universities.*

Keywords: *Vocational Education Normal Students, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability Cultivation*

Introduction

Innovation is a significant driving force for societal development, while entrepreneurship is an essential pathway to realizing development. At present, the country is vigorously implementing an innovation-driven development strategy to accelerate the building of an innovative nation. With the ongoing implementation of significant measures such as "Internet+" and "Made in China 2035," the focus on cultivating innovative and entrepreneurial talents has reached unprecedented heights.

Since the State Council issued the Opinions on Deepening the Reform of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education Institutions in 2015, universities have progressed from a pilot phase to a promotion phase, now entering a transformation and upgrading phase. Documents such as the Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of the Construction of the Teacher Workforce in the New Era and the Implementation Plan for Deepening the Reform of the "Dual-Qualified" Teacher Workforce Construction in Vocational Education in the New Era have also set new requirements for the construction of vocational college teaching staff.

As the core of vocational college teaching staff development, vocational normal students need innovation and entrepreneurship abilities to become the high-quality, professional, and entrepreneurial teachers demanded by vocational education development. These abilities are reflected in their capacity to innovate teaching content, methods, and approaches in response to internal and external changes, thus maximizing their role as educators. Additionally, they involve cultivating entrepreneurial awareness during their studies and accumulating entrepreneurial abilities in their future careers, enabling them to undertake innovation and entrepreneurship activities in their roles.

Therefore, this paper analyzes the current state of innovation and entrepreneurship ability cultivation for vocational normal students through a questionnaire survey. It seeks to explore strategies suitable for cultivating such abilities, aiming to broaden perspectives for innovation and entrepreneurship reform in normal universities.

1. The Historical Inevitability of Cultivating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability in Vocational Education Normal Students

1.1 The Need to Alleviate Social Employment Pressure

In recent years, the rapid development of "innovation and entrepreneurship" education has, to a certain extent, mitigated employment pressures. Li Hui points out: "Innovation and entrepreneurship education is an educational concept that arises to meet the needs of economic and social development and higher education progress. It necessitates integrating innovation and entrepreneurship education throughout the talent cultivation process."^[1] Vocational colleges, which focus on "cultivating technical and skilled talents," urgently require a new generation of innovation- and entrepreneurship-oriented teaching staff. Strengthening the cultivation of vocational education normal students' innovation and entrepreneurship abilities not only enhances their innovative and entrepreneurial thinking, improving their future work efficiency and quality, but also boosts their competitiveness in the job market, thereby alleviating social employment pressures to some extent.

1.2 Future Role Expectations and the Responsibility of Cultivating Innovation-Oriented Talents

Vocational education normal students are the mainstay of future vocational education teaching staff reserves. Zhang Dan and Zhu Dequan argue: "The teaching workforce is the core element ensuring the quality of talent cultivation. Advancing the construction of the vocational education teaching workforce is an intrinsic requirement for China's vocational education to achieve connotative development and modernization." Therefore, only by first strengthening the cultivation of vocational education normal students' innovation and entrepreneurship abilities can they effectively shoulder the responsibility of nurturing the innovative and entrepreneurial talents required by societal and contemporary development.^[2-5]

1.3 The Need for Self-Realization Among Vocational Education Normal Students

The continuous development of the economy and society has led to evolving requirements for talent cultivation. The nation's urgent demand for high-quality talent has made it increasingly difficult for graduates without specialized skills to secure employment. The "Mass Innovation and Entrepreneurship" policy presents both opportunities and challenges for vocational education normal students. Thus, normal universities should align with societal development and respond to policy calls by actively improving the mechanisms for cultivating innovation and entrepreneurship abilities and refining student development programs. This approach not only facilitates better employment prospects for students but also enables them to contribute significantly to cultivating high-quality, innovative, and entrepreneurial talents in their future vocational education careers. As future teaching staff for vocational education, vocational normal students can supply a large number of innovative and entrepreneurial talents to the nation, making substantial contributions to the development of China's education sector.

2. Problems in Cultivating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability in Vocational Education Normal Students

A survey of vocational education normal students from five teacher-training universities in Guangxi revealed several issues in the current stage of cultivating innovation and entrepreneurship abilities. These include outdated educational concepts, an underdeveloped curriculum system, and a lack of professional faculty specializing in innovation and entrepreneurship education. These issues have hindered the cultivation and enhancement of innovation and entrepreneurship abilities in Guangxi's vocational education normal students to varying degrees. The specific problems are as follows:

2.1 Lack of Advanced Concepts for Cultivating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Abilities

According to the survey, 41.31% of students believe that limited coverage and insufficient emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship education are critical factors restricting the development of their abilities in this area. Consequently, many students fail to develop a strong awareness of innovation and entrepreneurship.^[6,7]

On one hand, schools lack proper guidance in cultivating these abilities, perceiving innovation and

entrepreneurship education as relevant only to a subset of students who are more interested or capable, rather than making it accessible to all students. This approach results in inadequate awareness among students about the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship. Additionally, some teachers have a shallow understanding of cultivating these abilities, merely delivering basic concepts without deeper exploration.

On the other hand, students themselves often undervalue innovation and entrepreneurship, considering its importance to be lower than that of their core courses. Their lack of commitment and minimal participation in relevant theoretical learning and practical activities significantly hinder the improvement of their innovation and entrepreneurship abilities.

2.2 An Incomplete System for Cultivating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Abilities

A well-developed system is key to nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship abilities. However, the survey revealed several gaps in this regard:

Incomplete Practical Platforms: While some vocational colleges have established practice platforms, they lack systematic guidance from professionals. They often neglect fostering students' awareness of innovation and entrepreneurship and developing innovative thinking, limiting students' ability to enhance their comprehensive practical skills through these platforms.^[8]

Shortage of Qualified Faculty: The survey shows that many teachers involved in "innovation and entrepreneurship" education are general faculty, administrative staff, support personnel, or teachers who have undergone brief training. Their theoretical knowledge and practical experience in innovation and entrepreneurship often fall short compared to dedicated faculty in this field.

Insufficient Incentive Mechanisms: Some teacher-training universities treat innovation and entrepreneurship education as a mere formality, lacking incentive mechanisms to effectively cultivate these abilities. In some cases, innovation and entrepreneurship education is perfunctory, with little professional guidance or assessment mechanisms in place. Such formalism is detrimental to the cultivation of students' abilities in this area.

2.3 Lack of Supportive Environments for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

In addition to advanced concepts and a comprehensive system, a supportive environment is essential for cultivating innovation and entrepreneurship abilities. This includes support from families, society, and national policies. However, the survey identified the following issues hindering the establishment of such an environment:

Inappropriate Family Attitudes: Some families prioritize professional coursework and certifications over cultivating innovation and entrepreneurship abilities, considering them unnecessary. Others perceive university-level entrepreneurial activities as high-risk, potentially leading to financial losses.

Low Engagement from Enterprises: Many companies lack enthusiasm for supporting vocational education normal students in areas such as industry development, corporate platforms, technical expertise, and resource sharing. Since students' innovation and entrepreneurship projects are often closely tied to industry and enterprise development, the absence of enterprise support greatly reduces the likelihood of project implementation.^[9]

Inadequate Policy Implementation by Local Governments: Some local governments fail to effectively implement national policies on cultivating innovation and entrepreneurship abilities. This results in a lack of institutional guarantees, policies, and financial support for schools to develop these abilities among students.

3. Pathways for Cultivating and Enhancing Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability in Vocational Education Normal Students

3.1 Establishing Correct Concepts for Cultivating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability

Correct educational concepts are general viewpoints and fundamental perspectives on education formed through long-term educational practice. Research has shown that the correctness of educational concepts is directly related to whether schools can achieve their talent cultivation goals. As a newly developed educational philosophy, "innovation and entrepreneurship ability cultivation" aligns with

historical trends and the actual needs of modern development. To cultivate innovative and entrepreneurial vocational education teachers, it is essential to establish correct cultivation concepts for vocational education normal students. This involves the following measures:

Recognizing that societal demands for talent are constantly evolving, vocational colleges should shift their talent cultivation goals from merely increasing employment rates to focusing on nurturing innovative and entrepreneurial talents, encouraging students to pursue self-employment. Innovation and entrepreneurship education should be integrated into the entire process of vocational education, fostering innovative and entrepreneurial vocational education teachers to meet the demands of economic and social development.

Enhancing students' entrepreneurial intentions and continuously improving their innovation awareness and entrepreneurial abilities. "Double Innovation Education" requires vocational colleges to transition from solely cultivating technical and skilled talents to nurturing innovative and entrepreneurial talents. This also involves shifting from an employment-oriented approach to an entrepreneurship-oriented one, encouraging students to innovate and start businesses, creating new jobs to alleviate social employment pressure.

Innovating educational models to instill new concepts of innovation and entrepreneurship in students, ultimately constructing a talent cultivation system for innovative and entrepreneurial individuals in the new era.^[10]

3.2 Improving the System for Cultivating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability

A comprehensive system is a crucial foundation for cultivating vocational education normal students' innovation and entrepreneurship abilities. Enhancing this system involves the following strategies:

Building Improved Practice Platforms: Organize various levels of innovation and entrepreneurship competitions at the school, county, city, and district levels to enhance students' practical skills. Establish mechanisms for school-enterprise joint practice platforms, where students first develop innovation skills and creative thinking within the school, then broaden their horizons through enterprise experiences. This dual approach enables students to accumulate experience and improve their capabilities.

Strengthening the Faculty for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education: Schools should develop mechanisms for cultivating innovative and entrepreneurial teachers, implementing systematic and effective training programs. Regular training sessions should enhance teachers' comprehensive abilities. Schools should also form internal mentor teams at departmental or research group levels, while inviting external part-time instructors to guide students during practice. By leveraging school-enterprise collaboration, schools can establish dynamic mechanisms linking on-campus and off-campus resources to build a robust innovation and entrepreneurship education system.

Enhancing Incentive Mechanisms: Schools should set up innovation and entrepreneurship funds, organize related competitions, optimize evaluation systems, and establish dedicated institutions. Additionally, offering diverse training courses, strengthening professional guidance, and providing multi-channel financial and policy support will instill confidence in students to improve their abilities.

3.3 Optimizing the Environment for Cultivating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability

A favorable environment is crucial for nurturing students' innovation and entrepreneurship abilities. The cultivation process requires the combined efforts of schools, families, society, and governments:

Schools: In addition to organizing related competitions, schools should hold events such as innovation and entrepreneurship activity months or academic weeks to foster a campus culture conducive to innovation and entrepreneurship.

Families: Parents should be guided to change traditional educational and employment mindsets, emphasizing the importance of cultivating students' innovation and entrepreneurship abilities. Families should provide encouragement and support, helping students build confidence in their capabilities.

Society: Enterprises should be encouraged to actively participate in schools' talent cultivation systems. They can share insights on industry trends, market challenges, and technical hurdles, offering students practical opportunities to engage in business operations. Schools, in turn, should collaborate

with enterprises to train innovative talents, ensuring mutual growth and development.

Governments: Governments should actively implement national policies on innovation and entrepreneurship education, leveraging their functions to establish channels for school-enterprise collaboration. Governments should also create dedicated education funds, increasing financial support to ensure the effectiveness of cultivating innovation and entrepreneurship abilities in vocational education normal students.

Conclusion

Vocational education normal students, as the future teachers of vocational schools, play a crucial role in building innovative faculty teams for vocational education. Cultivating their innovation and entrepreneurship abilities significantly enhances their overall competencies, encouraging them to explore curriculum reform and educational innovation in vocational education. This process lays a solid foundation for training a new generation of innovative and entrepreneurial talents who meet diverse societal needs.

The cultivation of innovation and entrepreneurship abilities in vocational education normal students requires the active participation of schools, families, society, and governments. It is essential to establish a mechanism in which schools take the lead, families provide support, society offers assistance, and governments ensure strong backing. This coordinated effort can effectively promote the training of innovative and entrepreneurial talents, ultimately driving the high-quality development of vocational education.

Funded Projects

2016 Guangxi Vocational Education Teaching Reform Project: Research and Practice on the Cultivation of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability of Vocational Education Normal Students under the Background of "Innovation and Entrepreneurship" (Project No. GXGZJG2016A099).

2019 Student Affairs Research Project of Nanning Normal University: Research on the Cultivation of College Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability under the Background of Cultural Confidence (Project No. 2019XG08).

2020 Nanning Normal University Innovation and Entrepreneurship Research Project: Research on the Integration and Construction of Second-Classroom Curriculum Based on Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education.

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