

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AND WORK MOTIVATION IN NEWLY ESTABLISHED UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGES: A CASE STUDY OF L COLLEGE IN YUNNAN PROVINCE

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between personnel management and teacher work motivation at L College in Yunnan Province. The objectives are to: 1) assess the current status of personnel management at the college; 2) investigate the current state of teacher work motivation; and 3) analyze the correlation between personnel management and teacher work motivation. The study involves 215 teachers, with data collected through a questionnaire survey using the personnel management evaluation scale and teacher work motivation scale. Data analysis is conducted using SPSS. Findings reveal that: 1) Personnel management at L College is at a medium level, with high scores in performance appraisal (2.955), development (2.909), and information management (2.871), but lower scores in human resource planning (2.687), onboarding management (2.669), and negotiation (2.673); 2) Teacher work motivation is also at a medium level, with higher scores in job nature (2.921), sense of achievement (2.859), and professional status (2.798), while work environment (2.664) and job stability (2.702) need improvement; 3) Personnel management is positively correlated with teacher work motivation ($r = 0.745$, $p < 0.01$), explaining 85.7% of the variation in motivation. Continuous management ($\beta = 0.201$) and performance appraisal ($\beta = 0.145$) significantly impact teacher motivation.

Keywords: Newly established undergraduate colleges, personnel management, work motivation

Introduction

In the era of accelerating global education change, the rapid development of information technology has had a profound impact on the teaching mode and management mode of higher education (Kerr, 2001). China's higher education is in a critical period of transformation and development, especially the newly built undergraduate universities, which have come from the upgrading and transformation of higher vocational colleges and shoulder the important mission of improving the quality of education and serving regional economic development. However, these universities generally face many challenges in academic level, governance structure, talent team construction and other aspects. How to adapt to the reform and achieve successful transformation has become the core problem to be solved by the new undergraduate universities.

As a typical representative of newly built undergraduate colleges, L College in Yunnan Province is representative in its personnel management. According to the data of the personnel department of the school, the teacher turnover rate in the school is high in recent years, and

some teachers are dissatisfied with the current performance appraisal system and salary incentive policy. According to the survey data, about 35% of teachers believe that the incentive mechanism is not targeted and systematic, cannot fully reflect their work results, and lack recognition of personal value in their career development. According to Herzberg's two-factor theory, this phenomenon reflects the dual problem of insufficient incentive factors and lack of health care factors. In addition, in the past three years, about 25% of the young and middle-aged teachers in Yunnan L College choose to leave, which has a negative impact on the stability of the teaching team and the continuity of the discipline construction. The workload of teachers is increased by the flow of personnel, which further weakens their work enthusiasm and teaching investment.

1. Theoretical significance

Based on theoretical and empirical research, this study identifies the core factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction, career development and job motivation, and reveals the specific mechanisms on incentive effects such as salary system, career development channel and organizational culture.

This paper discusses the causal relationship between personnel management policy and teacher work incentive, verifies the key role of effective personnel management in promoting teacher career development, job satisfaction and team stability, and provides scientific basis and theoretical support for the construction of teachers in new undergraduate colleges.

2. Practical significance

This study sorts out and analyzes the current situation and shortcomings of the personnel management system of new undergraduate universities, including the problems existing in the key links such as teacher selection, performance appraisal, salary incentive, and career development, so as to provide detailed empirical basis for the improvement of personnel management in new undergraduate universities.

Research Objectives

1. To research and systematically evaluate the current situation of personnel management in new undergraduate universities.
2. To study the factors influencing teachers' work motivation in Yunnan L College.
3. To Study and verify the correlation between personnel management and teachers' work incentives.

Scope of the Research

Variable Scope

Independent variable: personnel management

Dependent variable: job motivation

Hypotheses

H₁: The personnel management level of Yunnan L College has a significant positive impact on teachers' work enthusiasm.

H₂: There are significant differences in the influence of different types of incentive measures on teachers' work enthusiasm.

H₃: There is a significant correlation between all dimensions of personnel management and teachers' work incentive.

Literature Review

Constructivist Learning Theory

McGregor's incentive theory, McGregor's X theory and Y theory are important theoretical frameworks in organizational behavior, which explore how managers' basic assumptions about human nature affect their management mode. The theory holds that the development and progress of an organization depends on the ability to predict and guide employee behavior (McGregor, 1960).

The X theory is based on the relative deviation of human nature assumptions: that people are born with inertia, lack of initiative and self-restraint. Under this assumption, people instinctively work universally, requiring strict supervision and control to complete the task. Managers who tend to pursue stability, resist change and value personal interests, and adopt X theory tend to adopt management means such as coercion, command, and threat, to ensure the completion of work objectives through external pressure and punishment mechanism. This management method may be more applicable in an environment where the basic living needs of the staff have not been fully met.

Relatively speaking, the Y theory holds a more positive view of human nature: that work is as natural as games and rest, and that people have the inner motivation to realize their self-worth. In the appropriate environment, the staff will not only take the initiative to take responsibility, but also the Y theory believes that the salary is only one of the influencing factors, and employees also attach importance to the internal rewards such as self-development and social recognition. Based on this philosophy, managers should create conditions for employees to demonstrate their talents, participate in decision-making, and achieve organizational goals through self-management.

Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Target Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory explains the dynamic mechanism of human behavior from another perspective. This theory is based on the infinity and hierarchy of human beings, which are divided into five levels of importance (Maslow, 1987): physiological needs: the survival needs for communication, including the requirements for basic physiological conditions such as food, water, and sleep. Safety needs: After their basic physiological needs are met, people will pursue a more lasting sense of security, such as personal safety, occupation and economic security. This demand is reflected in the demand for institutional protection, such as rules, laws, and medical protection. Social needs: involved aspects, including emotional belonging, friendship interaction and the pursuit of family, reflect the basic needs of people as social animals for emotional connection. Respect needs: it is a dual demand for self-esteem and recognition by others, including a sense of achievement, professional prestige and social status. Realize self-needs: as the highest level of needs, pointing to the full play of individual potential and the complete realization of personality. This is a dynamic and never-ending process, because people tend to have new and higher pursuits after they achieve their set goals.

Personnel management

The modern university system of the reform and opening up in the 18th century. After hundreds of years of development, the personnel system of these universities has become more mature. However, in the 21st century, the global higher education faces new challenges: the global economic crisis leads to the financial pressure of universities, the expansion of students in the background of the popularization of higher education, the intensified competition among world universities, and the urgent ranking of international talent flow. It is of great significance

to the solution of university personnel system reform in China. Through systematic research, Philip G. Atbach and others pointed out through systematic research that the current academic career in universities is facing challenges: the overall requirements of society, the pressure brought by the development of higher education scale, the impact of economic crisis, which makes the personnel environment in universities increasingly complex. To meet these challenges, countries have adopted different reform strategies: British universities have adopted the approach of adjusting the structure of teachers and increasing the proportion of non-tenure full-time and part-time teachers while retaining tenure (Philip G. Atbach, et al., 2006).

In terms of research on the tenure system in universities, Yarmolinsky Adam (1996) proposed the flexible path of tenure system reform based on the value of academic freedom and management efficiency. Li Chunyu's objective investigation of the administrators and teachers of American research universities found that the implementation of the post-appointment evaluation system reflected more a response to social roles rather than a general impact on the academic status of teachers (Li Chunyu, 2021). Robert Nima analyzed the development of recruitment, appointment, retirement and welfare in the future of the teaching system (Heuer, 2007).

Recently, international universities have generally begun to use artificial intelligence and big data technology to optimize the talent recruitment process. Stanford University in the United States has developed a talent screening system based on machine learning to improve the accuracy and efficiency of talent evaluation by analyzing multi-dimensional indicators such as academic achievements and research influence of applicants (Bondarouk & Brewster, 2016).

Altbach and Musselin point out that the main challenges facing university personnel management in the context of globalization include: enthusiasm for the international flow of talents, beliefs in teacher evaluation standards, and the declining attractiveness of academic careers. They stressed that universities need to establish a flexible personnel management system (Altbach & Musselin, 2008). Cameron and Smart's survey of 50 universities in the United States found that successful personnel management in universities generally has three characteristics: performance-based salary system, unequal career development channels, and efficient talent retention mechanism. Universities provide an important reference for constructing a scientific personnel management system (Serapiglia, et al., 2009).

In terms of talent evaluation, Diamond and Adam have found that the traditional evaluation criteria based on scientific research results can no longer fully meet the development needs of higher education. They proposed the establishment of a trinity of comprehensive scientific research evaluation systems of teaching management services, which has been widely recognized (Diamond & Adam, 2023). According to a study by Meara of new universities in the United States, such institutions generally face three major challenges in personnel management: insufficient talent attraction, weak salary competitiveness, and high teacher turnover rate. They suggested enhancing teacher loyalty by improving the working environment and providing development opportunities (Meara, et al., 2011)

Through a survey of 15 newly built undergraduate universities in China, Zhao Ying pointed out that the personnel management of such universities has a trend of emphasizing introduction rather than training, and quantity over quality. He suggested strengthening the efficient talent development mechanism for young teachers and cultivating their talents (Zhao Ying, 2021). Tang Qingxiong discussed the reform path of the personnel system of the new undergraduate universities from the perspective of system innovation. He proposed that we should pay attention to the sound system and focus on promoting the organic system of talent

introduction, training, and evaluation. This view lays the foundation for perfection. Personnel management of new undergraduate universities has important enlightenment (Tang Qingxiong, 2020).

Based on previous research, the author defines personnel management as: personnel management is a systematic process of comprehensive management of the staff under the framework of policies, regulations and rules and regulations. Including human planning, recruitment, talent selection, induction guidance, performance evaluation, career development, salary, job sustainability, etc., job security, communication, consultation and information management, etc., through the establishment of scientific system and standard operation mechanism, realize the optimal allocation of human resources, to ensure that the staff can work efficiently and achieve organizational goals. This definition not only reflects the institutional characteristics of personnel management, but also emphasizes its functional orientation of serving the development, and also reflects the innovative requirements of personnel management in universities in the new era.

The work incentive

In the research of incentive mechanism, foreign countries have a solid theoretical foundation. As early as in the 1930s, foreign experts began to study the incentive theory. In the early 20s 50s, David McClelland research found that people at the bottom of the physiological needs meet more inclined to self-realization demand, so on the existing knowledge and skills level can further motivation, which is his achievement demand theory, is now a lot of enterprises in the application of incentive mechanism of one of the important theory (Hu Xuhui & Ma Yue, 2007). In this theory, Maslow divides human needs into five levels: physiological, safety, love, respect, and self-realization; in 1970, Maslow expanded the five-stage model to eight levels, increasing cognitive needs, aesthetic needs, and transcendence needs. In 1959, based on the research of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, Herzberg proposed the two-factor theory, in which, Herzberg believed that the factors affecting employees can be divided into two categories, namely health care factors and incentive factors. Thereafter, McClelland studied people's needs and motivation, and concluded that after people need to meet their survival needs, there is a higher need for achievement, affinity and power.

In the study of work motivation theory, Ryan and Deci proposed the emphasis of self-theory that meeting the needs of teachers' autonomy, competence and belonging is the key to stimulate their internal motivation. Understanding a teachers' work motivation provides a new perspective (Deci, et al., 2017). The study by Schaufeli and Llorens (2006) showed that work incentives are an important variable linking organizational management with individual performance. They found that a sense of organizational support and opportunities for career development were the key factors influencing teacher work motivation (Llorens et al., 2006).

Chinese scholar Tang Quanqi's research on the American faculty found that professional identity and professional development have a more significant impact on the enthusiasm of college teachers than the level of higher education. This is of great significance for the search for an effective teacher incentive mechanism (Tang Quanqi, 2005). Based on ERG theory, Yang Haiyan conducted a targeted research on the demand structure of teachers in new undergraduate universities. The results show that the professional growth needs and self-realistic needs are the main factors affecting the teachers' work enthusiasm. She suggested that more attention should be paid to teachers' developmental needs in the design of incentive mechanisms (Yang Haiyan, 2023).

Huang Qunjiao's survey of eight newly built universities in Guangxi found that the traditional model of "emphasizing material things over spirit" has been difficult to meet the needs of teachers in the new era. They proposed to build "diversity and harmony" to stimulate the body, namely the organic combination of material and spiritual stimulation and development stimulation (Huang Qunjiao, 2014). Kuang's research discusses the particularity of the young teachers in new undergraduate colleges. He pointed out that this group is generally concerned about their career development demands and innovation aspirations, and stimulated their work enthusiasm by suggesting the construction of academic platforms and strengthening the guidance of tutors (Kuang Banghong, 2004).

Based on previous research, the author defines work incentive as: it refers to the internal motivation and external factors that can stimulate teachers' enthusiasm, and promote them to voluntarily put into work and achieve the established goals. This includes two types of factors: motivators and health care factors. These research views provide important theoretical support for research. However, it should be noted that the existing studies mostly simply discuss the issues of personnel relationship management or work incentive, and lack of systematic investment in both. Especially under the particularity of newly built undergraduate universities, how to improve the teachers' work incentive through the optimization of personnel management needs to be studied in-depth.

Research Methodology

1. Population and Sample

In order to comprehensively and deeply study the relationship between personnel management and work of Yunnan L University, this study issued a questionnaire to the staff of Yunnan L University in December 2024. The Taro-Yamane formula was used to calculate the required sample size. The specific calculation process is as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e^2))$$

Where n is the required sample size, N is the overall capacity, and e is the stroke amplitude of 5%.

Substitute the total number of school staff into the formula:

$$n = 509 / (1 + 509 \times (0.05^2)) = 509 / (1 + 509 \times 0.0025) = 509 / (1 + 1.27) = 509 / 2.27 = 224.23$$

According to the sample calculation formula, the final sample size was 224 students, but considering the sample recovery rate and sample size consolidation, the sample size of this study was finally determined to be 215 staff members.

2. Research instruments

In this study, the convenience sampling method was used for the data investigation. Questionnaires will be made through a professional online questionnaire platform, and questionnaires will be distributed to carry out pre-investigation and formal investigation from December 2,2 to December 15,2024. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method to select samples according to the convenience and accessibility of researchers. It is usually used for data collection in studies. This method is used to find the respondents and then facilitate the development of the survey ((Burke & Gerace, 1986). This high-precision method can determine the sample units based on a simple principle, which is conducive to improving the efficiency of the survey implementation (Jia Junping, 2006). The convenient sampling

method is based on the following aspects: firstly, considering the large size of teachers and the homogeneity of group characteristics; secondly, the sampling limitation to realize the large random sampling survey; finally, the convenient sampling method can effectively reduce the survey cost and improve the efficiency of data collection.

3. data collection

The data collection method of this paper focuses on questionnaire survey and uses stratified random sampling to draw vocational college students in Sichuan Province as a sample. The questionnaire was distributed in email and paper form with a clear return period set to increase the response rate. The collected questionnaire data were collated, coded and entered into SPSS software for statistical analysis. In order to ensure the data quality, the questionnaire was designed covering six dimensions, including teaching method, teaching content, teaching evaluation system, physical quality, professional quality, and employability, with a total of 48 questions. During the data collection process, meticulous distribution and follow-up strategies were used to ensure the breadth and representativeness of the sample and provide a reliable data basis for the study analysis.

4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the following statistical methods, using off-the-shelf procedures combined with specific data analysis to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results. The ANOVA results showed that the regression model had an F-value of 110.297 with a significance of 0.000. This indicated that the model was overall significant and the relationship between the independent and dependent variables was statistically significant. The effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable was assessed through regression coefficients.

Research Results

According to the research results, on the research on personnel management and teacher work incentive of new undergraduate universities, we can draw the following main conclusions:

The personnel management of Yunnan L College is generally at a middle level, which is consistent with the research hypothesis. Among them, the scores of performance appraisal (2.955), development (2.909) and information management (2.871) were relatively high, while the scores of human resource planning (2.687), induction management (2.669) and negotiation (2.673) were relatively low. This reflects that as a newly built undergraduate university, L College has formed a relatively perfect mechanism in basic personnel management, but there is still room for improvement in strategic talent management.

The overall performance of teachers in L College in Yunnan Province is at the middle level, with good nature of work (2.921), sense of achievement (2.859) and professional status (2.798), while the working environment (2.664) and work stability (2.702) need to be improved. This is mainly because teachers have a strong sense of identity and mission to the teaching work itself, but their satisfaction in the basic guarantee is relatively low.

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	significance	covariance statistics	
	B	standard error	Beta			tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	.325	.079		4.134	.000		
Human resources planning	.090	.024	.134	3.725	.000	.549	1.823
Invite applications for a job	.090	.023	.153	3.860	.000	.449	2.227
Talent Selection	.071	.027	.094	2.635	.009	.558	1.792
Onboarding	.058	.026	.081	2.237	.026	.533	1.877
Performance Appraisal	.096	.024	.145	3.949	.000	.526	1.900
Developmental Remuneration and benefits	.078	.024	.119	3.284	.001	.539	1.854
sustainability	.057	.025	.096	2.261	.025	.395	2.533
Work Stability	.138	.023	.201	5.914	.000	.611	1.636
Conference Information Management	.054	.028	.073	1.964	.051	.507	1.974
	.049	.025	.069	1.969	.050	.577	1.734
	.082	.025	.115	3.294	.001	.579	1.727

The covariance diagnostics showed that the tolerance values of all the variables were higher than 0.1 and the VIF values were less than 2.533, indicating that there was no serious covariance problem among the variables. The results indicate that these variables have high explanatory power for teacher motivation evaluation. Continuity, performance appraisal, recruitment, and human resource planning have the most significant effect on motivation evaluation. This indicates that these factors need to be focused on in management. In addition, other variables such as information management, development, and compensation and benefits also have a more significant role in teacher motivation evaluation. The fit of the regression model and the statistical results show that the independent variables have a significant effect on the dependent variable. The results of the study provide a strong basis for a deeper understanding of teacher incentives.

Discussion

Based on the research findings, the following suggestions are proposed to improve the personnel management and teacher work incentive mechanism of Yunnan L College:

1. Improve the personnel management system. It is suggested that the school should focus on improving the system construction from three aspects: first, establish a scientific post setting mechanism, and rationally allocate teaching and scientific research positions according to the needs of subject development. Secondly, the professional title evaluation system should be reformed to highlight the assessment weight of teaching performance and practical ability. Innovate the assessment and evaluation mechanism, and establish the honest evaluation index system.

2. Optimize the mechanism of talent introduction and training. It is suggested to adopt the strategy of "simultaneous introduction and education": on the one hand, formulate competitive talent introduction policies to increase the introduction of high-level talents and talents in short supply; on the other hand, strengthen the training of existing teachers and support the growth of teachers through tutorial system and project-based training funding. At the same time, establish a reasonable exit mechanism to maintain the vitality of the talent team.

3. Build a comprehensive incentive mechanism. It is suggested to build the incentive system from three aspects: material incentives, improve the performance pay distribution scheme and establish the incentive mechanism linked to the contribution; spiritual incentive, establish the honorary titles of teaching teacher and outstanding scientific research worker, strengthen the spiritual incentive, and provide teachers with professional development opportunities such as further study and academic exchange.

4. Optimize the organization and management environment. It is suggested to focus on the following aspects: improve the office conditions and teaching facilities to create a good material environment; strengthen the cooperation and communication between departments to build a harmonious interpersonal environment; improve the democratic management mechanism and create a fair and just institutional environment.

5. Improve service awareness and ability. It is suggested to start from two aspects: one is to improve the service consciousness of managers and establish the concept of "taking the teacher"; the other is to strengthen the information construction and improve the management efficiency and service quality. At the same time, a smooth communication and feedback mechanism should be established to respond to teachers' demands.

These improvement measures need to be promoted from multiple aspects, such as system design, resource allocation and organizational management, which should not only pay attention to short-term results, but also focus on long-term development, so as to promote the virtuous cycle of talent team construction of the university.

Recommendations

Based on the process and findings of this study, this study presents the perspectives for future research from the following dimensions:

First, in terms of research perspective, future research can adopt multiple theoretical perspectives and analytical frameworks. This study is mainly based on the theory of human resource management and two-factor theory. Future research can introduce multi-disciplinary perspectives such as organizational behavior and educational economics, which will help to deeply understand the complex interactive mechanism of personnel management and teacher work incentive in new undergraduate institutions.

Second, in terms of research methods, the follow-up studies can use mixed research methods. This study mainly adopts quantitative research methods such as questionnaire survey. In the future, we can combine qualitative research methods such as interviews and participatory observation, and conduct mutual verification through quantitative and qualitative research, so as to obtain richer and in-depth research findings. In particular, qualitative research methods may bring new insights into the deep reasons behind teachers' work motivation and behavioral choices.

Third, in terms of research scope, the sample can expand the scope and conduct longitudinal studies. In this study, the cross-sectional study took Yunnan L College as a single case. In the future, more new undergraduate universities can be included for comparative studies, or the same research object can be tracked to study the long-term impact of personnel management reform on teachers' work incentives. This will help to reveal the common characteristics and personality differences of different types of colleges and universities, and provide more powerful targeted support for policy making.

Fourth, in terms of the research topics, the breadth and depth of the research content can be expanded. In addition to focusing on the relationship between personnel management and work incentives, future research can also explore the role of internal factors such as

organizational culture and leadership style, as well as the influence of teachers' professional development, teaching and innovation. At the same time, the different needs of different groups (such as young teachers, vocational teachers, etc.) can also be studied to provide reference for precise policies.

Fifth, in terms of practice application, future research should strengthen policy transformation and practice testing. The policy recommendations presented in this study need further validation and refinement in practice. It is suggested that the implementation effect of reform measures should be systematically evaluated through action research, and problems should be found and optimized in time, so as to ensure that the research results can truly serve the development of new undergraduate universities.

In short, the research on personnel management and teacher work incentive in new undergraduate colleges has a broad space for exploration. It is expected that more scholars will pay attention to this field in the future and provide strong support for the high-quality development of new undergraduate universities through theoretical innovation and method breakthroughs. At the same time, we also hope that this study can provide a good reference and data for the subsequent related studies.

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