

Research on Higher Vocational Colleges' Teacher Performance Incentive System Under The "Xingliao Excellence Institution Construction" Program

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Abstract

Under the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" strategy, building a teacher performance incentive system is key for higher vocational colleges to boost educational quality and core competitiveness. This paper uses literature analysis and case studies of typical schools to review the current state of performance incentive systems in Liaoning's higher vocational colleges. It finds that existing mechanisms have problems like single evaluation standards, non-tiered/non-categorized indicators, and over-focus on "end-result" incentives, making it hard to motivate teachers. To solve these issues, the paper suggests improving the tiered and categorized evaluation system, strengthening development-oriented approaches and process management, and enhancing performance evaluation process management. These aim to create a scientific system that balances incentives and development. This is important for improving higher vocational teachers' team quality and promoting regional vocational education development.

Keywords

Xingliao Excellence Institution; Higher Vocational Education; Teacher Performance; Incentive System.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the nation has been advancing a high-quality development strategy, stressing that vocational education, as the main training ground for technical and skilled talents, is crucial for a modern economic system. Under this umbrella, Liaoning Province has initiated the "Xingliao Excellence" institution and cluster of specialty projects. It aims to boost regional industrial upgrading via vocational education, serving the "Digital Liaoning, Manufacturing-strong Liaoning" strategy. It focuses on supporting 20 higher vocational colleges to become high-level ones, leading provincially and top-notch domestically^[1-2].

The "Xingliao Excellence Institution" plan seeks to enhance the core competitiveness of higher vocational education, build a modern vocational education system, and improve its ability to serve local economic and social development. In this process, the quality and vitality of the teaching staff are key indicators of the plan's success. Establishing a scientific, reasonable, and effective teacher performance management system is thus an essential part of this excellence-building effort^[3].

2. The Current Status of "Xingliao Excellence Institution" Construction

Since the launch of the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" construction, a batch of high-level vocational colleges with leading and demonstration function have been created in line with the economic and social development needs of Liaoning Province. These colleges strongly support the comprehensive revitalization of Liaoning by providing talent and intellectual guarantees.

After several years of construction and development, the participating colleges have achieved significant results in many aspects, strongly promoting the high - quality development of vocational education in Liaoning Province^[4].

Each Xingliao Excellence Institution closely connects with Liaoning's development strategy and dynamically adjusts its professional layout. Liaoning Railway Vocational and Technical College has completed 100% of the overall "Xingliao Excellence" construction tasks, finished 490 construction task acceptance points, and achieved over 100 high - level results. Liaoning Urban Construction Vocational and Technical College, facing the "dual - ability" development needs of intelligent construction and building energy - saving, has advanced the construction of four Xingliao Excellence clusters of specialties in intelligent construction engineering technology, municipal engineering technology, etc., promoting the development of 18 majors. Liaoning Economic Vocational and Technical College, serving the transformation and upgrading of Liaoning's productive service industry, has focused on creating characteristic clusters of specialties such as logistics management, smart finance, and digital information, and opened 10 new majors urgently needed by industries, achieving a high match between talent training and industry demands. Meanwhile, fruitful results have also been obtained in industry - education integration. Many colleges have built school - enterprise cooperation platforms to provide social services for enterprises. Liaoning Urban Construction Vocational and Technical College has established over 100 teaching intern - ship bases and hired over 100 visiting professors. Liaoning Economic Vocational and Technical College has built 14 industry - education closely integrated training bases, over 40 school - enterprise two - way workstations, and eight mixed - ownership secondary industry colleges. It has cooperated with over 200 enterprises, trained over 120,000 learners, completed 158 training projects for cadres of provincial - level enterprises and institutions, 105 counterpart support training projects, provided management innovation consulting services for 358 small, medium, and micro enterprises, and received payment of over ten million yuan.

With the strong support of Liaoning Province, in recent years, various colleges have actively explored and made great efforts in building teacher performance incentive systems, achieving remarkable progress. Meanwhile, the Liaoning Provincial Department of Education has established a performance evaluation mechanism to dynamically monitor and adjust the construction process. However, during the project construction process, some challenges have also been faced. Some colleges have deficiencies in performance indicator completion and have not yet established effective performance incentive mechanisms. Moreover, differences in income and consumption levels across regions have limited the effectiveness of the current salary system in motivating the teaching staff.

3. The Significance of Establishing a Performance Incentive System

3.1. The Necessity of Teachers' Performance Incentive System

Under the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" construction, building a scientific and reasonable teacher performance incentive system is essential. Vocational education's uniqueness demands that teachers possess solid professional knowledge, rich practical experience, and teaching ability to meet the need for high - quality technical and skilled talents. Yet, teachers' work enthusiasm and teaching quality are often influenced by work environment, career development, and salary. Traditional teacher management models usually fail to fully motivate teachers, affecting school - wide development. A performance incentive system, with clear evaluation criteria and incentives, can boost teachers' enthusiasm and engagement in teaching and research, thus improving the school's educational level^[5].

As "Xingliao Excellence Institution" construction advances, higher vocational colleges face higher demands and fiercer competition. To achieve school construction goals, it's necessary to

comprehensively enhance the overall quality and teaching ability of the teacher workforce. The performance incentive system, through a scientific and reasonable evaluation system, can comprehensively and objectively assess teachers' work performance, offering a basis for promotions, salary adjustments, and training opportunities. This facilitates the optimization of teacher resource allocation, enhances resource utilization efficiency, and encourages teachers to continuously improve their professional and teaching abilities to align with the school's development needs.

3.2. The role of incentive system in promoting the construction of teachers' team

A well - designed teacher performance incentive system is crucial for teacher team building. It offers teachers clear career - development directions and goals. Backed by a scientific and reasonable performance - evaluation index system, teachers can clearly understand the school's work requirements and expectations, and purposefully enhance their teaching and professional levels^[6]. For instance, by joining teaching - reform, curriculum - building, and research projects, teachers can boost their overall quality and lay a solid foundation for career development. The system's reward mechanism also provides material and spiritual rewards for teachers who excel in teaching and research, boosting their enthusiasm and job satisfaction, and promoting teacher team stability and growth. Moreover, the system encourages teacher interaction and cooperation. During performance evaluation, teachers can learn from and draw on each other to improve their teaching and professional abilities^[7]. Team performance evaluation mechanisms particularly motivate teachers to work together on teaching and research tasks. For example, in professional building, curriculum development, and teaching team formation, teachers can cooperate to maximize their strengths, solve teaching and research problems, and enhance the school's overall teaching and research capacities. Through such teamwork, teachers can develop good communication and collaboration mechanisms, strengthening team cohesion and centripetal force, and advancing teacher team building.

3.3. The strategic significance of serving the construction goal of "Xingliao Excellence Institution"

Under the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" construction, building a teacher performance incentive system is of great importance. On the one hand, the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" construction focuses on key tasks such as teacher ethics, industry - education integration, and school - enterprise cooperation. As the core of education, teachers' performance directly impacts the school's construction effectiveness. The performance incentive system can align teachers' career goals with the school's objectives, encouraging their active participation in school - wide construction efforts. For instance, teachers can engage in school - enterprise projects, guide students in vocational skills competitions, and conduct social services. These actions convert the school's teaching and research outcomes into real - world productivity, offering technological and talent support for local economic and social development, and promoting the achievement of the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" construction goals.

On the other hand, the performance incentive system provides scientific management tools and decision - making basis for the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" construction. With a scientific and reasonable performance evaluation system, schools can gain a comprehensive understanding of teachers' performance and contributions, thus obtaining scientific decision - making basis. For example, based on performance evaluation results, schools can reasonably adjust teachers' work tasks and positions, optimize the teacher workforce structure, and enhance management efficiency. Additionally, the performance incentive system, through clear evaluation criteria and incentive measures, regulates teachers' behavior, encourages their self - conscious adherence to school rules and regulations, and fosters a positive teaching and

learning environment. All these efforts provide a strong guarantee for the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" construction.

4. Analysis on the Construction of Current Performance Incentive System

4.1. Overall Status of Teacher Performance Incentive System

Under the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" initiative, some higher vocational colleges have begun to focus on building teacher performance incentive systems and have achieved certain results. These colleges have established a scientific and reasonable performance evaluation index system, incorporating multiple aspects of teachers' work, such as teaching, research, and social services, into the evaluation scope, thereby initially constructing a relatively comprehensive performance evaluation mechanism. For example, some colleges have introduced diverse evaluation methods such as student evaluation of teaching, peer review, and expert review to ensure the objectivity and fairness of the evaluation results. At the same time, some colleges have also established incentive mechanisms linked to performance evaluation results, such as salary adjustment, professional title promotion, and excellence awards, which have played a role in motivating teachers' enthusiasm for work.

In the implementation process of the performance incentive system, some colleges also focus on combining it with the school's overall development strategy. By guiding teachers to actively participate in key tasks such as teaching reform, program building, and school - enterprise cooperation through performance incentives, the colleges aim to achieve their development goals. For instance, colleges like Liaoning Urban Construction Vocational and Technical College and Liaoning Vocational College have held implementation and promotion meetings for performance evaluation, emphasized its importance, and made specific arrangements for the work. They have clarified the evaluation index system and process, ensuring the effective implementation of the performance incentive system.

4.2. Difficulties and challenges faced by performance incentive system

Although some higher vocational colleges have made progress in building teacher performance incentive systems, they still face challenges in practice. On the one hand, some colleges lack a layered and classified performance - indicator design, ignoring the responsibility differences among teachers in various posts. Using a one - size - fits - all template leads to poor indicator fit and fails to truly reflect teachers' work results. Also, the over - emphasis on teaching load and research achievements, coupled with insufficient evaluation indicators for practical skills, social services, and school - enterprise cooperation, discourages teachers from engaging in these areas. On the other hand, the indicator system's over - reliance on quantifiable data marginalizes content with strong subjectivity or difficulty in measurement, such as teaching quality, student growth, and teacher input. As a result, teachers tend to focus on publishing papers and applying for research projects while neglecting teaching quality and depth. With the "Xingliao Excellence Institution" construction advancing, schools' teaching goals and tasks keep changing.

However, the performance evaluation indicator system hasn't been dynamically adjusted in time, causing a disconnect between evaluation indicators and the schools' actual needs.

5. Suggestions on the Improvement of Performance Incentive System

5.1. Improve the evaluation system of classification and stratification

The work content and responsibilities of teachers in higher vocational colleges are becoming more diversified. To solve the problem of uniform assessment, these colleges need to implement a classification - and - layer based evaluation mechanism tailored to different post

types. More targeted evaluation indicators should be developed in line with the work characteristics and responsibilities of different teacher types. This can more accurately measure teachers' work performance and boost their enthusiasm^[8].

The evaluation mechanism should integrate classification and layer - based principles. Classification evaluation, based on teachers' work nature and post responsibilities, divides teachers into teaching - oriented, teaching - and - research - oriented, research - oriented, and community - service - oriented categories. It focuses on evaluating teaching quality and course building for teaching - oriented teachers, teaching and research outcomes for teaching - and - research - oriented teachers, research output level and volume for research - oriented teachers, and community service effectiveness for community - service - oriented teachers^[9]. This approach matches precisely different teachers' actual work situations, avoids a "one - size - fits - all" method, and enhances evaluation rationality. Layer - based evaluation divides teachers into junior, intermediate, and senior levels according to their professional titles, experience, and career development stages. It emphasizes improving basic teaching skills for junior teachers, teaching reform and research project performance for intermediate teachers, and program building and team leadership for senior teachers. This meets the needs of teachers at different levels, allows for the establishment of suitable evaluation standards and development goals, promotes teachers' individual development, and thus advances the overall faculty team building in schools.

5.2. Strengthen development orientation and process management

The current performance appraisal system tends to focus on "end - result evaluation" and provides insufficient support for the teacher growth process. To improve this situation, the performance incentive system should focus on both work results and development processes, and strengthen development - oriented approaches and process management^[10].

The performance incentive system should center on promoting teachers' professional development. Schools can enhance teachers' teaching and research abilities by offering training, further study, and academic exchange opportunities. For instance, schools can offer more training and academic exchange platforms to high - performing teachers based on appraisal results, broadening their horizons and improving their professional quality. A teacher development fund can be set up to support teaching reform and research projects, providing financial backing for teachers' career development. At the same time, schools need to strengthen the management and supervision of the teaching process. A regular performance evaluation mechanism should be established. A mid - term performance evaluation should be carried out each semester to check teaching progress, teaching methods, and the progress of research projects. This allows for the timely identification of problems and the provision of improvement suggestions. Teachers' work files should be maintained to document their work processes and outcomes, offering reliable evidence for appraisals. By strengthening development - oriented approaches and process management, schools can promptly identify issues in teachers' work and provide targeted guidance and support. This promotes continuous teacher development and overall faculty - quality improvement.

5.3. Strengthen the management of performance evaluation process

The scientific and fair nature of performance evaluations directly impacts teachers' recognition and acceptance of the performance incentive system. Thus, enhancing the management of the evaluation process to ensure its transparency and impartiality is crucial for improving the system's effectiveness.

To boost the scientific and effective nature of performance evaluations, schools should focus on three areas: clarifying evaluation standards, optimizing evaluation processes, and refining feedback mechanisms. First, evaluation indicators must be explicit, concrete, and actionable,

avoiding vague or subjective criteria. Schools should develop these indicators through extensive research and teacher involvement, ensuring everyone understands and agrees with the standards. Second, the evaluation process should be scientific, reasonable, and transparent. This includes clearly defining steps like preparation, data collection and analysis, and result feedback and display. Schools should announce evaluation times and requirements in advance, use diversified evaluation methods, and promptly release results for supervision. Finally, a robust feedback mechanism is essential. Schools need to provide teachers with timely evaluation results and detailed analysis. They should also establish effective channels for teachers to voice opinions and suggestions, carefully analyzing and responding to these inputs to raise teachers' satisfaction and recognition of the performance evaluation system.

6. Conclusion

In the performance incentive mechanisms of higher vocational colleges, common issues like "homogenized indicators", "single - minded incentives", and "lack of evaluation transparency" can dampen the enthusiasm and motivation of teacher teams. This paper suggests building a classification - and - layer based performance evaluation system. This system should be grounded in job categories and rank levels, focus on teacher growth - process management, and enhance the fairness, scientific nature, and orientation of incentive systems. Performance incentives should not only boost educational quality but also align with the school's strategic development. This enables synergistic development of teachers' individual value and the school's overall goals.

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