

A Survey and Research on the Leadership Status and Development Strategies of College Student Cadres in Chinese Vocational Colleges

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Abstract: This study utilizes literature review and questionnaire methods to investigate the leadership knowledge, skills, and attitudes of college student cadres in Chinese vocational colleges. Data analysis is conducted using SPSS 22.0 statistical software. The research reveals that the leadership level of college student cadres in Chinese vocational colleges is generally weak, with significant differences observed in age, registered courses, leadership positions, leadership experience, and training. Based on these findings, strategies for improving both the student cadres and school leadership development are proposed. Suggestions include expanding the sample coverage, conducting in-depth factor analysis, long-term tracking studies, interdisciplinary research, and integrating theory with practice, thereby innovating training methods.

Keywords: China Vocational College; College student cadre leadership; Leadership survey; Leadership development strategies.

1. Introduction

With the deepening of economic globalization and continuous changes in the external environment, there is an increasing demand for higher-quality talents. A consensus has emerged that in an increasingly globalized world, leaders with a "global perspective" are needed. Leadership skills are becoming increasingly important as a fundamental component of college student qualifications, garnering high attention from governments and organizations. Although China has made considerable achievements in leadership education for university students, the focus has mostly been on undergraduate institutions. There is a lack of research specifically addressing leadership development in three-year vocational colleges, especially for student cadres.

In this context, this study investigates the current status of leadership knowledge, skills, and attitudes among student cadres in Chinese vocational colleges. Through a questionnaire survey, it explores the impact of these factors and proposes targeted strategies for leadership development, constructing a supervisory model that enriches practical experience.

2. Research Objectives and Methods:

Based on the Leadership Challenge Model, a leadership survey questionnaire for college students in vocational colleges was developed.

The survey targeted 300 student cadres in a vocational college in City L, resulting in 295 valid responses, with an effective response rate of 98.33%.

3. Survey Results and Analysis

3.1. Demographic Analysis of Respondents:

The research subjects of this study are student cadres in

higher vocational colleges. They are relatively evenly distributed in terms of age, gender, and registered courses, and there is no obvious age, gender, or major bias. When it comes to holding leadership positions, all levels of leadership are represented. Interviewees held leadership positions at different levels, including school-level student union presidents, ministers, monitors, etc. There are relatively more respondents from student union ministers and monitors, probably because these positions have greater influence within the school.

Most of the respondents have extensive student leadership experience, with 48.14% having 3-4 years of experience and 23.39% having 5-6 years of experience. This suggests that the respondents have accumulated a considerable amount of experience in student leadership roles that may have had a positive impact on their leadership development. 68.47% of the respondents have participated in more than 2 leadership trainings, which shows that most of the respondents have a certain level of attention and investment in leadership training. Although most of the respondents have participated in more than 2 leadership trainings, 31.53% of the respondents have not participated in or only participated in 1 leadership training. This shows that there is still a gap in the leadership training of student leaders in Chinese vocational colleges.

3.2. The current situation of leadership among college student cadres in China's vocational colleges

Tables 1 to 3 show that college student cadres in Chinese vocational colleges generally have weak knowledge and skills in leadership, especially in areas such as political literacy, practical ability and self-management that need to be improved.

Table 1. Level of Knowledge of the Respondents on the Various Areas of Campus Leadership in Terms of Self-Awareness and Personal Behavior

Self-Awareness and Personal Behavior	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Establishing clear life direction and goals.	2.44	1.21	Low
Creating one's powerful inner world and being aware of emotional changes.	2.40	1.15	Low
Identifying one's character traits and abilities.	2.42	1.17	Low
Engendering a willingness to help others.	2.33	1.15	Low
Generating the idea of treating others sincerely.	2.33	1.17	Low
Overall	2.39	1.17	Low

Legend: 1.00 to 1.49 – Very Low (VL); 1.50 to 2.49 – Low (L); 2.50 to 3.49 – High (H); 3.50 to 4.00 – Very High (VH)

Table 2. Respondents' Assessment of Their Skills in Campus Leadership with Regard to the Aforementioned Variables in Terms of Self-Awareness and Personal Behavior

Self-Awareness and Personal Behavior	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Show the ability for self-observation and self-evaluation.	2.49	1.15	Fair
Establish a clear understanding of the relationship between oneself and others, and between oneself and the environment.	2.52	1.14	Good
Create effective ways to self-regulate and control when negative emotions arise.	2.51	1.14	Good
Generate insights into details.	2.54	1.16	Good
Establish a behavioral model that tolerates people's shortcomings and utilizes their strengths.	2.55	1.14	Good
Overall	2.52	1.14	Good

Legend: 1.00 to 1.49 – Needs Improvement (NI); 1.50 to 2.49 – Fair (F); 2.50 to 3.49 – Good (G); 3.50 to 4.00 – Exceptional (E)

Table 3. Attitude of the Respondents Towards the Various Qualities Relevant to Campus Leadership in Terms of Gratitude

Gratitude	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Motivate oneself to have a high sense of gratitude.	2.44	1.15	Disagree
Thank one's parents, relatives, teachers, classmates, etc. who have helped you accomplish a goal.	2.40	1.12	Disagree
Encourage oneself to express gratitude in the midst of challenging situations.	2.41	1.17	Disagree
Cultivate a sense of gratitude among team members.	2.40	1.16	Disagree
Encourage his or her team members to express gratitude at all times.	2.35	1.17	Disagree
Overall	2.40	1.16	Disagree

Legend: 1.00 to 1.49 – Strongly Disagree (SD); 1.50 to 2.49 – Disagree (D); 2.50 to 3.49 – Agree (A); 3.50 to 4.00 – Strongly Agree (SA)

Table 4. Comparison of the Respondents' Knowledge, Skills, And Attitudes Towards Campus Leadership When Grouped According to Their Age

Attributes	Age	Mean	S.D.	F-Value	P-Value	Sig.
Knowledge	18-19	2.25	1.12	49.78	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	20-21	2.38	1.14			
	22-23	2.55	1.16			
Skills	18-19	2.36	1.12	31.67	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	20-21	2.44	1.11			
	22-23	2.59	1.17			
Attitude	18-19	2.28	1.13	51.62	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S

Table 5. Comparison of the Respondents' Knowledge, Skills, And Attitudes Towards Campus Leadership When Grouped According to Their Sex

Attributes	Sex	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	P-Value	Sig.
Knowledge	Male	2.40	1.14	-0.04	P = 0.97 > 0.05	NS
	Female	2.40	1.15			
Skills	Male	2.48	1.12	1.51	P = 0.13 > 0.05	NS
	Female	2.45	1.15			
Attitude	Male	2.40	1.14	0.22	P = 0.83 > 0.05	NS
	Female	2.39	1.14			

Table 6. Comparison of the Respondents' Knowledge, Skills, And Attitudes Towards Campus Leadership When Grouped According to Their Course/Program Enrolled

Attributes	Course/Program Enrolled	Mean	S.D.	F-Value	P-Value	Sig.
Knowledge	Forestry Technology	2.48	1.11	10.80	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	Architecture and Design	2.22	1.12			
	Intelligent Manufacturing	2.33	1.15			
	Accounting	2.44	1.18			
	Business Administration	2.54	1.18			
	Tourism and Health	2.36	1.12			
Skills	Electronic Information	2.41	1.13	6.92	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	Forestry Technology	2.45	1.10			
	Architecture and Design	2.35	1.10			
	Intelligent Manufacturing	2.48	1.17			
	Accounting	2.63	1.16			
	Business Administration	2.49	1.16			
Attitude	Tourism and Health	2.43	1.2	11.09	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	Electronic Information	2.43	1.11			
	Forestry Technology	2.40	1.11			

Table 7. Comparison of the Respondents' Knowledge, Skills, And Attitudes Towards Campus Leadership When Grouped According to Their Leadership Position Handled

Attributes	Leadership Position Held	Mean	S.D.	F-Value	P-Value	Sig.
Knowledge	Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Deputy Secretary of the Youth League Committee of the School-Level Student Union	2.50	1.15	14.53	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	Minister and Deputy Minister of the School-Level Student Union	2.44	1.17			
	President and Vice-President of the Department Student Union	2.28	1.15			
	Minister and Deputy Minister of Student Unions at all Levels	2.54	1.19			
	Class Leader of Each Class	2.28	1.09			
	Member of Student Organizations at all Levels	2.46	1.14			
Skills	Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Deputy Secretary of the Youth League Committee of the School-Level Student Union	2.61	1.18	23.74	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	Minister and Deputy Minister of the School-Level Student Union	2.52	1.15			
	President and Vice-President of the Department Student Union	2.47	1.12			
	Minister and Deputy Minister of Student Unions at all Levels	2.60	1.17			
	Class Leader of Each Class	2.26	1.07			
	Member of Student Organizations at all Levels	2.54	1.14			
Attitude	Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Deputy Secretary of the Youth League Committee of the School-Level Student Union	2.60	1.11	22.30	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S

Table 8. Comparison of the Respondents' Knowledge, Skills, And Attitudes Towards Campus Leadership When Grouped According to Their Years of Student Leadership Experience

Attributes	Years of Student Leadership Experience	Mean	S.D.	F-Value	P-Value	Sig.
Knowledge	1-2 years	2.27	1.12	23.47	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	3-4 years	2.46	1.15			
	5-6 years	2.43	1.16			
Skills	1-2 years	2.40	1.12	6.81	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	3-4 years	2.50	1.13			
	5-6 years	2.49	1.17			
Attitude	1-2 years	2.32	1.13	13.02	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	3-4 years	2.40	1.15			
	5-6 years	2.49	1.14			

Table 9. Comparison of the Respondents' Knowledge, Skills, And Attitudes Towards Campus Leadership When Grouped According to Their Number of Leadership Trainings Attended

Attributes	Number of Leadership Trainings Attended	Mean	S.D.	F-Value	P-Value	Sig.
Knowledge	0-1	2.27	1.10	16.89	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	2-3	2.37	1.14			
	4-5	2.53	1.16			
	6 or more	2.37	1.21			
Skills	0-1	2.42	1.10	17.35	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S
	2-3	2.40	1.12			
	4-5	2.61	1.16			
	6 or more	2.47	1.21			
Attitude	0-1	2.28	1.13	17.59	P = 0.00 < 0.05	S

Table 4--Table 9 shows that there are significant differences in age, course type, leadership position, leadership experience and training participation dimensions among college student cadres in Chinese vocational colleges, which provides a clear direction for future training plans. Gender does not have a significant impact on leadership, which provides strong data support for the implementation of gender equality in leadership development.

4. Strategies for Cultivating Leadership Among College Student Cadres in Chinese Vocational Colleges

Based on the survey results, this article proposes the following strategies for cultivating the leadership of college student cadres in higher vocational colleges from both the student cadres themselves and the school:

4.1. Student leaders themselves:

Actively offer leadership development courses, covering three aspects: knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and improve students' understanding of leadership through theoretical learning.

A leadership mentor system is implemented, whereby mentors establish a one-to-one mentoring relationship with students and provide regular guidance on academics, career planning, and leadership development.

Design social practice projects to allow student leaders to practice leadership in real scenarios, including organizing activities, community services, volunteer services, etc.

Build an independent learning platform and provide online learning resources, including leadership online courses, e-books, online seminars, etc.

4.2. School aspects:

Develop a leadership training plan for all staff to ensure that every student can receive systematic and comprehensive leadership training during their time at school.

Introducing project-based learning, student leaders can hone their problem-solving and teamwork skills and develop practical experience by participating in projects.

Establish a directional leadership evaluation system to evaluate the leadership demonstrated by students in actual projects to promote individual growth.

Organize leadership competitions to encourage students to actively participate, improve leadership skills and enhance competitiveness through competition.

Create a professional leadership practice center to provide practice venues, equipment and resources to support student leaders in participating in simulation exercises, role plays and other activities.

Through the above specific strategies, we aim to comprehensively improve the leadership level of college student cadres in China's higher vocational colleges from both the student and school dimensions, and lay a solid foundation for the successful development of their future careers and social roles.

5. Conclusion

Through this study, we deeply understand the importance

of leadership in the cultivation of college students, especially for student leaders in vocational colleges. By analyzing the demographic variables of the respondents, we not only revealed the general weaknesses in the leadership of college student cadres in China's vocational colleges, but also found significant differences in age, registered courses, leadership positions, leadership experience and training. In response to these findings, we propose a series of strategies for improving student leader leadership.

However, due to the limited skill of the author, this article has many limitations, such as sample limitations, data collection methods, etc., and there is no follow-up evaluation of the implementation effects of leadership development strategies. In the future, we can expand the sample scope, conduct factor analysis, conduct long-term follow-up research, interdisciplinary research, etc., to better and more comprehensively promote the cultivation of leadership among college student cadres in Chinese vocational colleges.

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