

Research on the Enhancement of Core Employability Competencies of Guangxi University Students through Vocational Skills Training

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Abstract: This paper focuses on the impact of vocational skills training on enhancing the core employability competencies of university students in Guangxi, aiming to explore the role of such training in strengthening their employment competitiveness. By analyzing the connotation and current status of core employability competencies among Guangxi university students, it elaborates on the pathways through which vocational skills training enhances their professional skills, generic abilities, and professional qualities. It points out existing problems in current vocational skills training for Guangxi students, such as the disconnect between training content and market demands, monotonous training methods, and insufficient teaching resources. Corresponding optimization strategies are proposed. The research indicates that vocational skills training can effectively enhance the core employability competencies of Guangxi university students, and optimizing the training system is of significant importance for promoting their employment.

Keywords : Vocational Skills Training; Guangxi University Students; Core Employability Competencies; Enhancement Pathways; Optimization Strategies

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1 Introduction

Amidst the continuous and vigorous development of the social economy, the employment of university students remains a focal point of widespread concern across all sectors of society. Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, as a key gateway and strategic pivot in Southwest China, sees its university students' employment situation not only directly impacting the happiness index and quality of life for countless families but also profoundly influencing the region's economic development trends, social harmony and stability, and the optimization of its talent structure at a deeper level. With the ongoing optimization and upgrading of the industrial structure, market demands for high-quality, versatile talents are increasingly stringent. Relying solely on the transmission of traditional classroom theoretical knowledge makes it difficult for university students to fully adapt to and meet the diversified, high-standard requirements of the current job market. Therefore, effectively enhancing the core employability competencies of university students has become an urgent task for both the education sector and the job market. Vocational skills training, serving as a crucial bridge connecting higher education with actual workplace demands, can provide targeted supplementation and reinforcement for university students' shortcomings in practical operational skills, professional qualities, and workplace adaptability. It plays an indispensable and vital role in comprehensively enhancing their employment competitiveness and workplace adaptability. Based on this, conducting an in-depth exploration and systematic analysis of how vocational skills training can effectively assist Guangxi university students in enhancing their core employability competencies holds significant practical importance by providing strong support for addressing current employment challenges. Simultaneously, it possesses profound theoretical value by offering valuable references for higher education reform and the innovation of talent cultivation models.

2 The Connotation and Current Status of Core Employability Competencies of Guangxi University Students

2.1 Connotation of Core Employability Competencies

Core employability competencies represent a comprehensive concept. It encompasses not only the professional knowledge and skills mastered by university students but also includes the indispensable generic abilities and professional qualities required throughout career development. Professional knowledge and skills form the foundation for university students to establish themselves in the workplace and are prerequisites for completing specific work tasks. Generic abilities, such as communication skills, teamwork skills, and problem-solving abilities, are essential capacities that enable university students to function effectively across diverse work scenarios. Professional qualities include professional ethics, work attitude, dedication, and other factors that are crucial for long-term career development. These three aspects are interconnected and mutually supportive, forming an organic whole that constitutes the core employability competencies of university students.

2.2 Current Status of Core Employability Competencies among Guangxi University Students

Feedback from the current employment market for Guangxi university graduates indicates evident deficiencies in core employability competencies among some students. Regarding professional skills, while some students possess certain theoretical knowledge, they lack practical operational experience, often finding themselves helpless when confronted with specific work tasks. For instance, in technical positions, companies expect to hire graduates who can quickly operate equipment and solve technical problems. However, some graduates, due to insufficient practical experience, struggle to meet these immediate enterprise needs.

In terms of generic abilities, many university students face obstacles in communication and expression, hindering their ability to convey ideas clearly and accurately. In teamwork, they often lack a sense of cooperation and coordination skills, making it difficult to integrate into teams and contribute positively. When encountering problems at work, they frequently lack effective analysis and resolution capabilities, easily becoming stuck.

Regarding professional qualities, some students lack dedication and a sense of responsibility, approaching their work perfunctorily. There are also cognitive deviations in professional ethics, such as a lack of integrity or an excessive pursuit of personal interests. The existence of these issues poses numerous challenges for Guangxi university students in the job market.

3 Pathways for Vocational Skills Training to Enhance Core Employability Competencies of Guangxi University Students

3.1 Strengthening Professional Skills and Solidifying the Employment Foundation

Vocational skills training can provide targeted professional skills training for university students based on the development needs of Guangxi's local industries. Different industries have varying technical requirements and job standards. Vocational skills training can design corresponding courses and practical components according to these characteristics. For example, training focused on Guangxi's key development areas, such as the electronic information industry, can concentrate on specific skills like software development and hardware maintenance. Through project-based training simulating real work scenarios, students can gain proficiency in relevant technologies through practice. This training model ensures that students' professional skills align more closely with market demands, compensating for the lack of practical components in traditional university classroom teaching and providing them with a more solid professional foundation upon graduation.

3.2 Enhancing Generic Abilities to Meet Workplace Demands

Vocational skills training possesses unique advantages in enhancing the generic abilities of university students. Training programs often incorporate numerous team collaboration projects, requiring students to work with peers from diverse backgrounds, dividing tasks and collaborating to achieve common goals. In this process, they learn to listen to others' opinions, express their own views, and reconcile differing ideas, thereby effectively improving their communication and teamwork skills.

Simultaneously, training introduces various complex problems likely encountered in actual work, guiding students to

apply acquired knowledge for analysis, critical thinking, and solution development. Through continuous trial and exploration, students' problem-solving abilities can be significantly enhanced. Furthermore, some training programs include sessions like presentations and reports, honing students' expression skills and on-the-spot adaptability. The improvement of these generic abilities will help them better adapt to the workplace environment.

3.3 Cultivating Professional Qualities to Support Long-Term Development

Vocational skills training emphasizes the cultivation of professional qualities in university students. Through methods like case studies and expert lectures, training programs convey industry-specific professional ethics and spirit. For instance, inviting outstanding employees from enterprises to share their career experiences and discuss upholding integrity, taking responsibility, and maintaining dedication in the workplace provides students with real-life examples that deepen their understanding of the importance of professional qualities and help them establish correct professional ethics.

Moreover, the rigorous requirements within the training process, such as meeting deadlines and adhering to discipline, also foster students' sense of responsibility and time management skills. Through vocational skills training, university students can gradually develop positive work attitudes and professional habits, laying a solid foundation of qualities for their long-term career development.

4 Problems in Vocational Skills Training for Guangxi University Students

4.1 Disconnect Between Training Content and Market Demand

Some vocational skills training programs exhibit a significant lack of deep insight into the trends of Guangxi's industrial transformation when designing content. Relying solely on past experience or generic templates leads to a pronounced gap between the training offered and actual market needs. In recent years, Guangxi has accelerated its layout in emerging fields such as new energy vehicles, green chemicals, and the digital economy, leading to a sharp increase in enterprise demand for high-skilled talents in areas like smart equipment operation, industrial data modeling, and cross-border e-commerce operations. However, many training institutions still focus their training on basic operations in traditional manufacturing and routine clerical processing. The update speed of course content lags far behind the pace of industrial upgrading. A more prominent issue is that some institutions, aiming to attract more students, blindly pursue broad course coverage. They simply compile basic content from different industries, appearing superficially comprehensive but lacking specialized training tailored to Guangxi's characteristic industries (e.g., deep processing of sugarcane, digital design of ethnic handicrafts). This "broad but shallow" curriculum design means that while students are exposed to the rudiments of various skills during training, they struggle to develop genuine competitiveness for specific positions, often resulting in the awkward predicament of being unemployed immediately after training completion.

4.2 Monotonous Training Methods and Weak Practical Components

Currently, most vocational skills training still follows the traditional "teacher lectures, students take notes" model. Classroom time is predominantly occupied by PowerPoint presentations and theoretical explanations, lacking practical training aligned with actual job scenarios. Even when institutions claim their courses include practical elements, resource constraints often render them superficial. For example: In computer skills training, students may only perform basic software operations in outdated computer labs, lacking access to advanced technologies like cloud server deployment or big data analysis platforms used in enterprises. In mechanical processing training, due to insufficient CNC machine tools, it's common for over ten students to take turns observing a single device, with actual hands-on time constituting less than 10% of total instruction hours. Crucially, the practical content is often severely disconnected from real enterprise workflows. For instance, e-commerce training might only involve simulating listing products on a fictional platform, neglecting core aspects like live-streaming setup or customer dispute resolution. This "armchair strategy" style of training results in students who may pass theoretical assessments but are left helpless when facing real work tasks due to a lack of understanding of operational procedures and practical proficiency.

4.3 Insufficient Training Teaching Resources

Structural deficiencies in the teaching staff severely constrain the quality of vocational skills training. On one hand, many instructors in training institutions come from retired academics or recent graduates of regular universities. While they possess systematic theoretical knowledge, they generally lack frontline enterprise work experience. For example: An instructor teaching smart manufacturing may never have participated in production line debugging. An instructor guiding new media operations may lack actual account management experience. This results in teaching content remaining at the textbook level, unable to delve into industry nuances or technical operational details. On the other hand, the teaching methods of existing instructors tend to be rigid, relying heavily on lecturing from texts. They struggle to utilize interactive teaching methods like case discussions or scenario simulations to stimulate student participation and interest. Some skills training even adopts a "play instructional video + Q&A" mode, reducing the instructor's role to a mere equipment administrator. This state of the teaching force means training fails to convey cutting-edge industry trends or cultivate students' practical problem-solving abilities, ultimately leading to significantly diminished training effectiveness and an inability to meet market demands for high-quality skilled talents.

5 Strategies for Optimizing Vocational Skills Training for Guangxi University Students

5.1 Align with Market Demand and Scientifically Design Training Content

Training institutions should actively strengthen close communication and deep cooperation with local Guangxi enterprises and industry associations. Through extensive and in-depth research activities, they should comprehensively understand industry development trends and the specific skill requirements of various positions. Based on this understanding of actual market demands, training content should be designed scientifically and rationally. Particularly for Guangxi's key development sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, modern services, and specialty agriculture, corresponding training courses should be meticulously developed to ensure the skills students learn achieve precise alignment with market needs. Furthermore, training institutions must pay close attention to industry dynamics, promptly updating training content to incorporate emerging new technologies, methods, and concepts into the curriculum system. This ensures students keep pace with industry advancements, master the latest skills and knowledge, and enhance their competitiveness in the workplace.

5.2 Innovate Training Methods and Strengthen Practical Components

Training institutions should abandon the traditional single-mode lecture format and actively explore and adopt diverse training methods, such as case-based teaching, project-based learning, and simulated practical training, to enhance effectiveness. Simultaneously, the proportion of practical components must be significantly increased to provide students with ample and substantial hands-on opportunities. Specifically: Collaborate with relevant enterprises to establish practical training bases, allowing students to practice in real work environments and experience the workplace atmosphere firsthand, thereby effectively improving their practical operational abilities. Fully leverage advanced technologies like Virtual Reality (VR) to construct highly realistic simulated work scenarios. Training in these simulated environments not only increases engagement but also significantly enhances the practical effectiveness of training, enabling students to continuously improve their skills through the integration of theory and practice.

5.3 Strengthen Faculty Development and Enhance Teaching Quality

To comprehensively improve the quality of vocational skills training, institutions must place high priority on building a strong teaching faculty. Actively recruit professional talents with rich industry experience and outstanding practical skills to serve as instructors. They can impart valuable real-world experience and practical techniques to students, significantly increasing the training's relevance and practicality. Strengthen systematic training and rigorous assessment for existing instructors. Encourage teachers to actively participate in various industry exchange activities and enterprise practical projects to continuously enhance their own professional competence and teaching capabilities. Establish and improve scientific incentive mechanisms for faculty. Utilize both material and non-material incentives to fully mobilize teachers' enthusiasm and creativity in teaching. The goal is to build a high-quality, high-level teaching team capable of providing efficient and effective vocational skills training for university students.

6 Conclusion

Vocational skills training plays a crucial role in enhancing the core employability competencies of Guangxi university students. Through pathways such as strengthening professional skills, enhancing generic abilities, and cultivating professional qualities, it can comprehensively boost students' employment competitiveness. However, current vocational skills training for Guangxi students faces problems like a disconnect between training content and market demands, monotonous training methods, and insufficient teaching resources. Strategies such as aligning training content with market needs, innovating training methods to strengthen practical components, and enhancing faculty development to improve teaching quality can effectively optimize vocational skills training. This will better assist Guangxi university students in enhancing their core employability competencies, enabling them to stand out in the competitive job market and achieve the unity of personal and social value.

In the future, as Guangxi's industrial structure continues to adjust and the job market evolves, vocational skills training also needs continuous innovation and improvement to adapt to new demands and challenges, providing sustained and robust support for the employment and development of Guangxi university students.

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