

Research on E-commerce Talents Training in Higher Vocational Education under New Business Background

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Abstract

This paper introduced the development of higher vocational E-commerce education in China within the framework that the advantages, development, and higher vocational education of e-commerce are functionally interactive. The first part of the paper is dedicated to explaining the advantage of e-commerce as well as the present situation and prospects of e-commerce in China. Then, the next two sections are focused on reporting the rapid progress of higher vocational e-commerce education and its limitation in China. Next, our team analyze its irrationality according to our sampling survey on e-commerce specialized courses in China. The final section is mainly to design the knowledge structure and apprenticeship for e-commerce applied professionals combined with our TVET teaching experiences.

Keywords

China higher vocational education, E-commerce talents training, E-commerce courses

Introduction

1. Advantages of e-commerce

1.1. E-commerce makes the traditional business process electronically. This greatly reduces humans and material resources and reduces costs. This would also break the limitation of time and space because every transaction can be carried out any time anywhere, improving the overall efficiency.(Bell, D., & Mgbemena, C, 2019)

1.2. E-commerce is available in every part of the globe, which creates more trades opportunities for enterprises.

1.3. E-commerce enables enterprises to enter the global market at an extremely low cost, which enables SMEs to have the same information resources as large enterprises and improves the competitiveness of SMEs.

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2. The present situation and Prospect of E-commerce in China

2.1. Chinese government strongly supports the development of e-commerce

Since the 20th century, China has published a series of laws and regulations to support the e-commerce industry. Promote the construction of e-commerce credit system, accelerating the construction of express logistics system, constantly improving the infrastructure and service system of E-commerce. Starting May 2020, China has formed an E-commerce laws and regulations and supervision system, which provides a strong and legal policy for the development of E-commerce.

2.2. E-commerce is extremely popular in China

In the past decades, the number of online shoppers in China has went by 20% every year. According to the latest data from the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), By the 2nd quarter of 2020, the number of online shoppers in China is 710 million, resulting in much e-commerce were also listed in the United States, such as Alibaba, JingDong, PinDuoDuo and many more. Among 1.4 billion people in China¹, almost everyone has their apps on their mobile phones because e-commerce is deeply rooted in people's hearts.

2.3. Vigorous development of mobile e-commerce

According to the 44th statistical report on the development of China's internet, as of May 2020, the number of internet users in China has reached 880 million, including 870 million mobile Internet users², with 99.2% of the Internet users using mobile phones With the full coverage of 4G network and the promotion of 5G network, mobile e-commerce is booming with its convenience, universality, security, richness and other characteristics, which further promotes the development of China's e-commerce.

3. The rapid development and limitation of E-commerce education in Higher Vocational Education in China

3.1. The rapid development of China's e-commerce industry has greatly promoted the development of e-commerce major in higher vocational education:

3.1.1 Rapid improvement and renewal of e-commerce course system in Higher Vocational Education

E-commerce is an interdisciplinary subject, it does not only involve computer and internet, but it is also related to economics, management, psychology, and other disciplines. After decades of development, e-commerce has been extended to many research fields. What e-commerce needs is composite talents. After years of construction, the e-commerce curriculum system of China's higher vocational education has been relatively perfect and is constantly advancing and organically updating. Take the vocational education cloud platform (<https://www.icve.com.cn/>)

as an example, there are still thousands more of e-commerce related courses in higher vocational education, which are constantly increasing and updating.(Wenzhe, Y. U., Rong, Z., & Li, W, 2019)

3.1.2 Continuous improvement of e-commerce teacher's ability in Higher Vocational Colleges

Higher vocational education focuses on the study of technology, which is well known by the Chinese government. Therefore, it attaches great importance to the ability training of higher vocational teachers. There are various kinds of training for higher vocational teachers every year. Through these theoretical and practical training, the teaching ability of Higher Vocational e-commerce related teachers continues to improve. In recent years, the government has increased regulations that new teachers in higher vocational colleges must have at least two years of practical work experience.(Minarro-Giménez, J. A., Marín-Alonso, O., & Samwald, M, 2018)

3.2. Although the development of e-commerce education in China's higher vocational education is rapid, it has its limitations, which are mainly reflected in:

3.2.1 The curriculum of e-commerce major in some higher vocational colleges is unreasonable

Although the major of e-commerce has attracted much attention, higher vocational colleges are also aware of the important value of setting up the major of e-commerce. However, many vocational colleges are in a hurry to set up e-commerce major. When they set up an e-commerce major, they lack continuous research on social needs. Therefore, these vocational colleges are prone to unreasonable course setting of e-commerce major, which also affects the learning and ability for improvement of e-commerce major students in vocational colleges.

3.2.2 Insufficient depth of practical courses

From the perspective of e-commerce courses in higher vocational colleges, some of them are limited to the factors of funds, resources and systems, and lack of depth in practical innovation courses. On the one hand, due to the slow renewal of the software and hardware facilities in the school, the content that students learn through the simulation system lags behind the market, which leads to the disconnection between the practice and the market in the school. Although some colleges and universities have signed the cooperation agreement with enterprises, but the cooperation is limited, and the actual effect is not ideal. From the quality point of view, the cooperation between schools and enterprises lacks information exchange. This does not consider the actual needs from the student level, resulting in formalism and agreements with no actual effect.(Sun, Y., Liu, D.,& Li, B, 2019)

4. Questionnaire survey and analysis of e-commerce course in Higher Vocational Education

To have a more in-depth study on the current situation and problems of e-commerce professional courses in higher vocational colleges, our team have conducted a survey in e-commerce professional courses. The target audience for this survey is the students in the e-commerce major in five different higher vocational colleges. Survey forms were distributed and collected by the teachers. A total of 500 questionnaires were sent out and 485 valid questionnaires were recovered. The questionnaire investigated a total 45 questions such as the teaching methods of e-commerce major and the expectation of this course. Through the questionnaire survey, our team found the following problems in e-commerce professional courses:

4.1. Unreasonable curriculum

According to the questionnaire, 59% of the students thinks that the curriculum is unreasonable, and the content of the curriculum is too broad. They want to cultivate the students into an all-around talent, which makes the students learn too disorderly. A lot of teaching barely scratches the surface and is not proficient in any of them.

4.2. Less practical courses

E-commerce has strong practicality and application, which emphasizes that students should have a certain ability of hands-on operation. According to the results of the questionnaire, 91% of the students think that although the school provides the practice teaching site, they also teach through the simulation software in the laboratory, but some of the software has been eliminated. This will not make the students feel the real e-commerce environment, and the real practice courses are too little.

4.3. Only a few teachers with rich practical experience

Although the education background of e-commerce teachers in Higher Vocational Colleges in China is generally high, but there is no practical experience in e-commerce. The results of questionnaire survey show that the practical ability of teachers is generally low, and there are too few teachers with rich practical experience.

Methodology

The survey was conducted to investigate the rapid progress of higher vocational e-commerce education and its limitation in China, also the irrationality according to our sampling survey on e-commerce specialized courses in China.

The subject consisted of 500 people, including 300 students from college, and 200 people who have graduated from school, they were chosen at random to participate in the subject.

The survey was conducted by means of a questionnaire, which was made by our group and it was translated into Chinese later. The questionnaire consists of 45 questions, such as the teaching methods of e-commerce major and the expectation of this course.

The data were computed to find the rapid progress of higher vocational e-commerce education and its limitation in China, also the irrationality of e-commerce specialized courses in China.

Results and Discussion

According to the teaching experience of e-commerce major in our college, our group thinks that the following measures and countermeasures can be taken:

1. Improve and update the course system according to the development situation of e-commerce

Under the situation of the continuous development of China's e-commerce industry, the curriculum system and knowledge structure of e-commerce professional training in higher vocational colleges should be constantly adjusted, improved and updated, always adapt to the needs of society and enterprises, set courses that are only needed by society and enterprises.

2. Strengthen the practical training of core skills

Core skills is important for the development of e-commerce students. There are two kinds of e-commerce jobs in the real world, technical and commercial. However, based on the demand of talents, the general business jobs of graduates of e-commerce in higher vocational colleges include customer service, store operation, logistics management and so on, but the technical jobs are mostly store design. Therefore, higher vocational colleges should put the core competence of e-commerce specialty on the courses of e-commerce operation, customer service, logistics, design and so on, by making reasonable teaching objectives according to the actual needs of enterprises, this ensure that the teaching content is consistent with the actual needs of enterprises. This could also ensure that the practical teaching hours are more than the theoretical teaching hours, therefore strengthen the repeated training of student's core skills. Encourage students to actively participate in entrepreneurial practice, strengthen their skills application, or participate in the corresponding skills competition, giving more practice opportunities, and accumulate practical experience.(Khan, S., & Yairi, T, 2018).

3. Promote the mode of school enterprise and apprenticeship

Promote the mode of school enterprise. Students would enter the class as apprentices, and they are guided by the master or professional teachers of the enterprise for apprenticeship training.

Schools and enterprises jointly formulate modern apprenticeship talent training programs, build talent training classes and teaching teams, integrate different educational environments and educational resources inside and outside the school. Students have dual identities of students and apprentices.

Taking the post of "online shop designer" as an example, according to the level of students' individual ability, the students are tested in three stages: primary, intermediate and advanced, and the practical teaching courses are customized.

The online shop designer apprenticeship class lasts for 4 months per term, and the training contents mainly focus on tools, cases and practical training, including skilled application of tools, poster design, and actual store design of customers.

4. The new trend of teaching under the situation of COVID-19

Since February this year, COVID-19 pandemic has swept the world, which has also brought great impact on education. All schools in China, including universities and colleges, have adopted the online teaching mode. Although the impact of the pandemic is inevitable, teachers and students have gained a lot, even more than offline teaching. In addition to the Chinese government's policy support, online teaching and meeting software launched by several major internet companies in China, such as DingDing, QQ, WeChat and many more has played a huge role during this COVID-19 pandemic. All these software is much better than Zoom and other software in terms of function, efficiency and other aspects.

Conclusion

For the past 20 years, in the rapid development of China's e-commerce, China's Higher Vocational e-commerce education has developed rapidly. In the process of rapid development, there are always new practical problems. With the implementation of President Xi Jinping's "The Belt and Road Initiative", Zhejiang Technical Institute of Economics (ZJTIE) hope to work with INTI International University & Colleges to promote the development of e-commerce education in higher education.

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- Note1-2:The latest data from the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC),the 44th statistical report on the development of China's internet.