

# Problems and Countermeasures of Education Management in Changzhou Liuguojun Higher Vocational and Technical College from the Perspective of Motivation Theory

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**Abstract:** At present, higher vocational education is facing various problems and deficiencies. One of the most significant problems is that the learning motivation of higher vocational school students is lacking, and they are uncertain about personal life choices and career planning, which leads to a gap in the relationship between learning and personal development as well as a lack of motivation in their learning behavior. As a result, the quality of higher vocational education is affected. The application of motivation theory in higher vocational education management can solve these issues. This study mainly analyzes and investigates the connotation and function of motivation theory, the significance of applying motivation theory in higher vocational education management, the existing challenges, and the implementation path, in hope to explore a new path for the application of motivation theory in higher vocational education management.

**Keywords:** Higher vocational schools; Education management; Motivation theory; Educational strategy

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## 1. Research background

Education management is an essential work in the teaching system of higher vocational education. One of its important functions is to mobilize all aspects of education resources through the implementation and application of scientific management concepts and methods, systematically realize the optimization and reorganization of education resources, stimulate students' learning enthusiasm, as well as improve the quality and efficiency of education, which will ensue a faster development in higher vocational education<sup>[1]</sup>. From perspective of the current state of higher vocational school students, there are many existing problems, such as the lack of learning motivation, unclear learning purpose, and poor learning habits, which seriously hinder the improvement of students' academic performance, the strengthening of professional technology, and the cultivation of practical skills<sup>[2]</sup>. From this point of view, the application of motivation theory through the implementation of strong motivation mechanism and motivation measures in higher vocational education management can better stimulate students' learning enthusiasm and creativity guide students to better invest in the learning process, thus injecting vitality into the development of higher vocational education<sup>[3]</sup>.

Motivation is the core of management, and motivation theory is one of the important theories in education management psychology<sup>[4]</sup>. Herzberg and several other researchers developed a set of theories

based on motivation. They found that some factors can stimulate people's enthusiasm because these factors satisfy the need to actualize oneself or people's psychological needs. These factors are known as motivation factors <sup>[5]</sup>. Other factors that are related to safety or physiology can lead to a negative state when these hygiene factors are not achieved <sup>[6]</sup>.

In this study, questionnaires were distributed to 50 students from Changzhou Liuguojun Higher Vocational and Technical College, in order to analyze the collected data and identify the problems in higher vocational education management, so as to suggest countermeasures for them.

## **2. Connotation and functions of motivation theory**

### **2.1. Connotation of motivation theory**

From the perspective of theory, motivation theory is under the category of management <sup>[7]</sup>.

Its main purpose is to take targeted measures and behaviors through an in-depth understanding and accurate grasp of people's behavior motivation, so as to effectively stimulate people's enthusiasm and creativity, and then realize and achieve the organizational goals <sup>[8]</sup>. Generally speaking, there are two types of motivation theory. The first type involves taking individual performance, contribution, pay, and other elements as the evaluation standard, and then motivating the individual based on the differentiated outcome. This type emphasizes more on the motivation of individual contribution <sup>[9]</sup>. The other type involves implementing personalized motivation behavior for different individuals through the accurate grasp of individual internal needs from the perspective of individual motivation and internal needs <sup>[10]</sup>. This type emphasizes more on the content of motivation.

### **2.2. Functions of motivation theory**

First, it heightens individual potential. From the perspective of management, any individual cannot exist without an organization, thereby the individual has to rely on certain resources <sup>[11]</sup>. In other words, the individual's behavior is more like a positive response to the organization's needs. Based on this, if the organization implements positive motivations and expectations for the individual's needs, then there will be an improvement in the individual's potential <sup>[12]</sup>.

Second, it effectively enhances the centripetal force of the organization. The cohesion and centripetal force of an organization not only affect the development of individuals, but also have a significant impact on the development of the organization <sup>[13]</sup>. If common values and individual needs are not met in an organization, contradictions and internal friction between different individuals will arise, and the cohesion of the organization cannot be strengthened <sup>[14]</sup>. Based on this, the values and needs between individuals can achieve better consistency through the implementation of effective motivation behaviors and measures, which can minimize the contradictions between individuals and fundamentally enhance the cohesion of the organization <sup>[15]</sup>.

Third, it improves organizational effectiveness. In view of the differences between individuals in an organization, different individuals have different negative behaviors, effects, and problems; thus, they are unable to consciously work toward the established goal <sup>[16]</sup>. Therefore, it is necessary to implement targeted motivation behaviors and measures. Under the motivation behaviors and measures, the behaviors the members in the organization will be more purposeful and directional, and the negative emotions and behaviors of individuals in the organization will be effectively alleviated and prevented, which is crucial for the organization to achieve the established goals <sup>[17]</sup>.

### 3. Challenges in the implementation of motivation theory in higher vocational education management

#### 3.1. Weak communication mechanism between teachers and students

Q1: What is the main method used by teachers to communicate with you?

Options	Number of students	Proportion
A. Face-to-face communication	6	12%
B. Written comments	11	22%
C. Holistic communication in class	21	42%
D. WeChat, SMS, and other communication tools	12	24%
Total number of students	50	

Q2: How often do teachers communicate with you?

Options	Number of students	Proportion
A. High frequency	3	6%
B. Moderate frequency	15	30%
C. Low frequency	26	52%
D. Teachers hardly communicate with me	6	12%
Total number of students	50	

From the data, among 50 students, 52% felt that their teachers communicate with them at a low frequency, while 6% of the students felt that their teachers hardly communicate with them; only 3% of the students felt that the frequency of communication between teachers and students is high. The method used by teachers to communicate with students is mainly through holistic communication in class, while face-to-face communication that focuses on students' personality and privacy is rarely used by teachers. The effectiveness of communication between teachers and students in higher vocational schools is still low.

From the perspective of students' learning and lifestyle in higher vocational schools, most of their learning and living arrangements are loose and free [18]. Teachers are more inclined to allow students to arrange their own schedule for learning and resting based on their individual needs. Besides classroom teaching, there are little and limited interactions between teachers and students. However, in order to implement an effective motivation system and motivation measures, teachers and students must communicate with each other, which is one of the fundamental requirements for the implementation of motivation theory in higher vocational education management. Especially in the communication between teachers and students, education management workers need to investigate and identify students' motivation needs to have an accurate grasp of students' personalized needs, so as to formulate targeted motivation measures. From this point of view, the communication and coordination mechanisms between teachers and students in higher vocational schools are relatively lacking; thus, it is impossible to accurately grasp the personalized needs of students.

#### 3.2. Lack of attention to students' needs

Q3: Do you feel that you can speak freely when interacting with your teachers?

Options	Number of students	Proportion
A. Yes	11	22%
B. No	39	78%
Total number of students	50	

Q4: Are there any teachers whom you trust in school?

Options	Number of students	Proportion
A. Yes	6	12%
B. No	44	88%
Total number of students	50	

From the data, it can be seen that 78% of the students felt that they cannot speak freely when conversing with their teachers, and 88% of them felt that they do not know any teachers whom they can trust in school. The application of motivation theory in higher vocational education management is a systematic project. However, the premise is that teachers should have sufficient patience and an accurate grasp of students' psychological needs [19]. However, from this point of view, most higher vocational education managers are still in a commanding position with cognitive deviations on students' personalized needs for education and teaching. Some teachers think that students are whimsical, while others think that students are unreasonable. As a result, students no longer express their real feelings in the process of communication with their teachers. Consequently, managers are unable to identify the real needs of students, and in turn, those motivation needs that have been put forward are just assumptions. As these needs are not the real reflection of students' psychological needs, there will be no evident results from the corresponding motivation system and measures formulated.

### 3.3. Single application of motivation theory

Q5: What kind of students will be rewarded or commended?

Options	Number of students	Proportion
A. Outstanding students	28	56%
B. Students with artistic or sports expertise	9	18%
C. Hardworking and enthusiastic students	0	0%
D. Progressive students	13	26%
Total number of students	50	

Q6: What are the main forms of rewards given to students by teachers (or schools)?

Options	Number of students	Proportion
A. Scholarships and grants	25	50%
B. Communication and encouragement	9	18%
C. Praises during class	16	32%
Total number of students	50	

According to the data, 28% of the students felt that rewards are mainly for students with excellent performance, followed by the students showing progress (26%), and students with art and sports expertise (9%). However, none of the students thought that school awards would be given to hardworking and enthusiastic students. It can be seen that schools tend to neglect the value of moral quality. The data also showed that the main form of reward is through scholarships and grants.

The current motivation system and measures in higher vocational college education management have made some progress in promoting students' learning behavior and activities [20]. However, the problems are still evident, in which motivation measures are still focused on the material level in the form of scholarships,

grants, and so on. The application of motivation theory is relatively single. On the one hand, material rewards are always restricted, favoring students who thrive academically, but failing to provide a comprehensive and holistic motivation. On the other hand, there is a lack of spiritual motivation measures. Many students lack learning motivation, which cannot be solved by material motivation, but rather spiritual motivation.

#### **4. Countermeasures for improving the implementation quality of motivation theory**

##### **4.1. Constantly strengthening the understanding and grasp of students' psychological needs**

The motivation mechanism's effectiveness depends on whether the mechanism can provide a remedy to the case, and whether it meets the psychological and behavioral needs of students. Therefore, from this point of view, higher vocational education management must emphasize on the accurate understanding of students' psychological needs in the implementation of motivation theory. First, the communication between teachers and students should be strengthened. Teachers should transition from their role as managers to becoming friends with students, and eventually adopt the same perspective as them. Teachers should respect students' psychological needs, rather than blindly excluding them. Second, teachers should take diversified measures to accurately grasp the psychological needs of students and encourage students to express their feelings and demands through class meetings, student associations, WeChat groups, and other ways, so as to facilitate an accurate implementation of the motivation theory.

##### **4.2. Constantly examining and modifying the implementation goal of motivation theory**

Whether it is material motivation or spiritual motivation, it is important to rely on certain goals. Therefore, determining scientific and effective motivation goals remains an essentiality in the implementation of motivation theory in higher vocational education management. On the one hand, more attention should be given to the integration of students' personal development and higher vocational motivation goals. If a goal has nothing to do with the students, it is impossible to stimulate students' enthusiasm or encourage their participation. Students will feel that this matter has nothing to do with them, and corresponding motivation measures will be meaningless. On the other hand, attention should also be given to the integration of students' personal goals with social production and the development of higher vocational schools. Through motivation measures, students should hold such a belief that their learning and future growth are not only individual behaviors, but also have a huge role in economic and social development as well as the future of higher vocational schools. In this way, their learning behavior will have a stronger sense of mission, thus increasing their motivation.

##### **4.3. Constantly enriching the implementation methods of motivation theory**

The effect of the implementation of motivation theory in higher vocational education management depends on the method of implementation to a large extent. At present, most higher vocational schools still focus on material motivations, as these schools think that spiritual motivations are too vague to achieve evident results. On the one hand, teachers should affirm the effectiveness of material motivations, which is evident especially for students with strong learning consciousness and poor family circumstances. For those lacking learning motivation or with better family situations, the effect of this motivation is limited. On the other hand, teachers should emphasize on spiritual motivation. Through the construction of campus culture, teachers should further develop the master spirit and establish the dominance of higher vocational students. Students will be able to sense the care and attention of the society through ideological and political education, advanced student selection, and other means. This will stimulate the motivation for active learning from the bottom of their hearts.

#### **4.4. Emphasizing the role of positive motivation**

Influenced by age and physical development, the psychological activities and personality characteristics of higher vocational students are unstable and vulnerable to external influence. Based on this, teachers can play a positive role in the application of motivation theory. On the one hand, teachers should be adept at identifying students' inner positive energy. They should renounce punishment in the face of problems existing in students' learning process, behavior, and motivation; instead, they should seek out students' heart knots, their strengths, and encourage them to improve themselves. On the other hand, teachers can guide students to determine their own strengths and improve their expectations as well as self-recognition through subtle psychological suggestions.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The application of motivation theory in the education management of higher vocational schools can heighten individual potential, effectively enhance the centripetal force of the organization, and improve the efficiency of the organization; it can also effectively solve the problems existing in the innovation of education management, fundamentally stimulate students' learning enthusiasm and initiative, as well as inject vitality into talent training and the long-term development of higher vocational schools.

#### **Disclosure statement**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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