

# Study on Open Recruitment in Higher Vocational Colleges Based on Political, Economic, Social-Cultural and Technological Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

Compared with other scientific research institutes or academic universities, higher vocational colleges have their own advantages and disadvantages in the process of openly recruiting new teachers. The advantage is that colleges are less competitive than universities because it has lower requirements and can attract more candidates. The disadvantage is that there is no high-level academic platform than universities, and teachers' personal career and academic development are restricted. Political, Economic, Social-Cultural and Technological (PEST) analysis is a macro analysis method. By analyzing the macro-environment of higher vocational colleges, a theoretical basis is provided for higher vocational colleges to do a good job in the open recruitment, so that the work can be well done in accordance with the set goals.

**Keywords:** Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat (SWOT) analysis, higher vocational colleges, open recruitment

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the reform and opening up, vocational education has provided a powerful talents pool and intellectual support for China's economic and social development, and higher vocational colleges have seen the continuous improvement in the education and expansion of teacher staffs. Open recruitment, as an important means of faculty cultivation and talents introduction in colleges, is related to the reform and development of the schools, which are also the focus and challenge of improvement work of colleges. This paper analyzes the opportunities and challenges encountered in the process of open recruitment through the PEST analysis method, as well as various external macro factors, and provides some theoretical basis and practical assistance for higher vocational colleges to do a good job in the open recruitment.

## II. OVERVIEW OF PEST ANALYSIS

PEST analysis is a macro method analysis of the political, economic, sociocultural, technological factors of the targets. When analyzing the background of an enterprise or an organization, it is used to analyze the situation whereby an organization can objectively and fairly evaluate the influence of these factors on its operation and the favorable or unfavorable situation in

formulating strategies. To use the PEST method to analyze the work of openly recruiting teachers in higher vocational colleges, we must first understand the status and goals of open recruitment in higher vocational colleges.

## III. PEST ANALYSIS-BASED CASES IN COLLEGE OPEN RECRUITMENT

### A. Specific methods of open recruiting in colleges

Since the reform and opening up, colleges have cultivated a lot of high-skilled talents and professionals. Compared with academic university education, higher vocational colleges pay more attention to students' practical skills and emphasize "high-leveled skills". Therefore, new teachers who are openly recruited by colleges do not have the high-level educational background as those of universities whose full-time teachers are usually with doctoral degrees, while the teachers of colleges are usually with master degrees. Colleges, thus, provides employment opportunities for many graduate students with master degree. At present, the specific practices of open recruitment in most vocational colleges are as follows:

- Formulating the current year's recruitment plan according to the school's teacher training plan and talent training plan, including positions,

discipline requirements, other requirements, and recruitment numbers.

- Recruitment information releasing: According to the concrete conditions of each college, the recruitment information is released through the internet and other means, and it should be spread as widely as possible to have more people know the released recruitment information;
- Online registration or on-site registration is adopted in line with the real conditions of the organizations, and then the qualification of candidates will be examined and verified. Only those candidates who have passed the qualification examination can take the written test of the first round. The qualification examination includes controls on the age, majors, vocational qualifications, etc. of the candidates, and the screening is carried out in strict accordance with the requirements of the recruiters.
- Written test: At present, in order to ensure that the public recruitment of the organizations runs smoothly and is not controlled or restricted by human factors, they have entrusted a third-party which is an examination institution to organize the registration, preliminary qualification examination and written test of the recruitment. The recruiters themselves will not get involved in the written test questions setting or examinations scoring. The competitive candidates will be selected through the written test of the first round, and the number of candidates to be interviewed will be determined with a ratio of 1: 3.
- Interview: The targets to be recruited are different in different organizations, so the interviews are organized by each college themselves to select the personnel suitable for recruitment positions. However, this session also has certain limitations since interviews of only a few minutes are difficult for interviewers have sufficient acquaintance with candidates' competence.

#### B. Strengths of open recruitment with current methods

The implementation of the open recruitment system discussed above has the following advantages:

First of all, as our country pays more attention to the mobility of talent resources, it is no longer limited to the traditional method of introducing talents. In the past, talents were either allocated or mobilized to certain organizations in which human resources were limited and there was a lack of communication between employers and job seekers. However, since the implementation of the open recruitment system, more

attention has been given to the mobility of talents. On the one hand, information is highly socialized and can be disseminated very quickly. Once the information about job vacancies is released online, job seekers will soon know about the recruitment news. The organization can calculate the number of candidates and have more candidates to be selected from, and therefore, be able to recruit the talents according to their demands, and meanwhile, job seekers have a wide range of choices since they can learn about the recruitment information of different organizations through the Internet.

Secondly, before the open recruitment system was implemented, graduates often found the jobs through uniform distribution by schools, and this process was mostly connected with human relationships and nepotism. People who were favored could find good jobs even regardless of their academic achievements. It is not rare that some hereditary organizations with high income and good welfares. In these organizations, priority is often given to the children of the staffs and favored customers. Many students with outstanding academic performance have greatly dampened their self-confidence and this may have bad impact on the development of the social conducts. However, after the implementation of the open recruitment system, with strict examination and verification procedures of candidates' qualifications, many units have chosen to entrust a third-party to organize written examinations in order to prevent negative effects of various aspects. Unknowing the details about the recruitment written exams can help avoid unfairness caused by the favored human relationships in hiring personnel. Therefore, the candidates to be interviewed are those who are competent ones really passed the exams.

Third, for employers, employees who are hired thanks to their human relationships and nepotism may not be able to meet the requirements of the recruiters and it is awkward for them to handle the nepotism. By adopting open recruitment, the recruiters are greatly reduced the worry and distress of.

#### C. Weaknesses of open recruitment with current methods

At present, for the written examination paper for the candidates is the same regardless of their subject or major. The written test questions cover a very wide range of topics including current affairs and politics, which is effective to test candidates' general knowledge but fails to test their professional skills. Those candidates who get high score in the written exams may not those who are competitive in the professional knowledge. On top of that, the written test questions are almost all objective ones such as multiple choice, which means the test is not viable to some degree. It is also found that the students of arts majors generally score higher than students of science majors in the written

test. For employers, therefore, it is difficult to measure the professional knowledge and skills of the candidate, nor can they be judged by the interviewing of only a few minutes. So it could be concluded that it is the type and content of the written exam restrict the selection of professional talents by the employers.

The organization of open recruitment is a long and tedious process. It takes almost half a year from the collection of employment information, submission of approval, release information to the final employment and approval of personnel. This requires a lot of human resources, physical materials and financial resources. There are also many regulations and disciplinary requirements for the recruitment. For example, in the recruitment information to be released, there should not be gender restriction, candidates' place of birth and their graduation school. However, there are not too many restrictions on candidates themselves. There are some cases that some candidates give up the chances to enter the organization they are applying for even they have passed the physical examination of the final round and will be approved to be recruited by the human resources department only because they have found some better jobs. It not only is a waste of recruitment resources, but also impact other candidates' application.

The open recruitment system stipulates that "one of the three candidates entering the interview must be hired", which is actually not practical in some cases. Since the written test contains only objective items such as multiple choices covering the general knowledge, it

is difficult for the employers to have a fair and comprehensive acquaintance of the candidates, especially their professional skills. So even though the three candidates have passed the written test, not all of them meet the requirements of the employers. As the incompetent candidates are finally hired, some of them will not be up to the expectation of employers and even fail to fulfill their responsibilities and duties. On the other hand, colleges as public institutions do not have the autonomy to fire the personnel so that those who are not competent and lack of sense of responsibilities will continue to stay, which is not good for the future development of the colleges.

In summary, the methods adopted in the current open recruitment have both advantages and disadvantages. In order to improve the recruitment system, we have introduced the PEST analysis method to analyze the opportunities and challenges faced by the open recruitment in higher vocational colleges.

#### **IV. MACRO-ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC RECRUITMENT IN HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGES**

Based on the principles of the PEST analysis, we studied the political, economic, social-cultural, and technological environments of public recruitment in higher vocational colleges, and summarized the opportunities and challenges faced by the work. ("Table I")

TABLE I. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES ANALYZED WITH PEST

PEST	Opportunities	Challenges
<i>Political</i>	Great policy support. In recent years, many regulations and principles to strengthen vocational education have been introduced, such as the "State Council's Notice on the Implementation of the National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan".	Compared with universities, there is gaps in colleges' state per-capita funding, policy support, and improvement work; the open recruitment system is more favorable to the candidates than the employers are.
<i>Economic</i>	Staffs in colleges have more stable positions than those in enterprises in terms of salary and welfare, and they have better working environment that is more attractive to talents.	Compared with scientific research institutes or academic universities there is gaps in college teachers' income and welfare, and the economic benefits colleges bring are also lower.
<i>Social-Cultural</i>	Influenced by the traditional concept that "respected teachers and value education", teachers have a higher social status and are highly respected by the public.	Teachers in colleges are in the unfavorable conditions than those in academic universities in publishing papers, applying for scientific research projects, publishing monographs, and writing theses. The social environment for teachers' academic study is restricted.
<i>Technological</i>	Colleges pay more attention to cultivating students' high-tech skills and practical abilities, and faculties' technological innovation is guaranteed.	There are more and more colleges favored vocational education instead of academic study. The need for more talents renders new technical requirements in terms of system, recruitment process, job management, etc. for public recruitment in higher vocational colleges

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

Through the PEST analysis of the external environment of public recruitment in higher vocational colleges, we draw the following conclusions:

##### *A. Political factors*

The implementation of the open recruitment policy has favorable opportunities, but also challenges and threats for employers. While it is fair to candidates but there is lack of integrity managing of the candidates,

and there is integrity constraint on the employers but it is not fair for employers. Therefore, it is difficult to find a good balance between candidates and employers.

#### *B. Economic factors*

The organization of open recruitment is a big work that takes a lot of time, money and efforts, which includes the examination fee paid to the organizer of the written test, the assessment fee to the interviewers for interviewing the candidates, the work fee to the examination agency, and the supervision and audit fee to the disciplinary inspection staffs. A specific work group and disciplinary inspection committee must be established to work in the entire process, but there appear inevitably some unexpected cases that may affect the successful recruitment. For example, recruiter may not be able to recruit the ideal candidates to meet their needs; there are not enough applicants applying for the positions; or there are some candidates who have been recruited but given up the offer.

#### *C. Social-cultural factors*

There should be more attention paid to the open recruitment of colleges and some public institutions. Some candidates do not take the exam or the interview seriously enough but see it as just "give-it-a-try"; some resort to complain or even appeal to the higher authorities for help just because they fail to get expected score or performance. This leads to great disruption to the work of the authorities and departments in charge of personnel affairs.

#### *D. Technological factors*

As the current open recruitment system has been in effect for nearly a decade, and various organizations have continuously summarized and improved their work during the recruitment process, and have achieved some initial results. For example, the organization of the examination process is more standardized with the examiners better trained. The current recruitment system is also well accepted thanks to its normalization and relative fairness. However, as the society is constantly advancing and progressing, there is still much to be improved to ensure the fair and just recruitment.

According to the "State Council's Notice on Printing and Distributing National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan" (State issued [2019] No. 4), we will adhere to the guidance of President Xi Jinping's socialist ideas with Chinese characteristics in the new era and give priority to the innovative reform in vocational education by improving the public recruitment system.

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