



COPPING PHENOMENON IN CHINA: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON VOCATIONAL COLLEGES IN SHANXI

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Abstract

This research aims to identify the phenomena of coping in China by concentrating on the theoretical viewpoint of Vocational Colleges in Shanxi. There are few theories, such as social cognitive theory, constructivist learning theory, social identity theory, political symbolism, huang yanpei's theory of vocational education, richter's theory of vet based on adaption and behaviorist learning theory are discussed in details to explain the phenomenon. It is vital to recognise that higher vocational colleges are the reserve basis of national technical colleges and create professional and technical colleges with high capabilities and high quality. The influence of rate of return on admissions to vocational colleges has been extensively studied in recent years. This research also examines the benefits of vocational education from the perspectives of employment rate, pay, degree of income from vocational labour, and identity transformation. Yet, it has to be determined whether the rate of return influences the reputation and allure of vocational colleges.

Keywords: *Attractiveness, Vocational, Education, College, Shanxi, China*

Introduction

China's vocational education has always been an opposing party in the reform of education. It played the role of a purifier of feudal education in the early 20th century. With China's reform and opening up, it adjusted its educational system and played a role in elite education shunt. It spreads its notion and scope into higher education, taking on the role of academic corrector (Meng, 2021). China's vocational education is changing (Tham et al., 2017; Udriyah et al., 2019; Li, 2020). Teaching abilities, student employment, and enrollment are problems for many vocational and technical schools (Wang & Zhou, 2019). There are numerous challenges facing higher vocational teaching today, many of which are made worse by restricted teaching resources. The allocation of resources for higher vocational education has to be more balanced. There is a huge discrepancy in economic development and education resources between the north and south of the country (Meng, 2021; Zhang et al., 2020).

Due to the sluggish reform of the vocational education enrollment exam, it is difficult to realise the talent development channel of "vertical penetration" within vocational education (Zhu & Shi, 2021). In the early stages of China's vocational education development, the path chosen has always been to learn from the experience of advanced countries, which is conducive to the rapid establishment of a systematic and comprehensive vocational education system in a short period to serve the country's social and economic development. The development of vocational education in China has advanced significantly and switched from "introducing" to "getting out" as a result of the strengthening of China's overall national strength and the Party and state's long-term support for vocational education. China's vocational education has become more confident in its development, continuously "building its image and brand" in other countries, finally presenting the vocational education model with Chinese characteristics and boosting its worldwide competitiveness and influence (Zhu & Shi, 2021).

Shanxi vocational education development will improve college operations. It is vital to strengthen teacher training at our province's vocational colleges (Wang & Zhou, 2019; Meng, 2021). Enhance and alter the present professional arrangement to suit the criteria of shifting the development focus of various industries in our province (Rachmawati et al., 2019; Azam et al., 2021).

Students in vocational colleges feel inferior to their classmates solely because they attend vocational colleges (Haur et al., 2017; Safarmamad, 2019). The public's bias towards vocational education has impeded its development. In such a circumstance, the provincial government should actively help people understand vocational education, appraise its relevance, and not consider vocational colleges as a forlorn alternative after failing the college admission test (Hoelscher et al., 2008). Coupled with rising undergraduate enrollment, vocational and technical education is seeing a sharp decline in student enrollment (Huang, 2020). The drop in students raises tuition. The declining student population will also impact student quality. The majority of students entering vocational-technical colleges despise studying, do not perform well, and are behind due to the education system and the aforementioned background (Bano et al., 2022; Liang, 2020; Wu & Liu, 2015; Li, 2015). Vocational and technical colleges should be called homeless shelters. Hence, most students hate vocational colleges (Liang, 2016; Dewi et al., 2019; Nguyen et al., 2019).

They lack insurance, an employment contract, cannot pay on time, and cannot acquire subsidies. In the early days of the People's Republic of China, "worker" was a coveted occupation owing to considerable welfare payments. (Liang, Yet, throughout the era of the commodity however, the "worker's" role as a master increasingly eroded. Skilled employees are seen as "craftsmen," physical labourers, and others with poorer education and quality. These strongly established misconceptions are difficult for experienced professionals to cope with in their daily lives, and many lack professional decorum. This is not true since only the division of labour is different and there is no distinction between high and low; in this time of equality for everyone, they work hard in quiet and contribute to society development, but they are not given the recognition they deserve (Wang, 2011; Hanushek, 2017; Lu, 2021; Yu et al., 2015). As a consequence, it is obvious that the social status and income levels of VTI graduates are not particularly high, which is significantly associated with the students and their families.

Lu and Zhang (2021) claimed that throughout the 1990s, state-owned businesses and industrially-competent ministries were particularly active in vocational skills training and job placement. Secondary vocational education has long benefited from the graduation allocation strategy controlled by industry-competent departments. Wang (2018) states that most vocational colleges have college-business collaboration, but it is typically shallow and should be increased. Only 20% of professional courses, 24% of training bases, and 19% of evaluations were college-enterprise collaborative. Nevertheless, just 22 cooperative firms (15%) indicated college-enterprise collaboration is for talent nurturing; 232 enterprises (83%) said they had little or no engagement in the talent development process. Based on in-depth interviews with teachers, students, and enterprises, it is clear that some enterprises engage in college-enterprise cooperation for reasons other than talent cultivation (such as to meet their own employment needs, to gain a good reputation, to occupy the resources of the college, etc.), and the effectiveness of college-enterprise cooperation is not guaranteed. Additionally, college-business partnership is often geographical. In southeast coastal cities and economically developed areas, college-enterprise cooperation between vocational colleges and universities is more in-depth, however in interior and economically backward regions such as Shanxi Province, it is the opposite (Gao & Ren, 2021; Han, 2017; Pushpakumara et al., 2019). As a result, it is clear that the employment rate of vocational colleges might be more secure and enticing to students.

Literature Review

According to Leney and Green (2004), appeal demonstrates a system's responsiveness to the ideas and expectations of learners. The perspectives of stakeholders, who are immediately affected by the system's responsiveness to the external world via its openness to the needs and ideas of learners and other stakeholders, determine a system's attractiveness. This authors' research also suggests that improving VET programme quality, accessibility, and openness may improve life quality. These authors suggest making vocational education and training programmes more accessible and transparent to boost their appeal.



According to Huang (2021), the appeal of vocational colleges is strongly influenced by the kind of teacher and gender. Increasingly concentrated hiring of technical specialists as adjunct instructors for hands-on training courses is appealing to new students. According to the study, male instructors have a negative influence on enrollment in vocational colleges, whereas female teachers have a positive one.

Majors are the essential structure of the college, and the role and contribution of each major to the overall development of the college vary depending on the stage of construction it is in. An crucial factor for selecting which majors should be generated as a priority, which majors should be supported as a priority, and how to adapt and arrange the majors is whether they match with the college's goal. Each major's construction direction, aim, and building technique should emphasise the college's orientation. (Hu, 2014). At the same time, the study (Liu, 2014) mentions that enterprises some time directly participate in the academic training process, and that both colleges and enterprises jointly set up majors that meet the production needs of enterprises, and such majors become order or orientation training majors, and students can directly enter specific positions in enterprises for employment after graduation.

According to Gu (2019) in Wuxi, only Jiangsu Institute of Information Technology earned 231 points over the provincial control line in 2014, while other colleges were accepted at or below the provincial control line. While the rest of the colleges had provincially restricted access, Wuxi Vocational and Technological College nonetheless obtained the best mark for liberal arts admission in 2016. The majority of the colleges are still at the provincial level, with Wuxi Vocational and Technical College receiving the highest scientific score of 224. The admittance scores of other colleges in Wuxi have drastically declined between 2014 and 2016, with the exception of Wuxi Vocational and Technological College. The enrollment plans of colleges and universities are mainly incomplete, as demonstrated by the existing status of provincial control line admission. Hence, their analysis indicated that a fall in the attraction of vocational students and a decrease in the number of vocational colleges would lower the quality of vocational colleges, which would lower their performance.

Wang's (2018) survey shows that enterprises' motivation for college-enterprise cooperation is insufficient, as only 22 cooperative enterprises (15%) said that college-enterprise cooperation is for talent cultivation, while 232 (83%) said they did not or rarely participated in the process of talent cultivation, which is consistent with the "extent of enterprises' participation in college-enterprise cooperation." This is mainly comparable with the study data on "the degree of firms' participation in college-enterprise collaboration." In-depth interviews show that corporations are typically passive, "exploitative," and profit-driven in college-enterprise partnership. Vocational and technical colleges must perform to corporate expectations. Improved enrollment statistics will also assist colleges and universities set the scope of learning in a scientific way. Moreover, many theories underpinning the topics outlined below are supported by the preceding literature.

Social Cognitive Theory

Bandura established the social cognitive theory. Behaviorists argue that learning is generated through the link between inputs and responses. Bandura (1989) stressed the role of cognition in behavioural processes and developed the triadic interaction theory, observational learning theory, and self-efficacy.

Bandura discovered that humans learn not just via direct experience but also through indirect experience gathered through observation, which is more prevalent in the development of social behaviour; he termed this observational learning. Observational learning, also known as substitution learning, is the process by which individuals witness the behaviour of role models (which is novel to the observer), acquire symbolic representations of the model behaviour, and drive the observer to imitate the equivalent behaviour. Bandura's social cognition theory implies that competent and prominent role models get greater attention from observers. The outcomes of role model behaviours educate observers on the functional importance of role model behaviours, and observers strive to learn those behaviours that they deem vital to learn. For their children, parents serve as role models.



Several factors, including social behaviour, educational attainment, attire, and behaviour, may have an impact on a child's behaviour.

From the perspective of TVET and what needs to be done to enhance its appeal, this theory emphasises the importance of parents and teachers as role models who nurture desirable behaviours in children, which can indirectly influence children's choices, and sometimes parents use the power of role models to intervene directly in their students' choices. (Zhu et al., 2019)

Unfortunately, the implementation of this theory tends to make a direct link between students' behaviour and the notion of being acknowledged, so that students' behaviour becomes a desire for recognition rather than their own independent thinking.

Constructivist Learning Theory

There is no established date for the beginning of constructivism. Ernst von Glasersfeld, an American philosopher, psychologist, and cyberneticist, first presented the term of "radical constructivism" openly. Yet, constructivism as a philosophical concept has a lengthy history. The primary source of its ideas is Piaget and Vygotsky (1978), whose theory of cognitive learning explains how humans may integrate objective knowledge structures by interaction with them.

The distinctions between constructivism and behaviourism in terms of fundamental epistemological difficulties and the focus on the "personhood" of knowledge make constructivism unique from the behaviourist paradigm in directing the design of many components of vocational education programmes. Constructivism emphasises contextual teaching, cooperative learning, and inquiry learning in vocational education curriculum implementation. In vocational education curriculum goal setting, constructivism emphasises flexible, flexible, and individualised curriculum goals to accommodate learners' diverse constructive processes and gains. In vocational education curriculum implementation, constructivism emphasises situational teaching, cooperative learning, and enquiry learning. In contrast to modern vocational education curriculum models such as "dual system," constructivism also emphasises learners' motivation and moral and emotional development. In vocational education curriculum evaluation, constructivism emphasises qualitative evaluation, which facilitates the integration of teaching and evaluation. (Hou, 2008)

Vocational education has its unique peculiarities, and instruction in vocational schools is more focused on improving learners' practical problem-solving abilities. Hence, in the sphere of vocational education, there is more freedom in curriculum construction, greater focus on social elements of the curriculum, and greater emphasis on practice. The emphasis is on the psychological developmental qualities of the individual learner and the development of practical problem-solving abilities, and the standards for disciplinary systematisation and comprehensiveness of information are not great. Hence, the psycho-logical and contextualised knowledge of learners highlighted in the constructivist learning theory is extremely suitable with this aspect of vocational education curriculum. The effect of constructivism on vocational education curriculum design may be explored in terms of vocational education curriculum goals, curriculum content organisation, curriculum implementation, and curriculum evaluation.

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory says that human behaviour fluctuates according to other people's behaviour and the norms of modern society. In addition to being an essential component of a person's self-concept, social identity relates to their impression of belonging to a certain social group. Henri Tajfel developed the notion of social identity as a means of understanding intergroup behaviour (1970). There are three fundamental requirements for social identity theory. First, people have a strong subjective feeling of identification with the group they belong to; second, groupings are compared with each other; third, groups with comparable traits are compared. These three basic conditions determine the course of social identity, i.e., the individual confirms whether the self is qualified for the group through social category, clarifies the differences between groups through social comparison, and strengthens the social identity of the group to which the individual belongs; the transition of the individual's social identity to changes in the level of social structure also prompts



the individual to strengthen the changes in the self, which then also produces social deconstruction and reconstruction (Zheng2009). At the core of social identity is the assumption that individuals can have positive affective experiences during identity transitions driven by self-esteem, and that positive affective experiences respond to self-esteem, thereby reproducing the dynamics of identity transitions and driving individuals to have more positive affective experiences. (Deng,2019)

According to social identity theory, an organisation that is more appealing will boost its social prestige, and a favourable reputation also has a substantial beneficial effect on the organization's attractiveness. (Younis&Hammad, 2020) . A vocational-technical school may be considered as a member of all vocational colleges, and each vocational school aspires to achieve higher social appeal and widespread social acceptability to boost its self-esteem. The more appealing a vocational-technical school is as a social organisation, the more social recognition it is likely to obtain, which may have a particularly favourable influence on the school's reputation and performance, although this must be proven.

Political Symbolism

Politicians may employ symbols to symbolise their organisations in a number of ways, including items, people, phrases, performances, and gestures (Cohen, 1979). The importance of political symbols is largely to contain the political structures and practises they represent, to link institutions and emotions and to enable polities or political movements become more unified. Political symbolism is a "abridged" and emotionally biased portrayal of political reality. This makes political symbolism fundamentally problematic, since it inhibits people from comprehending the "real character" of their political environment and might cause them to accept rulers and policies that are against their own interests. (Theiler, 2017)

Jonathan (2002) explained educational reform in the context of social change using the framework of political symbols. There is usually a significant gap between policy announcement and implementation, and there are other aspects that are not typical of educational reform in poor nations. The construction of education policy is a symbolic action that all countries perform, yet few see symbolism as more essential than practical factors when designing their programmes.

Policies such as the one-child policy, the growth of universities, and the programme for one million vocational and technical students have all had an impact on the development of vocational education in China, to varying degrees. Yet diverse policies have always been impossible to execute or over-implemented in practise, and the goal of political symbolism has never been attained. Halpin and Troyna (1995) have previously remarked that governments are more interested in the political symbolism of measures than in their content. The importance of this research is also to comprehend how to make the symbolic significance of the policy more acceptable.

Huang Yanpei's Theory of Vocational Education

Huang Yanpei (1920) characterised the objective of vocational education as "to allow the jobless to have work and the employed to enjoy their jobs." The so-called "employment of the unemployed" refers to the training of practical talents for the development of capitalist industry and commerce through vocational education, while simultaneously addressing the issue of social unemployment, so that talents are not wasted and livelihoods can be guaranteed. So-called "making people happy with their employment" refers to the formation of people's moral intelligence via vocational education, so that they may be competent for their occupations and like them, and so develop and invent things for the benefit of human civilization.

The role and status of the vocational education, Huang Yanpei thought, profession is social existence and development of the necessary product of division of labour, and education is to maintain and conditions for the development of industries, from the continuation and promotion of social production and social life, improve work efficiency and motivate workers requirement of intelligent communication career and education is necessary.



The role of vocational education, as far as its theoretical significance is concerned, rests in “seeking the development of individuality”. “Preparation for one’s means of subsistence”; “Preparation of the individual for contribution to society”; “Preparation of the nation and the globe for higher output.” In terms of its role in Chinese society at the time, it was to assist the Chinese people in resolving their greatest, most important, most difficult, and most pressing issues of subsistence, to eradicate poverty, and then to enable every citizen of the country to enjoy the fundamental right to freedom. (Huang & Tang, 2021).

Employers’ expectations for graduates of vocational and technical institutes are, nevertheless, getting more specialised and segmented as time passes. The theory places greater emphasis on vocational education fulfilling the requirements of the nation, but it has to be determined if it is adaptable to the demands of various kinds of businesses in the present day.

Richter’s theory of VET based on adaption

Concepts of vocational and technical education (VET) that are founded on employment and the processes of working necessitate a vocational scientific stance. Hermeneutics, empirical analysis, and dialectical analysis are the three distinct sorts of research that may be conducted in this area. Instead, a constructivist methodology as well as action sciences keywords are used in this study. Work is seen as a fundamental constituent element in vocational education and training, and the programme is intended to be executed within social and economic circumstances. Collaborative effort is required not just from employees, work settings, and technology, but also from educators and society as a whole. (Richter, 2009)

It is essential to keep in mind that training and education for certain occupations take place within a specific set of economic and social circumstances. It is essential that labour, society, and educational institutions work together. This setting is ideal for the development of learning that is competency-based. It is essential that the aforementioned factors not be considered in isolation. Each one is required to take into consideration vocational education in addition to the vocational sciences that go along with it. Also, one must take into account the dependency that already exists. Learners are seen as human capital within the framework of adaptive vocational education. The use of adaptive procedures and technology is required of him or her as part of the process of managing both current and occupational needs. People are the primary focus of competency-based vocational education and training, and they will be able to actively (collectively) affect both the working world and society as a whole. (Bohne, Eicker & Haseloff, 2017)

The application of the theory in this situation is warranted due to the fact that quality vocational education establishments share a commitment to providing instruction that is underpinned by objective vocational science. On the other hand, China does not have a uniform vocational science system, and there is a need for more study on the degree to which various types of vocational education institutions comply with the trends in their respective sectors.

Behaviorist Learning Theory

The term “behaviourist learning theory” refers to the notion of researching human learning behaviour via observation and experimentation, with observation and experimentation serving as the primary research methodologies. Thorndike (1898) held the belief that the learning process is a stimulus-response process, and that the only way to acquire accurate feedback was to undergo a process of continuous trial and error in an environment that had a variety of external stimuli. Hence, learning is a methodical process that can be broken down into many distinct parts, and it is a human reaction to the many stimuli that come from the surrounding world.

The neo-behaviorist theory of learning was established by B. F. Skinner in 1938. Skinner believed that human learning behaviour consists of two types: the first type is the response caused by stimuli, also known as responding behaviour; the second type is the self-response made without the presence of stimuli, also known as operant reflexes. Skinner placed a lot of emphasis on the rate of response in learning issues, especially that the rate of response rises when the subject is engaged in learning activities, and that the rate of response falls when the subject is not engaged in learning activities.



Late in its development, neobehaviorist learning theory split into two distinct schools of thought: the radical school and the social cognitive learning theory school. Skinner is the leading representative of the radical school, whereas Bandura is the leading representative of the social cognitive learning theory school. Learning, according to the social cognitive learning theory school of thought, is a process that involves seeing and mimicking the conduct of others, and then either translating it into one's own behaviour or inventing new behaviour. Consequently, learning behaviour is a kind of conduct that involves observation and imitation, and the learning behaviour of an individual is contingent upon the environment in which the person resides. In addition, individuals reinforce their own behaviour via the use of external incentives and penalties for certain activities. The method in question is referred to as "alternative reinforcement." When a person utilises external conduct as a point of reference in alternative reinforcement, that individual encourages oneself or herself by witnessing the rewards and penalties experienced as a result of his or her own behaviour.

Because of its origins in behaviourism, the behaviourist learning theory places a primary emphasis on the reinforcing impact that stimuli has on learning. As a result, there is no question that we need to perform an excellent design at the top level of the curriculum design and teaching process of higher vocational education. This is necessary in order to standardise both the quality of the curriculum and the teaching. At the same time, vocational schools need to construct an all-inclusive platform for the production of curricula in order to guarantee the abundance of curricular materials and provide the appropriate technical assistance. In conclusion, not only are instructors actively participating in the construction of the curriculum, but students are also actively cooperating with the curriculum. These are the unavoidable prerequisites that must be met in order to guarantee that the changes in the curriculum and methods of instruction will have the desired impact of enhancing the students' capacity for higher-level vocational learning (Tang et al., 2013; Pambreni et al., 2019; Do et al., 2019; Do et al., 2020).

The behaviourist learning theory has played an essential role in the development of new approaches to classroom instruction. However, the focus on external stimuli and the complete neglect of the internal mental processes of the learner, the denial of consciousness, and the one-sided emphasis on the role of the environment and education, as well as the neglect of the subjective initiative of the human being are all problematic aspects of this approach. If students at vocational schools do not engage with one another to a significant degree, then the process of improving the quality of instruction will be harmed.

Conclusion


There are several study results on vocational education in China, covering a range of issues and perspectives. The current literature focuses primarily on the current situation of vocational education, analysing the layout and professional structure of vocational colleges, the construction of teachers, the cultivation of vocational education personnel, and the cultivation of vocational education funds, focusing on the cultivation of vocational education personnel, the investment of funds, and the development of regional economies. The findings indicate that there are still issues in vocational education, such as unreasonable specialisation, lagging teaching staff development, insufficient total investment, low investment per student, a large gap between vocational education and general education, and discord between vocational education and regional economic development. In addition, the literature makes a number of recommendations, such as setting up vocational education majors rationally in the future, training full-time teachers vigorously and investing in vocational education, improving the structure of vocational education and enhancing the coordination among regional economic industries in order to improve the time and level of vocational education.

The bulk of recent study has concluded that there are a number of issues with the development of vocational education in China, including issues with the external environment and laws as well as issues inside colleges and universities. Nonetheless, the bulk of study focuses on the perspectives of higher vocational students, with few from the perspectives of colleges. Higher vocational colleges not only appeal to the cause of students is caused by poor vocational education development in

China, the cause of less attractive in terms of high college graduates, there are also many other factors, such as graduates of family education to change, The influence of high college vocational education on them, the influence of high college vocational education on them, the change of the graduates career planning for the future, as well as the graduates for enrolment in higher vocational education to investigate factors change, and so on. Moreover, the development of vocational education in China is continually investigated in tandem, and modern research on vocational education are primarily worldwide in scope. Nonetheless, there are tremendous variations in the development of vocational education in various regions of China.

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