

Insights on the Construction of Cultural Brands in Higher Vocational Colleges from a Double High Perspective—Taking the "One College, One Brand" Campus Culture Construction Project of the Tourism Management College at Yunnan Tourism College as an Example

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Abstract: The "Vocational Education Law of the People's Republic of China" mandates that vocational education is as crucial as general education. As a key element of higher education, vocational education is actively aligning with the nation's strategic goals and is progressing towards the "Double First-Class" initiative. Despite this, higher vocational institutions encounter challenges in establishing campus cultural brands, including issues with positioning, insufficient emphasis on the unique aspects of vocational education, and a shortage of distinct professional characteristics. In light of these challenges, this paper examines the "Colorful Yunnan-Most Beautiful Red—Red Tourism Promotes Soul Casting and Education" project, a cultural brand initiative under the "One College, One Brand" framework during the provincial high-level professional group construction phase at the Tourism Management College of Yunnan Tourism College. The aim is to identify the challenges faced in the development of campus cultural brands within higher vocational colleges in China and to explore potential solutions and innovative approaches.

Keywords: Higher vocational colleges; Campus culture; Brand; "One College, One Brand"; "Dual High"; Tourism Management

1. Introduction

The "Double High-level Plan" for the construction of high-level higher vocational schools and programs with Chinese characteristics is a significant initiative in China's vocational education in recent years. In January 2019, the State Council issued the "National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan," which proposed the construction of a group of vocational schools and Professional group that are reform-oriented, development-supportive, with Chinese characteristics, and at a world-class level. This initiative aims to promote the continuous deepening of vocational education reforms and lead the high-quality development of vocational education in the new era ^[1]. The "Double High-level Plan" was officially launched.

In March of the same year, the *Opinions on Implementing the Double High-level Plan for the Construction of High-Level Higher Vocational Schools and Programs with Chinese Characteristics* was issued, stating that the "Double High-level Plan" should "vigorously carry out education on ideals and beliefs, as well as education on socialist core values, establish a comprehensive ideological and political work framework for all personnel, and achieve a high level of integration between vocational skills and professional spirit cultivation." ^{[2][3]}.

2. The Far-Reaching Significance of Campus Cultural Brand Construction in Higher Vocational Colleges Under the "Double High-level" Plan

The realization of the "Double High-level Plan" construction goals is inseparable from the development of campus cultural brands. For higher vocational colleges, which focus on vocational education, the construction of campus culture holds an equally strategic position alongside the teaching of professional theory and the strengthening of skills training. Compared to the quantifiable knowledge

mastery and skill acquisition, cultural factors are intangible and deep-rooted. These factors subtly influence students, affecting their intrinsic motivation for learning and the extent of their sustained efforts. They have a lasting impact on the setting of personal academic goals and the development of future potential. Particularly, they play a crucial role in shaping students' values on the eve of their entry into society. The construction of campus cultural brands can enhance the soft power of campus culture, innovate and enrich the university spirit, improve the quality of talent cultivation, and provide sustained and strong spiritual motivation for the high-quality development of higher vocational colleges. This, in turn, strengthens national cultural soft power and improves the overall quality of the nation ^[4].

3. Problems in Campus Cultural Brand Construction in Higher Vocational Colleges

Under the background of the "Double High" construction, higher vocational colleges are increasingly focusing on campus cultural brand construction. However, there are still issues such as misalignment in the positioning of cultural brand construction, failure to highlight the characteristics of vocational education, and a lack of clearly defined specialties. These obstacles not only hinder the creation of a strong campus cultural atmosphere but also fail to align with the reform processes of higher vocational education.

3.1. Misalignment in the Positioning of Campus Cultural Brand Construction

Vague Positioning. Some higher vocational colleges have yet to establish a clear directional positioning in their campus cultural brand building. This results in an unclear development direction, making it difficult to create a recognizable brand image. This issue may stem from a lack of deep understanding of the institution's own characteristics, educational philosophy, and the connotations of campus culture, which leads to misalignment in the positioning during the brand-building process.

Over-reliance on Imitation. Some higher vocational colleges overly depend on replicating the successful practices of other institutions in their campus cultural brand construction, neglecting their own characteristics and strengths. This approach not only prevents the school from forming a unique brand identity but may also lead to a "one-size-fits-all" phenomenon across schools, reducing the college's distinctiveness.

3.2. The Cultural Brand Fails to Reflect the Characteristics of Vocational Education

Vocational education focuses on the cultivation of practical skills, and the campus cultural environment can provide strong support for achieving this goal.

Lack of Vocational Elements. As an essential component of vocational education, the campus cultural brand of higher vocational colleges should fully reflect the characteristics and requirements of vocational education. However, in practice, some higher vocational colleges' campus cultural brands lack vocational elements and fail to fully showcase the distinct features of vocational education. This may be due to the insufficient understanding of vocational education by the institutions, or a lack of clarity regarding the connection between campus cultural brands and vocational education.

Insufficient Collaboration with Enterprises and Industries. The construction of campus cultural brands in higher vocational colleges should be closely linked with enterprises and industries, working together to shape a brand image with industry-specific characteristics. However, in practice, some higher vocational colleges do not have deep cooperation with enterprises and industries, leading to campus cultural brands lacking industry elements and the practical support of enterprises.

3.3. The Professional Characteristics of the Cultural Brand Are Not Prominent

Lack of Clear Professional Characteristics. The construction of campus cultural brands in higher vocational colleges should align with the institutions' program offerings and academic characteristics, forming a brand image that reflects the professional traits of the institution. However, in practice, some higher vocational colleges' campus cultural brands fail to fully showcase their professional characteristics, resulting in a brand image that lacks uniqueness.

Disconnection Between Professional Education and Cultural Brands. Some higher vocational colleges, when establishing campus cultural brands, fail to closely integrate professional education with the cultural brand, resulting in a disconnect between the two. This may be due to the institution's

unclear understanding of the relationship between professional education and campus cultural brands, or a lack of an effective mechanism for their integration in practice.

4. Principles for the Construction of Campus Cultural Brands in Higher Vocational Colleges

The principles for the construction of campus cultural brands in higher vocational colleges include the principle of human-centeredness, the principle of sustainability, and the principle of innovation. These principles are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, collectively forming the core elements of campus cultural brand construction in higher vocational colleges.

4.1. The Principle of Human-Centeredness

The principle of human-centeredness emphasizes that the construction of campus cultural brands should be student-oriented, focusing on the growth and developmental needs of students. First, it is essential to respect the primary position of students. Institutions should respect and understand the individual characteristics and differences of each student, encourage active participation in campus cultural activities, and foster students' autonomy and innovative spirit. Second, attention should be given to students' diverse needs. This includes addressing their academic, social, and psychological needs by providing a variety of cultural activities, psychological counseling, and other services to meet their diverse demands. Third, it is important to promote the all-round development of students. Campus cultural construction should focus on the holistic development of students, offering a variety of educational resources and practical opportunities to cultivate their overall competencies and professional abilities.

4.2. Principle of Sustainability

The principle of sustainability requires that the construction of campus cultural brands be a long-term, stable, systematic, and continuous process. Building a campus cultural brand is a complex, system-wide undertaking that demands sustained effort and cannot be achieved overnight. To ensure the sustainability and stability of campus cultural development, institutions must establish a sound long-term mechanism. First, long-term planning should be emphasized. This plan should clearly define the goals and tasks of campus cultural construction and establish specific implementation plans and measures. Second, stable investment is essential. Campus cultural construction requires consistent investment, including financial, human, and material support, to ensure its continuity and stability. Third, continuous evaluation should be implemented. A sustainable evaluation mechanism for campus cultural construction should be established, which regularly assesses and provides feedback on the effectiveness of cultural initiatives, allowing for timely adjustments and improvements to the campus cultural development plan.

4.3. Principle of Innovation

The principle of innovation emphasizes that campus cultural construction should be innovative and forward-thinking, capable of guiding the direction of campus culture development. In the context of higher vocational colleges' campus cultural brand construction, the principle of innovation is reflected in several key areas: First, innovative concepts. The construction of campus cultural brands should establish an innovative mindset, focusing on cultivating students' awareness and ability for innovation, and encouraging students to boldly try and explore new ideas. Second, innovative forms. Campus cultural construction should employ diverse forms, such as cultural activities, social practices, volunteer services, etc., using novel and engaging approaches to capture students' attention, enhancing the participation and influence of campus cultural events. Third, innovative content. Campus cultural construction should focus on content innovation, incorporating the characteristics of the times and societal needs. It should continuously update the content and forms of campus cultural activities to make campus culture more relevant to students, closer to life, and aligned with practical realities.

5. Introduction to the "One College, One Brand" Project Implementation and Construction Insights

In 2023, our school focused on the "One College, One Brand" campus cultural brand construction and selection activities, deeply exploring and inheriting the 67-year history of the school's cultural

traditions. We promoted the integration of refined culture into the campus, enhancing the educational function of culture through a multidimensional, integrated campus cultural feature. Our college's cultural brand, *Colorful Yunnan-Most Beautiful Red—Red Tourism Promotes Soul Casting and Education*, was designated as a key cultural brand of the university and has gradually developed into a campus cultural brand with vocational education humanistic spirit, certain stability, and high recognition.

5.1. Background of the Project Design

On August 1, 2023, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Education, the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, the All-China Women's Federation, the China National Committee for the Wellbeing of the Youth, jointly issued the *Action Plan for Utilizing Red Resources to Cultivate New Era Talents: Red Tourism Promotes Soul Casting and Education (2023–2025)* [5]. The document emphasizes the implementation of the fundamental task of moral education, with the theme of "Utilizing Red Resources to Cultivate New Era Talents." [6].

Relying on the professional characteristics and talent development goals, our college inherits its fine cultural traditions and historical accumulation, focusing on the creation of the cultural brand *Colorful Yunnan-Most Beautiful Red—Red Tourism Promotes Soul Casting and Education*.

5.2. Practical Significance of Project Design

5.2.1. Yunnan's Red Tourism Resource Endowment

In 2021, the Department of Culture and Tourism of Yunnan Province published 60 red tourism routes at the Yunnan Military Academy Museum. The *14th Five-Year Plan for Tourism Development in Yunnan Province* clearly states the need to enrich the supply of high-quality products and vigorously develop red tourism. In September 2023, *Three-Year Action Plan for the Construction of a Strong Cultural and Tourism Province in Yunnan (2023–2025)*, emphasizing the development of red tourism and the deep exploration of red cultural connotations, as well as the promotion of red cultural spirit.

5.2.2. Shortage of Tourism Talent Capable of Telling Red Stories

Although Yunnan Province and Kunming City boast rich red tourism resources, they face the challenge of a shortage of professional tourism talents who can effectively convey red stories. Some red tourism guides tend to rely on rote memorization of their scripts, with insufficient understanding of the historical value of the resources. During tours, they rarely interact with visitors and are often unable to answer questions accurately, which undermines the educational significance of red tourist sites. Some red tourism scenic areas lack depth in exploring cultural connotations. Their tourism route planning is often unreasonable, the variety of tourism products is limited, and there is still considerable room for improvement in service quality.

5.3. Process Overview of the Project

Our college is actively engaged in the construction of red cultural projects, red tourism brand activities, and a series of promotional events. We delve deeply into the educational connotations of red culture, emphasizing its transformation into educational value. The aim is to cultivate a group of exemplary red tourism guides who excel in the "Five Good" qualities: "good political ideology, good knowledge base, good explanation and service skills, good role models, and good social influence" [7][8].

5.3.1. Red Culture Projects

Our college's faculty members actively incorporate red culture into course construction. They lead students in refining red tourism-related projects and enthusiastically participate in national competitions, such as the "Challenge Cup" National Extracurricular Academic Science and Technology Works Competition, the National College Student Red Tourism Creative Planning Competition, and the "Internet+" National College Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition.

5.3.2. Red Practice

Hosting Red Tourism Brand Activities. Our college actively organizes a variety of red tourism brand activities, such as the "Strong Nation and Rejuvenation Starts with Me" student competition, the "Continuing the Red Bloodline, Striving to be the Youth of the Era" series of events, the summer

"Three Going to the Countryside" program, the "Pure Love, Only for China" themed essay competition, VLOGs (Video Blogs) contests, and the "Letters Across Time" correspondence activities.

5.3.3. Red Communication

Conducting a Series of Promotional Activities. Firstly, our college actively serves faculty and students by organizing the "Cherish Natural Resources, Tell the Earth Story Well" Geology Museum volunteer tour guide activity, and the "Learn from Lei Feng, Take Action, Advocate for Contribution and Civilization" series of Lei Feng Day activities. Secondly, we extend our outreach to local communities by conducting legal education and community service activities, including "Community Volunteer Service for Legal Education," "World Water Day" scientific popularization activities in collaboration with elementary school students, the "Beautiful China, We Are the Guardians" civilized tourism promotion, and visits to the Yunnan Army Lecture Hall. Finally, we conduct in-depth rural tourism talent training in regions such as Kashgar in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, as well as Pingtian Miao Autonomous County and Xinping County in Yunnan Province.

5.4. Evaluation of Project Implementation Outcomes

The project has transitioned from being conducted solely by the secondary college to a coordinated effort at both the college and university levels. After one year of practice, multidimensional evaluations have been carried out by teachers, students, parents, colleagues in the educational field, cultural professionals, and others.

5.4.1. Teacher Evaluation

The implementation of the "One College, One Brand" campus cultural activities has changed the students' learning attitudes and sparked their strong interest in red culture and red tourism. There has been a noticeable difference in students' spirit of struggle, and innovation before and after the cultural construction. In terms of guiding speech recitation, students have shifted from rote memorization to understanding first, followed by memorization. This transition from passive to active learning has not only optimized learning methods but also strengthened the foundation of professional knowledge, while significantly improving professional skill levels.

5.4.2. Student Evaluation

In their pursuit of becoming exemplary "five-star red tourism guides" — those with good political thoughts, strong knowledge reserves, excellent explanation services, exemplary leadership, and positive social influence — students have dedicated more time to learning and reading, especially focusing on improving their explanation skills. This has made them feel different from before, with learning now having a clearer direction and greater motivation.

5.4.3. Parent Evaluation

Through the continuous implementation of the "One College, One Brand" campus cultural activities, students have undergone significant changes. They have become more attentive to the red tourism attractions in their hometowns and proactively analyze whether the red tourism routes are reasonable, whether the guiding speeches are impressive, and so on. Naturally, their public speaking skills have also improved.

5.4.4. Evaluation by Peers in the Education Field

The positive campus cultural activities have prompted students to form new cognitive needs, creating a virtuous cycle where teaching style and learning style mutually reinforce each other. In terms of cultural development, the project, based on the specialized characteristics of the Tourism Management College, has effectively utilized and explored resources, leveraging students' initiative. This has also helped to change the stereotypical image often associated with students of higher vocational colleges.

5.4.5. Cultural Professional Evaluation

Campus culture is an indispensable part of social culture. Creating campus culture in higher vocational colleges by establishing specific cultural contexts is beneficial to the enhancement of the overall social cultural literacy. At the same time, it can actively collaborate with cultural institutions in society, thereby stimulating greater vitality in the campus culture of vocational colleges.

5.5. Insights from Project Implementation

The construction of campus cultural brands in higher vocational colleges under the "Double High" background must be based on the new stage of the era, deeply implementing the new development philosophy of "innovation, coordination, green, openness, and sharing." Only in this way can we form a distinctive, highly recognizable campus cultural brand with good social recognition and reputation.

5.5.1. Building the "One College, One Brand" Ideological and Political Education Model

The "One College, One Brand" ideological and political education model involves branding the ideological and political education, projectizing its operations, and ensuring sustainable development. The key to building this model is to find the correct positioning, keep pace with the times, and apply the principle of teaching according to students' abilities. Specific implementation strategies include establishing a scientific brand concept, integrating educational resources, relying on the "Ten Major Education Systems," and refining the brand's unique features ^[9].

5.5.2. Using Excellent Traditional Culture to Cultivate a Positive Campus Culture

The "One College, One Brand" project emphasizes the integration of excellent traditional culture into campus cultural development. By exploring and inheriting outstanding traditional culture, higher vocational colleges can shape a unique campus spirit and value orientation, enhancing the cultural identity and sense of belonging among teachers and students. This cultural cultivation helps to create a positive and uplifting campus cultural atmosphere, promoting the overall development of students. Furthermore, it is essential to actively integrate local culture, assisting students in becoming talents who can contribute to the development of the local economy.

5.5.3. Promoting the Formation of a Good Academic Atmosphere through Digital Expression

The "One College, One Brand" project encourages the use of digital expression methods to foster the development of a positive academic atmosphere. By employing innovative cultural activities and a rich variety of content, it effectively stimulates students' enthusiasm for knowledge and creativity, while also nurturing their self-directed learning abilities and innovative thinking. Higher vocational institutions can utilize new media technologies to organize online cultural activities, such as online book clubs, virtual exhibitions, and professional achievements showcases. Additionally, students can record their daily lives through VLOGs (video blogs), a format they are skilled at. This not only enriches students' learning methods but also promotes the construction of a positive academic atmosphere. Furthermore, these innovative cultural expression methods help enhance the institution's visibility and influence, attracting more outstanding students and faculty members.

5.5.4. Empowering the Improvement of Comprehensive Quality of Students in Higher Vocational Colleges through Cultural Brand Construction

The "One College, One Brand" project enhances the comprehensive quality of students in higher vocational colleges by creating distinctive cultural brands. Vocational education is designed to cultivate high-quality technical and skilled talents, equipping learners with the necessary professional ethics, scientific knowledge, specialized expertise, technical skills, and overall vocational competencies and capabilities required for career development or employment ^[10]. For students in higher vocational institutions, while knowledge and skills are undoubtedly important, the true measure of a student's excellence lies in the comprehensive qualities they demonstrate through their character, behavior, habits, and academic knowledge. The "One College, One Brand" project promotes positive culture and establishes a clear ideological direction, helping shape students' sound worldviews, life perspectives, and value systems.

5.5.5. Innovating New Approaches to Campus Cultural Activities

The "One College, One Brand" project focuses on a practical orientation, offering students opportunities to engage with communities and rural areas. This helps enhance students' sense of social responsibility and public welfare awareness, while also responding to the national call for rural revitalization. It inspires young students to actively contribute to the development of their hometowns, helping them deeply realize the importance of "striving to be good youth and making contributions at the grassroots level."

6. Conclusions

In recent years, vocational education has significantly elevated its strategic position within China's national development strategy. It has become a crucial pathway for cultivating high-quality technical and skilled talents, serving national strategic demands, and driving regional economic and social development. Against the backdrop of vocational colleges actively implementing the "Double High-level Plan", campus cultural branding—as both a carrier and platform for campus culture—serves not only as a vital mechanism for fostering cultural development but also as an effective means to enhance talent cultivation quality. Nevertheless, the construction of cultural branding in vocational colleges remains an area rich with unexplored potential, warranting further in-depth exploration and innovative practices by scholars and practitioners.

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