A Survey Study on the Competence of Student Leaders in Private Colleges and Universities under the Perspective of Competency

Cen Ding
Panyapiwat Institute of Management, Thailand
E-mail: 79477512@qq.com

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Abstract

Private colleges and universities occupy an important position in China's higher education, and improving the competence of student cadres is crucial to their development. This study aims to systematically analyze the current situation of competence of student cadres in private universities and to lay a foundation of investigation for improvement strategies.

Combining qualitative and quantitative methods, this study analyzes the interview data of 30 student leaders from some private universities in Jiangsu Province through behavioral event interviews and questionnaires to summarize the elements of competence. It also evaluates 5632 valid questionnaires from 26 private colleges and universities in six provinces to analyze the current status of competence.

The competency of student cadres includes 4 dimensions, 17 elements and 46 explanations, including political character, work attitude, work ability and personal traits. There are three main problems: some competencies need to be improved, the main evaluator's evaluation is one-sided, and there is a bias in self-perception.

It is recommended that work competence be enhanced through systematic training and practice, that political integrity and personality traits be improved through rigorous screening and guidance, and that a sound evaluation and feedback mechanism be established. Future research should expand the scope to further validate the elements of competence and explore the impact of the organizational environment on the development of competence.

Keywords: private colleges and universities; Student cadres; Competency;statistical analysis

Introduction

In China's education system, private colleges and universities occupy a pivotal position. The level of quality of their operation has a far-reaching impact on the future development of national higher education. Therefore, private colleges and universities should center on the core idea of talent cultivation in their teaching activities, and carry out education and teaching, academic research, volunteer service and student management. The effective implementation of these activities will play a very important role in improving the comprehensive quality of students.

With the rapid development of China's private colleges and universities, the society's demand for talent cultivation in private colleges and universities is increasing. Under such circumstances, it is particularly important to improve the competence of student cadres in private colleges and universities. Qiu Yachong (2013: 04) points out that the role of university student cadres serves as both a platform for cultivating outstanding students and a bridge and link for optimizing school education management. Therefore, it is of great practical significance and value to carry out a special research on "competency enhancement of student

cadres in private colleges and universities", which will help to promote the high-quality development of student cadres in private colleges and universities, promote the synergistic effect of all-member, all-process and all-round education, and help students grow up and become successful as well as the educational reform of private colleges and universities.

In view of the specificity and importance of talent cultivation in private colleges and universities, integrating the theories of pedagogy, management, psychology and other disciplines to improve the competence of student cadres in private colleges and universities has become an important research topic for the construction of student cadres in private colleges and universities. On the one hand, clarifying the elements of competence of student cadres can dynamically reflect the changing working status and positioning of student cadres, and promote the enhancement of student cadres' own quality and the overall capacity building of the team; on the other hand, analyzing the current situation of competence through empirical research can help to carry forward the excellent competence, and make targeted enhancement for the weak competence and the problems that have been revealed, so as to realize the "double" effect of personal growth and school education and management. On the other hand, analyzing the current situation of competency through empirical research can help to promote the excellent competency and make targeted improvement for the weak competency and problems, so as to realize the "win-win" situation of personal growth and school education management.

The theory of "competency" has been developing in full swing in the field of management and has been widely used. There are only a few studies on the competency of student cadres in private colleges and universities, and most of them are theoretical researches on the identification of competency elements, which is a contingent research, and there are few studies on the current status of the competency of student cadres in private colleges and universities.

Considering the research background including the vital role of private colleges in China's education system and the importance of enhancing student cadres' competencies to meet growing societal demands. Despite existing theoretical studies, there is a lack of empirical research on the current competency status of student cadres, making this study crucial for improving both personal and institutional educational outcomes.

This study explores the elements and current situation of student cadre competence in private colleges and universities by combining qualitative and quantitative methods. It not only provides new insights into the theory of student cadre competence, but also will provide a scientific basis for the improvement of student cadre competence in private colleges and universities, and lay a foundation for the training of student cadres.

Research Objective

This study aims to systematically analyze and enhance the competence of student cadres in private colleges and universities, to deeply explore its connotation, status quo and influencing factors through a variety of research methods, and to put forward practical suggestions for improvement. The specific research objectives are as follows:

1. Identify the elements of competency that student leaders in private colleges and universities should possess:

Through the behavioral event interview method, we will summarize the core elements of competency of student cadres in private universities and clarify the dimensions of competency. This part will collect the behavioral performance of current and former student

cadres in different contexts through in-depth interviews with them to extract the key competencies and traits. The interviews will include aspects such as the challenges that student leaders encounter in their actual work, their problem-solving approaches, their teamwork, and their demonstration of leadership. By organizing and analyzing the data from these interviews, a comprehensive competency framework will be established to help understand the performance and requirements of student cadres in different work tasks, and provide a theoretical basis for subsequent training and selection.

2. Assessing the current state of student leader competency in private colleges and universities:

Using the questionnaire survey method and comparative analysis method, we investigate and analyze the current status of competence of student cadres in private colleges and universities, and understand their performance and problems in actual work. Through the design of scientific questionnaires, a wide range of surveys are conducted on student cadres in schools, covering information on their work content, performance evaluation, self-perception and feedback. The questionnaire data are comparatively analyzed by self-assessment and other assessment in order to comprehensively assess the competence level of current student cadres, identify the shortcomings and deficiencies in competence, as well as the problems shown by the current status of competence.

Literature Review

1. A study related to student leaders in higher education

According to research by Cao Ying, (2012: 57) "Student cadres in colleges and universities refer to students who are in certain management and leadership positions in the formal organization of students in colleges and universities, who undertake certain student education and management tasks, and who exercise certain service functions.

And leadership positions in the formal organization of students in institutions of higher education, undertake certain tasks of student education and management, and exercise certain service functions."

According to Chen and Li, (2020: 14) "Student cadres in colleges and universities are the main body of educational and management work in colleges and universities; student cadres in colleges and universities are the backbone of educational and management work in schools; and student cadres in colleges and universities are learners of social work as well as stewards of college students."

Student cadres in colleges and universities inevitably carry conflicting contradictions in them because of their dual identity. To summarize, there are mainly the following problems.

According to Dong Pengzhong, (2009: 88) the main problems of student cadres in colleges and universities are "enthusiasm stage, value utilitarianism, bureaucratic style and perfunctory learning."

Research by Gu, (2010: 18) supported "individual student cadres do not handle the relationship between study and work properly; individual student cadres have serious utilitarian thinking and lack of dedication; in social work, individual student cadres emphasize specific work but not analysis and summarization; in interpersonal relationships, individual student cadres emphasize the top but not the bottom, and the individual but not the whole."

Yuan and Zhong, (2011: 42) believe that some student leaders "cannot correctly handle the relationship between study and work, the relationship with classmates, and the relationship with teachers; they do not have a high level of ideology and impure motives for their work; they do not have a strong working ability, and they mechanically cope with the work assigned by teachers, lacking initiative and creativity."

According to Luo Ruihua, (2009: 59) the main problems of student cadres in colleges and universities are "the utilitarian nature of the motives for joining student cadres joining the speculative nature of the way of student cadres and the utilitarian nature of the work style."

2. Identifying Student Differences in Private Colleges and Universities

The institutional and historical presence of private colleges and universities is significantly different from that of public colleges and universities, and this is reflected in the significant differences in student characteristics.

Wang Fang et al., (2020: 146) pointed out that students in private colleges and universities usually have a correct political and ideological attitude, but lack deep thinking and in-depth understanding of social issues. Students in private colleges and universities generally have diversified values, but their behavior tends to be utilitarian, focusing more on personal interests than social dedication. They have a strong desire and motivation to learn, but lack persistence and are easily affected by setbacks. Psychological needs are diversified, but accompanied by a strong sense of inferiority, especially when compared with students in public institutions

Tian Jianwei et al., (2018: 450) suggested that students in private colleges and universities have positive political and ideological attitudes but lack correct ideals and beliefs, and pay less attention to the international Chinese situation and current affairs news. Students expect to be independent but lack sufficient ability, and often appear helpless when facing problems in interpersonal relationships, academic life and emotional processing. They have diversified values, but their moral values are getting weaker and weaker, and they are susceptible to the influence of network culture and social malpractices, such as cheating in exams and improper romantic concepts.

Chen Qi, (2019: 22) studied that students in private colleges and universities are generally characterized by learning bias and better family economic conditions. They show the characteristics of being eye-catching and lacking a sense of responsibility due to family and life influences. Chen Qi emphasized that the thoughts and behaviors of students in private colleges and universities are influenced by family, education, society, and the network, in which the family influence includes children being spoiled or parents being busy with their work, the education influence involves test-based education, the social influence is related to the perception of talents, and the network influence is reflected in students' information exposure and diversification of thoughts.

According to Cheng Songlin, (2018: 90) students in private colleges and universities generally face psychological adaptation problems, including distress in self-perception, emotion management, interpersonal relationships and future planning. He believes that these problems stem from the combined effects of family education, school education, social environment and personal factors. Cheng Songlin advocates measures to cope with these problems through mental health education, psychological counseling services and building a harmonious campus environment.

Ma Lijuan (2010) pointed out that students in private colleges and universities have problems in learning motivation, behavior and values. She pointed out that the causes of these problems include students' personal factors, family education, school education and the influence of the social environment. Ma Lijuan suggests that these problems can be solved through measures such as strengthening student management, improving education methods and enhancing students' self-management ability.

In summary, students in private colleges and universities generally have the following characteristics: first, differences in family background, most students in private colleges and universities come from families with better economic conditions, and family education has a significant impact on them. This may lead to some students being over-indulged and lacking independence and responsibility. Secondly, thinking and behavioral differences, students generally show a lack of deep thinking, a weak sense of responsibility, as well as a low eye. They pay less attention to social issues and show a lack of personal future planning and self-care ability. Third, psychological adaptation differences, many students encountered difficulties in self-concept, emotion management, interpersonal relationships and future planning. This reflects their psychological and emotional adaptation problems.

Research Methodology

1. Behavioral Event Interviewing

Behavioral event interview method is one of the commonly used methods in qualitative research, which aims to uncover what is behind the most and least successful events of the interviewees at work. An outline needs to be designed before the interview, while the interview process focuses on the interviewee's free description, avoiding the researcher's guidance or intervention. At the end of the interviews, the researcher distilled the key factors that led to success or failure through thematic analysis and coding methods. The advantage of this method is that it is logical and rigorous, and it can obtain the real state of the interviewees through face-to-face interviews, and the information is sufficient, comprehensive and objective, which helps to reveal the elements of competency more effectively. However, this method is time-consuming and requires the interviewer to be skillful in techniques to overcome the interference of human subjective factors.

This study will establish the selection criteria for the high-performing group and the average-performing group of student cadres based on the interview objectives. A sample of 30 student cadres from private colleges in Jiangsu Province will be selected for interviews. Nvivo software will be used for thematic analysis and coding to extract the competency elements of student cadres in private colleges.

2. Comparative analysis

Comparative analysis method analyzes the similarities or differences between things or people by comparing and contrasting them to provide a basis for the next research judgment.

This study mainly compares the similarities and differences between self-assessment and other assessment of student cadres' competence, and provides a reference basis for objectively summarizing the current situation of student cadres' competence and the causes of the problems in private colleges and universities.

3. Questionnaire methodology

The survey method involves designing and compiling questionnaires based on the research objectives and using specific sampling principles to gather information or solicit opinions from respondents. In this study, the "Competency Status Survey for Private Colleges" questionnaire will be developed and distributed to a large sample of student cadres, current students, and relevant teachers in private colleges. A total of 5,632 valid questionnaires were collected from 26 private colleges across 6 provinces, including 482 student cadre questionnaires, 4,902 regular student questionnaires, and 248 teacher questionnaires. The results of the questionnaires will undergo independent sample t-tests, variance analysis, and other data analyses to conduct an in-depth examination of the current competency status.

Research Scope

The scope of this study covers the following main areas:

1. Research topics and objects:

The theme of this study is to explore the competency characteristics and current status of student cadres in private universities, with the specific target population being current student cadres in private universities in China. The sample includes student union and club cadres from different private universities to ensure the diversity and representativeness of the data.

2. Scope of data:

When summarizing and analyzing the elements of competence of student cadres in private colleges and universities, the main purpose is to carry out "behavioral event interviews" for 30 student cadres in private colleges and universities in Jiangsu Province, and obtain 29 valid interview results.

In analyzing the current situation of student cadres' competence in private colleges and universities, a questionnaire survey was conducted mainly for students and teachers of 26 private colleges and universities in 6 provinces, and a total of 5632 valid questionnaires were collected.

By clarifying the above research scope, this study seeks to comprehensively and systematically explore the competency characteristics of student cadres in private colleges and universities, and to provide colleges and universities with a scientific basis and specific guidance in the process of student cadre selection, training, evaluation and development.

Research Results

1. Elements of Competence of Student Leaders in Private Colleges and Universities

Based on the results of the preliminary behavioral event interviews, combined with the rooted theory and the spirit of the Self-discipline Convention for Student Union Cadres and Several Provisions on the Improvement of the Style of the Staff of the Student Union of the FCSU in Serving the Students, the elements of competence of student cadres of the private colleges and universities were categorized into four dimensions, i.e., political qualities, work attitudes, work ability competence, and personal attributes.

Table 1 Explanation of the Competency Elements for Student Cadres in Private Universities

Factor	Key elements	Concrete explanation
political integrity	1 Political beliefs	1. Firm political stance, resolute support for the Party's leadership, loyalty to the Party
		2. Principled, impartial, fair and just
	2. Political quality	3. Awareness of the big picture and collectivism
		4. Strictly abide by organizational discipline and achieve integrity and self-discipline
	3 Friendship with classmates	5. Treat all students equally and with respect
		6. Take the initiative to help classmates and help reflect or solve problems when encountered
		7. Appreciate and encourage classmates
	4 Awareness of role models	8. Self-strictness and leading by example
working attitude	5 Identity	9. Have a certain sense of mission and pride in the position, love the work of student leaders
		10. Being able to lead by example
		11. Dedication
		12. Strong work initiative
		13. Strong execution
	6 Awareness of responsibility	14. Team player with a strong sense of cooperation
		15. Ability to use pressure and responsibility in the face of problems and difficulties
		16. Conscientious and responsible, rigorous and well-organized work
working ability	7 Expressive language skills	17. Good writing skills, able to prepare relevant documents and assist teachers in reviewing them
		18. Good oral presentation skills and ability to persuade others
		19. good at listening and understanding others, good at thinking differently
	8 Communication and coordination skills	20. Ability to communicate and collaborate in student organizations and good cross-departmental communication
		21. Be able to maintain good communication with teachers and understand their task requirements accurately
		22. Be able to mediate conflicts and tensions among students
	9 Problem-solving capacity	23. Be able to make calm judgments in the face of emergencies, make timely adjustments and solve problems
		24. Anticipate possible contingencies and have a backup plan in place
	10 Counseling	25. Be able to gain insight into the psychological state of your classmates

	capacity	26. Be able to help classmates channel negative emotions and stimulate positive ones 27. Excellent academic performance and help other students in academic and scholarly endeavors
	11 Learning capacity	28. Understand the functions and policies related to student work and student organizations in colleges and universities. 29. Good at learning and asking for advice 30. Possess a good school spirit and be able to motivate other students
	12 Organization al management capacity	31. Student leaders can be educated and nurtured 32. Possess a rallying point among students 33. Ability to coordinate scheduling and ensure order at student events 34. be able to plan student activities well with a reasonable division of labor
	13 Time management skills	35. possess good time management skills and be able to rationally allocate time for student work and time for study
	14 Innovative capacity	36. Willingness to think more about work and suggest ways in which it can be optimized 37.Love to study, can quickly accept and learn new technology, new things
personality trait	15 Moral Characteristic s	38. Honesty and reliability of speech and conduct 39. Able to self-reflect, take responsibility and improve on his/her own initiative 40. Practical and willing to work hard and be responsible
	16 Emotional Traits	41. Kind and upright 42. Have a certain degree of resistance to pressure, able to self-regulate the state of mind 43. Confident, generous and sunny
	17 Character Traits	44. Optimistic and positive, able to accept the opinions and criticisms of others 45. Carefulness and patience 46. Enthusiastic, generous and open, happy to serve fellow students

2. Competence of Student Leaders in Private Colleges and Universities Survey Research

Through the results of the questionnaire research of "Survey on the Status Quo of Competence of Student Leaders in Private Colleges and Universities", combined with the data analysis, the following conclusions were drawn.

2.1 Competency status survey study

(1) Low ratings of "work capacity" and the need to improve overall literacy

In terms of working ability, student leaders are in a relatively backward position in both self-assessment and other assessment results. In the self-assessment results of student cadres ranked third, and ranked the bottom in the results of other assessment of students. This

shows that the overall performance of student cadres in terms of working ability is not satisfactory, and there is much room for improvement.

From the point of view of self-evaluation, student cadres usually think that the most important thing they excel in terms of working ability is activity organization ability, and student cadres evaluate themselves as deficient in problem solving ability, psychological counseling ability, and innovation ability.

The results of these aspects are basically the same as those of others' evaluation, but the score of "having appeal among students" in the evaluation of peers is not satisfactory. The large difference in scores between the self-assessment and the others' assessment shows that although the student leaders think that they are doing relatively well, they are not able to perceive much of what they are doing, and they are relatively far from the teacher's requirements, especially in the areas of psychological counseling and resolving inter-student conflicts.

(2) "Political character" cognitive dissonance, individual shortcomings need improvement

There is a big difference between the results of self-assessment and other-assessment of student cadres in terms of political integrity. The student cadres ranked first in the self-assessment results, but ranked third in the peer assessment results. This shows that there is a big cognitive bias among student cadres themselves in terms of political integrity.

From the point of view of self-evaluation, student leaders generally have a positive attitude towards their own political integrity. However, student leaders also objectively believe that "due to the complicated affairs of student activities, there are a lot of things to do", more often focus on "things", and there are more shortcomings in the area of friendship and love for classmates.

The opinions in the evaluation of others are somewhat consistent with the self-evaluation of student leaders. However, in the aspects of "treating and respecting all classmates equally", "taking the initiative to help classmates, and helping to reflect or solve problems" and "appreciating and encouraging classmates", the evaluation of students is generally much lower than the self-evaluation of student leaders. However, in the areas of "treating and respecting all students equally", "taking the initiative to help students and helping them to reflect or solve problems" and "appreciating and encouraging students", the students' ratings are generally much lower than those of student leaders.

(3) "Personality traits" are distinctive and uniform, and stress tolerance needs to be improved

In the self-assessment, student leaders usually have a positive view of their personality traits. The results of student leaders' self-assessment and other-assessment are more consistent, and both are in the order of higher scores. It ranked second in the self-assessment results of student cadres, but first in the results of other-assessment by classmates. However, from the results of other people's evaluation, there are still deficiencies in the areas of stress resistance, practicality and acceptance of other people's criticism, especially from the results of teachers' evaluations, which are relatively low in these areas.

(4) "Work attitude" recognized, subjective initiative still needs to be strengthened

In the self-assessment, student cadres generally believed that they performed poorly in terms of their work attitude and ranked at the bottom of the scores, while in the others' assessment, the work attitude scores were close to each other but ranked second. This indicates that student cadres are more objective in their perception of their own work attitude, and the self-assessment scores are relatively close to the scores of others' assessment.

2.2 Competency status problem analysis

(1) Some competencies are in dire need of improvement

In the study on the competence of student cadres in private colleges and universities, it was found that there is a significant deficiency in the working ability of student cadres, which needs to be improved. This problem is mainly reflected in their performance in dealing with daily affairs and emergencies. From mediating conflicts and contradictions among students to psychological counseling and creativity, student cadres' performance in these key areas was not satisfactory. Although in their self-evaluation, they rate their ability to organize activities and their efficiency in handling tasks highly, the evaluations of their classmates and instructors show that there is still a lot of room for improvement in the practical application of these abilities.

(2) One-sided evaluation by the lead evaluator

In the research on the competence of student cadres in private colleges and universities, instructors, as the main evaluators, are somewhat one-sided in their evaluations, which affects the overall understanding of the comprehensive qualities and abilities of student cadres. Instructors' evaluations tend to focus on student cadres' execution, discipline and implementation of school policies. Teachers focused on whether student leaders were able to complete tasks on time, maintain order in student activities, and perform well in school management. In contrast, students' evaluations were more based on daily contacts and actual experiences, and they were more concerned about the performance of student leaders in direct interactions and services, which led to the possibility that the primary evaluators might not be sufficiently aware of some of the hidden abilities of student leaders.

(3) Self-perception is biased

In the study of student cadres' competence in private colleges and universities, it was found that there is a significant bias in student cadres' self-perceptions, which is mainly reflected in the gap between self-appraisal and others' appraisal. Student cadres generally hold high self-evaluations of their work ability, political integrity and personality traits. However, the evaluation results of instructors and students show that there is a considerable gap between the actual performance of student cadres in these aspects and their self-perception. The self-perception bias of student cadres stems from their overconfidence in their own abilities and qualities, as well as their underestimation of the actual work requirements and challenges.

Discussion

Studying the current situation of student cadres' competency in private colleges and universities has far-reaching significance. Traditional research often focuses on the construction and application of competency elements, aiming to improve the competency of student cadres through the guidance provided by the elements. However, the elements is only a tool, although it can provide a certain direction and framework, its effect depends on the accurate grasp of the actual situation. Therefore, it is more important to clarify the current situation of student cadres' competence and analyze the existing problems in depth than simply identifying competency elements.

This study's results share similarities and differences with previous research:

Consistency in Competency Elements: The competency elements identified in this study are somewhat consistent with those found in previous research and in the competency elements of student cadres in public universities. Regardless of whether they are in private or public universities, student cadres are expected to possess a set of fundamental skills. For example, Meng Yishuang (2022) highlighted skills such as language expression, communication, coordination, and organizational abilities, while Shen & Liu (2009: 61) emphasized social skills, management abilities, and professional skills. These elements align with the findings of this study. However, this research provides more detailed and specific explanations for the 46 competencies across 17 skills using grounded theory.

Competency Status Aligns with Characteristics of Private University Students: The competency status revealed in this study aligns with the common characteristics of private university students identified in previous research. Poor performance in respecting and proactively helping others corresponds with previous findings that private university students tend to exhibit more utilitarian behavior. Similarly, the weaker stress tolerance and psychological counseling abilities are consistent with the broader psychological adaptation challenges faced by students in private universities.

Differences in Clustering of Competency Elements: Compared to the commonly recognized competency elements for student cadres, this study, using grounded theory, summarizes 46 detailed explanations that help student cadres, schools, and teachers gain a deeper understanding of these elements and their manifestations. This understanding is crucial for developing effective strategies to enhance student cadres' competencies. While previous studies on student cadre competencies in universities have frequently mentioned political literacy, it is often categorized as a secondary classification rather than a primary one. For example, according to Meng Yishuang (2022), political literacy is further divided into firm political stance, solid political theory foundation, attention to current political events, and promotion of core socialist values. However, these aspects are categorized under personal literacy as a primary classification, rather than being an independent primary category.According to Sun Wei (2013) research, political theory is also classified as a secondary category under the broader knowledge classification.

Innovation in Research Methods: This study introduces innovation through large-scale surveys to empirically examine the current competency status of student cadres in private universities. To achieve comprehensive research data, this study plans to conduct large-scale surveys across various provinces, selecting samples from private universities according to their distribution nationwide, thereby gathering extensive data for a thorough analysis.

Although this study has sorted out the elements of competence of student leaders in private colleges and universities and analyzed their current situation, there are still the following aspects to be improved:

First, there are limitations in the elements of competency of student cadres in private colleges and universities. Based on the feasibility of interviews, this study interviewed 30 student cadres in Jiangsu Province, and although 17 elements and 48 interpretations were analyzed and summarized through the detailed behavioral event interview method, whether the 17 elements of competence can be further optimized because of the factors of the interviewed students' regions needs further research.

Secondly, the representativeness of the current situation of competence is not fully realized. In terms of the status quo research, this study sampled student cadres of private colleges and universities from 26 schools in 6 provinces, although more than 5,000 questionnaires were researched, compared with the total number of 785 private colleges and universities, it is still insufficient. And most of the research schools are economically more developed provinces, in the relatively less economically developed provinces of private colleges and universities student cadres whether the status quo is the same needs to be further demonstrated.

In the future, to address these areas for improvement, the scope of the study can be expanded, in addition to increasing the sample size of questionnaires and interviews to cover more provinces and different types of private colleges and universities, a longitudinal study can be carried out on individual student cadres, combining the theories of holistic human development and career development, and individual tracking and analysis can be carried out. The summarized elements of competence can also be further optimized and discerned with the help of experts' opinions.

Recommendations

Based on the research and analysis of the current situation of student cadres in private colleges and universities, combined with the degree of difficulty and cycle of cultivation of various elements of competence, we can start from the following aspects in order to effectively improve the competence of student cadres in private colleges and universities in the long term:

First of all, the enhancement of "working ability" should emphasize the combination of training and practice. Special training can quickly improve the ability of student cadres in communication and coordination, organization and management, psychological counseling, etc. Through systematic and targeted training, student cadres can not only master the necessary skills, but also enhance the overall quality. The establishment of self-training mechanism is also key. By defining training objectives and establishing an evaluation system, student cadres can continuously improve themselves in their work. In addition, through competitions and diversified activities, student leaders can practice and improve their abilities and specialties in actual operation, forming a favorable atmosphere of active learning and self-improvement.

"Political integrity", "personality traits" and "work attitude" require strict screening and leadership. Scientific selection criteria and systematic selection process can help to identify student cadres with inherent qualities and potential for long-term development. In the process of training, we should pay attention to theoretical learning, organize collective learning activities, and improve the political quality and ideological awareness of student cadres through systematic theoretical education and red education. At the same time, a positive organizational

atmosphere should be created to stimulate the pioneering power of student cadres, and their moral cultivation and national sentiment should be refined through rich thematic activities.

Finally, the establishment of a sound evaluation and feedback mechanism is the key to ensuring the effectiveness of the enhancement strategy. Through multi-dimensional 360-degree evaluation and periodic dynamic assessment, the performance of student cadres can be fully reflected. Timely feedback of the evaluation results will adjust the wrong self-perception and provide constructive advice to help student cadres find the best development path. In terms of career education, self-knowledge education and career planning guidance should be strengthened, and the career quality and competitiveness of student cadres should be enhanced through psychological assessment, vocational skills training and other means.

Based on the results derived from this study, the following areas of research can be continued in the future in order to further propose the competency of student leaders in private colleges and universities:

First, further validation of the competency elements. A more comprehensive validation of the competency elements derived from this study can be accomplished nationwide through the Delphi expert consultation method, questionnaire surveys, and other forms of validation.

Second, the scope of the study can be expanded, in addition to increasing the sample size of questionnaires and interviews to cover more provinces and different types of private colleges and universities, a longitudinal study can be conducted on individual student cadres, combining the theories of comprehensive human development and career development, and individual tracking analysis.

Third, the relationship between competency development and the organizational environment can be explored. The improvement of competency not only depends on individual training and practice, but is also closely related to the organizational environment in which it is located. Future research should explore in depth the mechanism of organizational environment's influence on the development of student cadres' competence, especially how factors such as organizational culture, management mode and incentive mechanism affect the growth and development of student cadres. This will provide theoretical support for optimizing the organizational environment and enhancing the competence of student cadres.

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