

# *Analysis on the Strategy of Reconstruction of Governance Structure in Higher Vocational Colleges*

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**Abstract**—Extend the concept of corporate governance structure to higher vocational colleges, and build a new college governance model based on business process reengineering theory. Reconstruct the governance structure of Dalian Vocational and Technical College with the professional construction process as the core. The decision-making, execution, and supervision are separated, so that the overall operation of the college with the purpose of educating people and professional construction as the core is more scientific and smooth. This paper finds an efficient way to reconstruct the governance structure of higher vocational colleges.

**Keywords**—vocational education; institutional governance; reengineering theory; structural reconstruction

## I. INTRODUCTION

With economic development and social progress, vocational education, especially higher vocational education, has received increasing attention from all countries<sup>[1]</sup>. China regards the reform and development of vocational education as an important way to promote economic restructuring and innovative economic growth model, and takes the construction of national model schools as a carrier to promote the reform of the training model for higher vocational professionals with Chinese characteristics<sup>[2]</sup>.

The core of the construction of the model school is professional construction<sup>[3]</sup>. During the construction of the three-year model school, Dalian Vocational and Technical College focused on the development of regional economy, focused on the construction of seven specialties, and promoted the construction of 15 professional groups, achieved phased results. Like many national model schools that have passed the acceptance test, Dalian Vocational and Technical College has put forward the development idea of “continuously consolidating and upgrading the achievements of the model school construction”<sup>[4]</sup>, facing three major issues: “what needs to be done to consolidate and enhance the achievements of the model school construction”, “how to promote the development of existing demonstration specialties”, and “how to promote the development of other specialties”.

In practice, the existing governance structure of organization and operation in terms of functions has been unable to adapt to the professional-centered talent training

requirements, hindered the professional construction of the system. It is necessary to explore the reconstruction of the college governance structure<sup>[5]</sup>.

Australia's higher vocational education is in a leading position in the world, and the scientific professional talent training model is highly respected by all countries<sup>[6]</sup>. The TAFE Academy, a form of higher vocational education in Australia, is invested and managed by the government, and the diploma is issued by the government<sup>[7]</sup>. This is similar to the main body of higher vocational education in China, the public higher vocational colleges. Their governance structure of the colleges and the training experience of professional talents have a good reference for Chinese colleges<sup>[8]</sup>.

Therefore, with the above questions, a visiting of the Gold Coast Institute of TAFE (GCIT) has been done by the Overseas Training Program of the Higher Vocational Institutions organized by the China Education International Exchange Association from September to October 2010, and compared with the status of the governance structure of Dalian Vocational and Technical College to do some thinking.

## II. CLARIFYING THE CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE IN HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

"Governance" and "management" are different: from the perspective of the subject, management is unitary, governance is pluralistic; from the perspective of objects, management is a closed system, governance is an open system; from the perspective of mechanism, management is the process of commanding and executing, governance is a multi-balance<sup>[9]</sup>. The governance structure was originally a legal term, meaning the establishment, operation, and legal relationship between the power organs of the company<sup>[10]</sup>. The corporate governance structure studies the incentive mechanism of the company's internal organizational structure and balances of power<sup>[11]</sup>.

The main function of higher vocational colleges is to "cultivate people", which must be realized through professional construction<sup>[12]</sup>. By introducing the concept of corporate governance structure, the governance structure of higher vocational colleges can be defined as: the organizational structures of Decision-making, implementation, and supervision that are balanced, mutually supportive, and

interrelated, to cultivate high-skilled and practical talents that meet the needs of economic and social development<sup>[13]</sup>.

### III. THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF RESTRUCTURING GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE IN HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGES—THE THEORY OF BUSINESS PROCESS REENGINEERING

#### A. *Enterprise Business Process Reengineering Theory*

At present, enterprises generally adopt a "straight function" organization model based on the theory of division of labor<sup>[14]</sup>. This model has the following drawbacks: the business process is implicit in the functional system of each department, and the complete "business flow" should be fragmented into a fragmentary "task flow"; the division of labor is too fine, resulting in poor information, and the enterprise is slow to respond to external changes<sup>[15]</sup>. The localism is serious, the coordination is more difficult; the enthusiasm of the departments and employees is lacking.

In order to overcome the above drawbacks, it is necessary to fundamentally break the management mode of the department based on the function, and reconstruct the organizational structure of the enterprise with the business process as the core.

Michael Hammer<sup>1</sup> and James Champy<sup>2</sup> first proposed the concept of enterprise business process reengineering: fundamental rethinking and thorough redesign of business processes to achieve significant improvements in performance in terms of cost, quality, service and speed<sup>[16]</sup>. It can adapt to the modern business environment characterized by "3C" (customer, competition, change).

According to the theory of business process reengineering, relevant scholars propose a process-based organizational dimension, that is, a multi-dimensional organizational structure with process-led, functional-assisted, team- and management-level activities. The organizational dimension has three main points: the process dimension is the main process, each process consists of several sub-processes, the basic activity unit has higher management authority; the process design function department provides assistance for business process operation; and the information technology platform is established to ensure that the activities and processes are coordinated.

#### B. *The Construction of College Organizational Dimensions with Professional Construction Process as the Core*

The main business processes of higher vocational colleges are centered on professional construction, covering the development of programs and standards, curriculum construction, construction of practical teaching conditions, and evaluation system construction<sup>[17]</sup>.

The organizational dimension model can be divided into three parts:

<sup>1</sup> Michael Hammer, Professor of Computer Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

<sup>2</sup> James Champy, Chairman of CSC Index Consultants

(1) Professional construction. According to the value chain theory, professional construction activities are divided into direct participation activities and support activities. Under the current management model, they are independent departments that are parallel to the decision-making level, and the overall structure of the institution is vertical. The purpose of reengineering professional construction is to complete the transition from "vertical" to "flat", that is, to form a construction plan centered on the professional construction process rather than the function. This kind of scheme can ensure the full functions of the professional construction as a whole, avoid waste of resources caused by transmission, auditing and waiting for information in the original mode, and improve work efficiency; students become the main point of each link and will improve the systematicness and scientificity of professional construction.

(2) Support monitoring platform. The platform provides unified support and services in finance, human resources, network systems, etc., and promotes decision-making to invest more energy in strategic planning of colleges and universities, guarantee professional construction goes smoothly. In particular, the network system, a large number of professional constructions and the formation of a huge overall operating system, without the support of digital platforms cannot run smoothly.

(3) Decision-making level. It needs to undertake three aspects of responsibility: strategic planning for institutions; setting and adjusting the dimensional network structure of professional construction processes and functional services to achieve optimal efficiency; and knowledge guidance and coordination of professional construction processes and functional services.

### IV. TAKING DALIAN VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE AS AN EXAMPLE TO RECONSTRUCT THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Australia's higher vocational education has achieved the effective connection between certificates and academic qualifications, and established a lifelong education system. The governance structure of GCIT with "certificate" as the core has greatly promoted the training of higher vocational talents. China's higher vocational education has not formed a perfect certificate system, and the core carrier of talent training is specialty. Therefore, Dalian Vocational and Technical College cannot copy the GCIT governance structure. However, the experience of GCIT's governance structure reform has brought us good inspiration: to explore the construction of the governance structure of Dalian Vocational and Technical College must be based on the professional construction process.

Dalian Vocational and Technical College currently adopts a "pyramid" governance structure, which is characterized by the management mode of "Secretary—Dean—Associate Dean—Functional office—Faculty—Department—Profession", profession implement the vertical management.

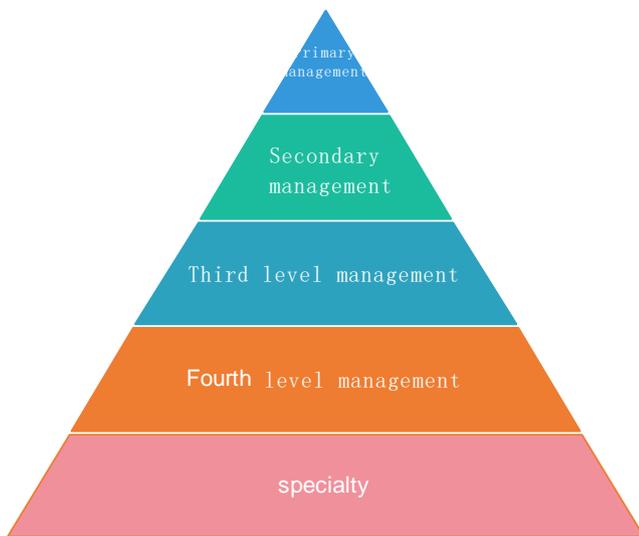


Fig. 1. The management mode currently adopted by Dalian Vocational and Technical College

This management model has obvious drawbacks: it strengthens the functions of the department, weakens the core position of professional construction, and makes the goal of professional talent training and characteristic specialty not prominent; too much management level makes the elements of the system come apart, such as professional construction and quality standards, quality control, training programs, evaluation systems; enterprises are separated from professional construction and talent training programs, leading to the limitations of school-enterprise cooperation and the imbalance between supply and demand of educators.

Based on the above analysis, it is necessary to draw on the experience of GCIT, apply the research results of business process reengineering in higher vocational colleges, break the existing governance structure model, and reconstruct the governance structure of Dalian vocational and technical college with the professional construction process as the core. As shown in fig.2.

Obviously, the newly envisaged governance structure can realize the separation of decision-making, execution, and supervision, so that the overall operation of the institution with the purpose of educating people and the core of professional construction is more scientific and smooth. Its main features and advantages are:

A. *Establish a relatively independent decision-making organization, the College Governance Committee (or the Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Committee), to make decisions more scientific and efficient.*

The committee is directly led by the deputy mayor of the government in charge of education. It is responsible for the formulation of the college's major policies and the decision-making of major issues. It is not directly involved in the implementation. It consists of 13 people: 3 people from the college, including party secretary, dean and a well-known professor; 5 people from the government, including education, finance, development, human resources and social security,

science and technology departments; three people are from companies that have established school-enterprise partnerships including a Chinese-owned enterprise, a multinational enterprise and a private enterprise; two are from scientific research institutions, including one from the Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Social Sciences.

Article 39 of the Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China clearly stipulates that the state-run colleges and universities implement the principal responsibility system under the leadership of the grassroots committee of the Communist Party of China, principal takes charge of the execution. Therefore, the party secretary of the college serves as the director of the committee.

The establishment of the committee can achieve mutual restraint between the various stakeholders and avoid excessive concentration of power; it can ensure that the decision-making of the institution does not deviate from the educational line of the party and the government, and ensure the core position of the education and professional construction of the institution; The interests of schools, governments, society and enterprises are more suitable for economic and social development and market demand for talent cultivation; the participation of professors and experts makes decision-making more objective, reasonable, based, humanized and less subjective; decision-making is not affected by the executive layer and other links, and decision-making efficiency is improved, ensuring that the formation of decisions does not affect the response and handling of major issues.

B. *Setting up the executive body in terms of the professional construction process, the implementation is more powerful.*

The dean is the executive head and directly manages human resources to avoid employee corruption. The six deputy deans form a professional management committee, with the professional construction department as the carrier, leading the professional construction work, responsible for formulating the professional construction standards and programs, and directly responsible to the dean, the six are: Vice President of Market Operation, taking charge of the International Exchange Center, the Admissions and Employment Office, the School-Enterprise Cooperation Office, responsible for market development, market operation, admissions promotion and employment guidance; vice president of teaching and operation, taking charge of the teaching operation department, the course operation department, the training center, responsible for the teaching operation management, curriculum construction and practical teaching conditions. This part is the central system of the college governance structure with the professional construction business process as the core. The course operation department sets up the corresponding department, constructs and registrants of various courses according to the major categories, Associate Dean of Teaching Evaluation, taking charge of the Teaching Monitoring and Examination Center, Skills Identification Center, responsible for the supervision of teaching operations, the assessment of the curriculum and the identification of skills to achieve

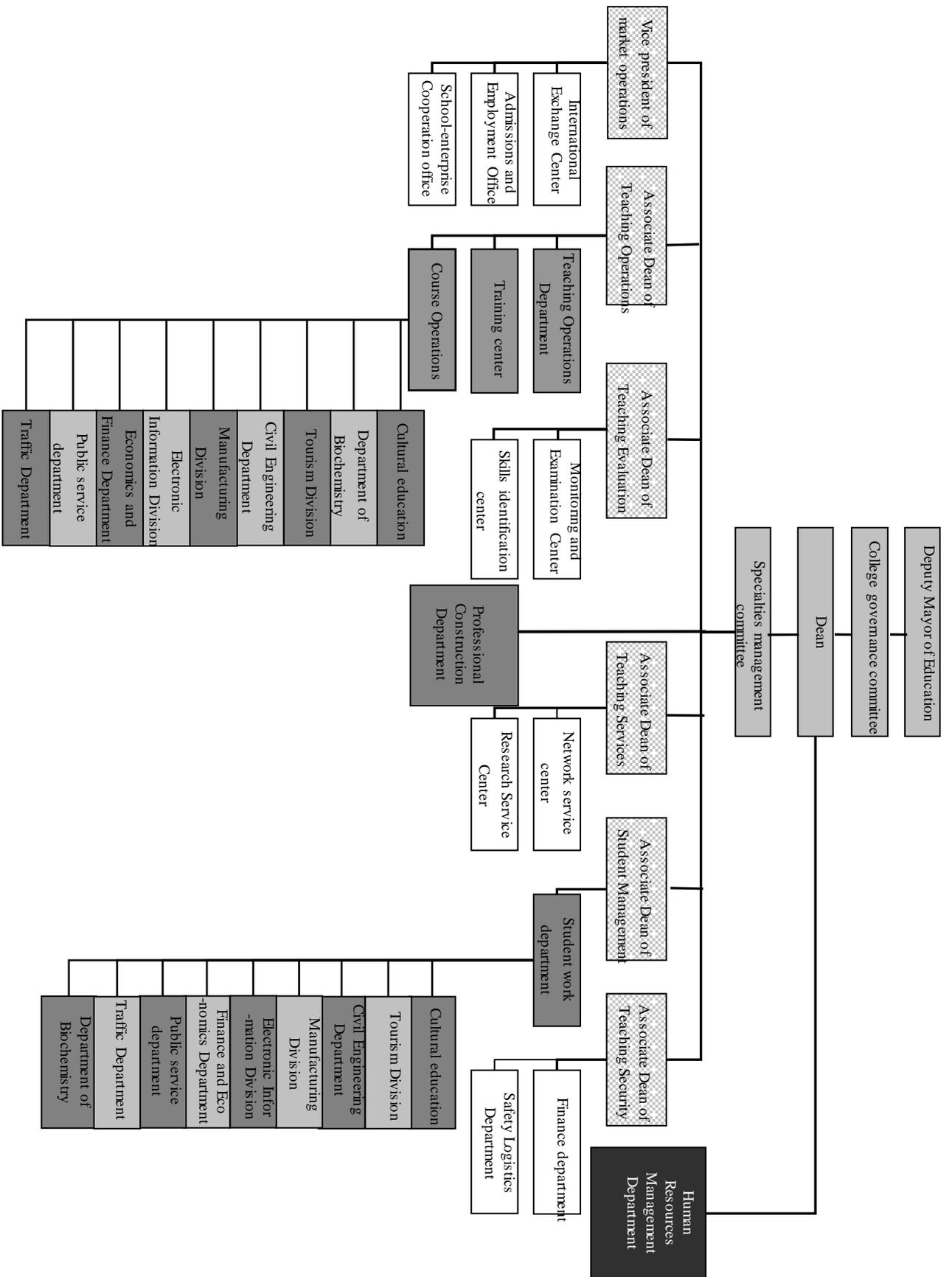


Fig. 2. Restructured governance structure of Dalian Vocational and Technical College

separation of teaching and testing; Associate Dean of Teaching Services, taking charge of the Network Service Center and Research Service Center, is responsible for providing technical services for professional construction; the Vice President of Teaching Support, taking charge of the Finance Department and the Safety Logistics Support Department, responsible for the professional construction; The vice president of student management, under the jurisdiction of the student work department, is responsible for training the object management.

The dean is from the decision-making level, which makes the executive layer better understand the connotation of decision-making, and the process of "decision-to-execution" is more systematic and smooth; Each step of the executive layer smoothes the working procedures according to the modern management theory. It does not cross-level management or request, and there is no business crossover, which makes the execution system efficient and clear, and promotes the realization of the strategic goals of the college and the implementation of various tasks; Execution is not directly involved in the decision-making level, improving execution efficiency.

*C. Supervision is more direct and effective.*

The supervisory layer is relatively independent and self-contained. Its main responsibility is to supervise the direction of running schools, whether the macro-strategy is consistent with the professional construction needs, supervise the quality of teaching, whether the dynamics of social demand meets the expected effect of professional construction, and whether supervision of teaching operations is conducive to professional construction.

The role of the supervisory layer is mainly reflected in the regulation and effect evaluation of various tasks around professional construction and personnel training, which is more directional and can effectively guide the operation of the professional construction process. Its relative independence ensures that the supervisory function is not subject to decision-making and execution. It can be implemented in an open, fair and impartial manner in strict accordance with regulations and systems. At the same time, it supervises non-counter-making decisions, does not directly intervene in specific matters, and does not affect the effectiveness of decision-making and execution.

*D. Highlight and strengthen the primary task of "cultivating people" and the core position of "professional construction"*

All the work of higher vocational colleges point to the goal of "high-skilled personnel training". The formulation and implementation of talent training programs must be realized through professional construction. Therefore, the professional construction process must be the core of the college's development, operation and institutional setup.

The newly envisaged governance structure breaks the management operation mechanism of the current "two-track parallel of the faculty and the division of disciplines according to the disciplines", cancels the setting of the "system".

Focusing on the core of professional construction business process, it has set up the departments with clear responsibilities, powerful functions, and non-intersection of business. It can guarantee the smooth implementation of the systemic and talent training objectives of professional construction, and highlight its core position.

According to the newly envisaged governance structure chart, the organizational relationship between the institutions set up can ensure the core position of professional construction.

The three parts of the organization's operational relationship centered on the professional construction process: The professional construction department led by the professional management committee is at the core of the operational relationship; Market construction, teaching operation, and teaching evaluation directly carry out professional construction; Teaching services, teaching support, and student management have jointly established a support platform for professional construction.

The parallel operation of various ministries and related departments will give full play to the advantages of high efficiency and convenience of the flat governance model. The core of the operation of the college - professional construction is more systematic. The communication with each link and the overall environment of the college is closer and more efficient.

**V. ILLUSTRATE THAT TEACHING OPERATIONS ARE MORE CONVENIENT AND EFFICIENT WITH THE EXAMPLE OF APPLICATION OF ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY**

Taking the construction of applied electronic technology as an example, the business process includes three parts: market operation, teaching operation, quality supervision, etc., and needs to support the platform.

In accordance with the professional construction process, the professional construction department set up an application team for the application of electronic technology and decomposed the tasks. First of all, the professional construction department is doing a good job in the construction of the major. The market operation department conducts market research for well-known enterprises in the electronics industry such as Intel and Goodyear. The company proposes professional construction opinions according to its own needs. The professional construction department and the market operation department collaborate with the enterprise to repeatedly demonstrate the talent training plan and professional standards. The professional management committee finally formulates professional construction plans and standards based on the investigation and argumentation. The Admissions and Employment Division determine the number of students enrolled based on expected market demand. After the talent training program and professional standards are determined, the professional construction department guides the course operation department to construct and register the core courses such as "Electronic Circuit Analysis and Practice", "Electronic Production Process and Management" and "Intelligent Control Technology Application" according to the professional construction business process. The relevant core courses are included in the

Electronic Information Division. The minor course required for the major is "Mechanical Drawing", which is selected from the Manufacturing Department. The required public course "Computer Foundation" is selected from the Public Courses. According to the core curriculum requirements established by the major, the training center establishes practical teaching conditions such as electronic technology training room, intelligent control training room and electronic assembly workshop. In order to make teaching evaluation and supervision more objective and scientific, the teaching evaluation department evaluates the course according to the principle of "separation of teaching and testing". Students are assessed for vocational qualification certificates, and students who pass the examinations receive certificates such as "Electrical Certificate" and "Electronic Assembly Certificate". The proportion of students who have obtained qualifications is an important indicator of teaching evaluation.

In the whole process of professional construction, teaching services, teaching support and student management departments provide effective support and guarantee for business processes.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

Separation of decision-making, execution, and supervision promotes more scientific decision-making, stronger execution, and more effective supervision. Work procedures are more convenient, scientific and efficient. It has realized the deep integration of government, enterprises and higher vocational colleges.

It can be seen from the above cases that once the newly envisaged college governance structure is realized, the pertinence and adaptability of the professional selection curriculum will be significantly enhanced. The process of course selection is also more direct and convenient. The professional construction of business processes is more closely linked, the professional construction is more systematic, and the efficiency and scientificity are greatly improved.

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