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Abstract. In the context of the digital economy, this paper explores how private higher education institutions can construct a contemporary business education talent development system. The analysis delves into the present challenges confronting business education in private colleges, proposing a set of strategies including reforms in the curriculum, innovation in teaching methodologies, and the integration of industry and education. A significant emphasis is placed on the necessity of digital technology and data analysis skills, as well as cross-cultural communication and collaborative abilities for business professionals. The objective of this research is to enhance the adaptability and practical effectiveness of business education, in order to fulfill the societal demand for highly qualified business professionals.

1. Introduction

In 2022, the transaction scale of China's digital economy industry reached 50.2 trillion yuan, with a year-on-year growth of 10.3%, accounting for 41.5% of the GDP [1]. The digital economy is becoming a new engine of economic growth in China. It drives the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries, changes our economic life, and influences the production methods, organizational structures, commercial forms, and management models of the economy and society. This poses new requirements for the training model of business talents. The traditional business talent training model, formed during the industrial economy era, is facing unprecedented challenges and shocks. How colleges train new business talents suitable for the development requirements of the digital economy has become an important topic of discussion in both the educational and industrial sectors.

In the era of the digital economy, the rapid changes in the business environment require that business talents not only possess traditional management theory knowledge but also master digital technology and data analysis skills. However, private colleges, as an important part of China's higher education system, face numerous challenges in resource allocation, curriculum setting, teaching methods, and industry-academia-research cooperation in their business education. These challenges restrict the effectiveness of private colleges in training business talents suitable for the era of the digital economy. Therefore, constructing a new business talent training system that adapts to the digital economy era is particularly urgent.

This paper aims to explore and construct a new business talent training system in private colleges under the context of the digital economy. The focus of the study is to analyze the challenges faced by business education in private colleges currently and to explore how to effectively enhance the quality of business talent training through strategies such as curriculum reform, innovation in teaching methods, and integration of industry and education. The results of this study are not only significant for improving the adaptability and practical effectiveness of business education in private colleges but also have a profound impact on meeting the societal demand for high-quality business talents.

2. New Requirements for Business Talent in the Digital Economy Era

2.1. New Business Characteristics in the Digital

In the context of the digital economy, digital resources have become a new type of production factor, with modern information networks serving as a vital medium. Significant changes have occurred in business subjects, objects, carriers, and information technology, leading to the reconstruction of all business activities [2]. The commercial characteristics of the digital economy era highlight aspects such as data-driven decision-making, digitization of business processes, and the blurring of market boundaries [3]. These characteristics present new challenges for corporate strategy formulation and operational models, while also offering vast opportunities for business innovation.
2.1.1. Data-Driven Decision Making

The accelerated innovation in information technology, along with its extensive integration with the economy and society, has triggered a rapid growth of data, evolving into a new form of production factor and significantly impacting the traditional modes of production [4]. This trend has fundamentally altered the way businesses operate and strategize. The role of data in the digital economy cannot be understated. It has transitioned from merely being a supportive tool to a critical basis for formulating business strategies and making daily operational decisions. By collecting and analyzing vast amounts of data, enterprises can gain deep insights into market trends, consumer behavior, and competitor dynamics. The results of these data analyses assist businesses in predicting future trends and developing more accurate and targeted strategies.

The process of data-driven decision-making makes business activities more fact-based and logical, as opposed to solely relying on intuition or experience [5]. This shift demands that enterprises possess robust data processing and analytical capabilities. Modern businesses are increasingly dependent on various advanced analytical tools and algorithms, such as machine learning and artificial intelligence technologies, to process complex datasets and extract valuable business insights.

2.1.2. Digitization of Business Processes

In the era of the digital economy, the digitization of business processes has become one of the core characteristics of business operations. This transformation is manifested in several aspects: 1) Digitization has led to the wave of business process automation, significantly enhancing operational efficiency. Traditional manual and paper-based workflows are increasingly being replaced by electronic systems. For example, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software are now widely used in various enterprises. They automate and simplify many complex business processes such as inventory management, order processing, customer service, etc. 2) Digitization enables enterprises to more effectively process and analyze large amounts of data, thereby providing support for decision-making. By integrating advanced data analysis tools and artificial intelligence algorithms, enterprises can quickly gain business insights, monitor key performance indicators in real time, and more accurately plan strategies and market positioning. 3) The transparency and traceability of digital processes have also significantly improved. Modern information systems make every link in business operations traceable and visible, thereby strengthening supervision, and improving management transparency and efficiency.

2.1.3. Blurring of Market Boundaries

In the era of the digital economy, the blurring of market boundaries is a prominent phenomenon. This blurriness stems from technological innovation and the proliferation of the global internet, changing traditional business models and market structures. Firstly, the boundaries between different industries are becoming increasingly unclear. For example, technology companies can provide financial services, while retailers may enter the media and content creation field through online platforms. This cross-industry fusion leads to the emergence of new business models and the expansion of market opportunities. Secondly, the phenomenon of globalization has weakened the impact of geographical boundaries on markets [6]. Small businesses and startups can easily access international markets, and consumers can purchase products and services from around the world through digital platforms. This interconnectedness of global markets leads to a more dynamic and diversified business environment. Finally, digital technology has changed consumer behavior and purchasing habits. Online shopping and digital services have blurred the distinction between physical and virtual markets. Consumers are increasingly inclined to shop and obtain services through digital channels, changing the operation of traditional retail and service industries.

2.2. New Requirements for Business Talent in the Digital Economy Era

In the digital economy era, business professionals need to possess a range of comprehensive skills, including data literacy and analytical abilities, digital technology skills, and cross-cultural communication and collaboration capabilities. These are key factors for success in today's rapidly evolving business environment.

2.2.1. Data Literacy and Analytical Skills

Data literacy, as understood from its literal meaning, refers to the ability to acquire, comprehend digital information, and integrate it into meaningful insights. This digital skill can be further divided into abilities such as web information search, hypertext reading, and critical information processing [7]. With the growing importance of data in the decision-making process, business professionals need to possess strong data analysis capabilities, including the use of various data analysis tools and techniques. Data literacy involves not just the acquisition and understanding of data but also the ability to effectively interpret, analyze, and utilize this data. In the digital economy era, data analysis skills have become an indispensable core competency for business professionals. These skills enable individuals to extract valuable insights and information from large and complex datasets, thereby supporting more informed business decisions. Beyond traditional data processing and analysis skills, business professionals also need to master advanced data analysis methods, such as predictive analytics, sentiment analysis, and machine
learning. These methods can help them gain deeper insights into market trends, consumer behavior, and business risks. Additionally, data visualization is an important aspect. Business professionals should be able to use tools to transform complex datasets into visually understandable and communicable formats. Effective data visualization can clearly present analysis results, helping decision-makers grasp key information quickly. Moreover, data literacy also involves an understanding of data ethics and privacy protection. When handling and analyzing data, business professionals must adhere to relevant laws and regulations to ensure the lawful and compliant use of data.

2.2.2. Digital Technology Skills

In the digital economy era, digital technology skills are crucial for business professionals. These skills encompass not only proficiency in basic computer applications but also an understanding and utilization of various advanced digital technologies to adapt to the constantly evolving business environment. Firstly, business professionals need to be familiar with the latest information technologies and software applications. This includes, but is not limited to, cloud computing services, big data platforms, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software. Understanding how these tools assist in business operations, data management, and optimization of business processes is vital. Secondly, familiarity with mobile technologies and social media platforms is becoming increasingly important. Business professionals should be able to effectively use these platforms for marketing, branding, and customer communication. Finally, understanding mobile app development and social media strategies is crucial for grasping the trends and opportunities in digital marketing.

2.2.3. Cross-Cultural Communication and Collaboration Skills

One of the key requirements for business professionals in the digital economy era is cross-cultural communication and collaboration skills. With the deepening of globalization and the increase in international business activities, business professionals need to be able to effectively communicate and collaborate in a multicultural environment to cope with the increasingly complex international markets and work environments.

3. Current Status of Business Talent Cultivation in Private Colleges

After researching five private colleges in Shanghai, it has been found that the cultivation of business talent in private colleges generally faces the following issues:

3.1. Lack of Systematic Design in Curriculum

Under the digital backdrop, students trained in new business disciplines are still not fully equipped to meet the new demands for data analysis capabilities required by business positions. Currently, although business schools have recognized the importance of digital technology skills in their talent training programs, achieving ideal results in the teaching process is challenging. The design of the business curriculum mainly involves simply adding one or two standalone data analysis courses. Moreover, there is a disconnect between teaching theory and data analysis practice, lacking an integration of data analysis practice with business theory to address the current state, causes, decisions, and problems of business activities. The difficulty of organically integrating theory and practice has become a focal point, challenge, and pain point in the construction of new business disciplines. This issue arises from a lack of systematic design in the overall construction of the new business curriculum.

3.2. Course Content Fails to Meet Societal Demands

Under the backdrop of digital economy development, the employment needs of enterprises have changed, requiring professional talents to possess not only basic business theory but also certain information technology capabilities. However, most current university business courses focus on the impartation of theoretical knowledge, lacking training and cultivation in information technology skills. At the same time, some colleges’ talent training models have an imbalance between theory and practice in their courses. How to scientifically and reasonably achieve a balance between theoretical and practical teaching within a limited teaching time is a challenging issue for colleges. In addition, many colleges’ textbooks and teaching contents are not updated in a timely manner, and there is a lack of focus on the exploration of recent successful and unsuccessful business operations cases both domestically and internationally. The course content is mismatched with the socio-economic development, unable to meet the needs of industry development, and graduates trained are not able to satisfy the needs of local economic development.

3.3. Teaching Resources Inadequate to Support the Cultivation of Digital Technology Skills in New Business Disciplines

The cultivation of diverse and composite talents requires the integration of teaching resources from different disciplines to stimulate inherent vitality and achieve complementary advantages. However, the innovative integration of digital technology with business disciplines is still in an exploratory stage, lacking textbooks and other resources to support the relevant curriculum content, which inevitably leads to significant difficulties in teaching implementation. The construction
of complementary teaching materials and practical platforms, both software and hardware, is a long-term process that requires considerable time, manpower, and resources. Furthermore, the existing experienced business teachers mostly come from traditional business backgrounds and lack a background in digital information technology, especially among the high-ranking faculty members. Teachers are deep participants in the reform and implementation of new business education; comprehensive reform in new business disciplines cannot proceed without the involvement of professional teachers. Talents with a background in both business and information technology are scarce in the entire human resource pool of society. If the teachers involved in talent training and curriculum system setting do not have a deep understanding of both business and information technology, it is challenging to construct a reasonable and systematic curriculum system.

3.4. Difficulty in Interdisciplinary Professional Integration

In China’s higher education system, which is based on academic disciplines, a three-tier management structure of colleges, departments, and majors is established for the allocation of educational and teaching resources. Under the current education model primarily focused on single disciplines, each major sets its curriculum system, allocates faculty, hardware, and software resources according to its talent training objectives. Academic and research activities among different majors largely operate in isolation, with clear barriers and limited cross-disciplinary communication and cooperation. New business disciplines require the integration of technological frontiers from different disciplines to cultivate diverse, composite talents.

In the institutional setup, business disciplines generally belong to the category of economics and management, while information technology usually falls under the science and engineering category in information colleges. Therefore, the cultivation of new business talents requires interdisciplinary integration, involving comprehensive collaboration and resource sharing in faculty, curriculum, and practical training platforms. However, under the current hierarchical management of colleges, colleges operate independently. Inter-departmental competition and self-interest considerations often hinder the deep integration and shared construction across different majors within the existing management mechanisms.

4. Exploration of New Business Talent Cultivation Models and Pathways in Private Colleges

In the context of the digital economy, business professionals suited for future digital commerce not only need a solid foundation in business disciplines but also require the ability to innovate, iterate, and apply data analysis skills to adapt to rapid technological advancements driving business transformation. Based on the analysis of the new characteristics of business in the digital economy era, new requirements for business talent, and the current status of business talent cultivation in private colleges, this paper proposes the following ideas for constructing a new business talent cultivation system in private colleges.

4.1. Curriculum Reform

With the rapid development of the digital economy, private colleges are facing significant challenges in cultivating new business talent. This requires educational institutions to not only strengthen the professional knowledge structure, practical skills, and vocational qualities based on traditional business education but also to keep pace with the latest industrial development needs by incorporating knowledge from advanced fields such as AI, data science and big data technology, and network information and computer science into the curriculum. Facing this challenge, private colleges should actively explore a "business + skills" professional construction model. This model means integrating interdisciplinary technology and knowledge, such as the Internet of Things, big data, computing technology, etc., on top of traditional business education, to build a discipline and professional system closely linked with social industries. This interdisciplinary integration helps to cultivate students’ comprehensive qualities and practical abilities, enabling them to better adapt and innovate in the business environment of the digital economy era.

4.2. Innovation in Teaching Methods

With the rapid changes in the business environment, especially in terms of product and service quality, user demand, and experience data analysis, new challenges and requirements have been posed for the cultivation of business talent. To address this, private colleges must adopt innovative teaching methods to train new types of business professionals who are proficient in using digital information technology. Teaching methods need to shift from traditional theoretical lectures to more practical and experiential learning. Through case studies, project-driven learning, and internship opportunities, students can apply their skills in real business environments. This approach not only enhances students’ practical operational capabilities but also cultivates their innovative thinking and problem-solving abilities. Additionally, modern information technology should be fully utilized in the teaching process. The use of internet technology, virtual simulation platforms, and visualization tools can provide students with an interactive and challenging learning environment. For example, through virtual simulation technology, students can practice in a simulated business environment, which helps them better understand complex business concepts and data analysis techniques.
4.3. Breaking Boundaries, Cross-sector Integration

Private colleges should establish close cooperative relationships with industry partners such as enterprises and industry associations. This can be achieved through various forms such as co-developing courses, setting up internship positions, and conducting joint research projects. Such collaboration enables students to directly engage with the latest trends and challenges in the industry, allowing them to learn and grow in real work environments. Encouraging students to develop entrepreneurial spirits and innovative thinking can be facilitated through activities like entrepreneurship competitions and innovation workshops. These activities not only enhance students' practical abilities but also ignite their potential for innovation. Regularly inviting industry leaders and entrepreneurs to give lectures and participate in seminars at the university can provide students with valuable experiences and insights directly from leading figures in the industry.

5. Conclusion

In response to the development of the digital economy, private colleges need to actively adapt to changes. By implementing curriculum reforms, innovating teaching methods, and integrating with actual industries, they can cultivate new types of business talents who possess digital information skills, innovation capabilities, and cross-cultural collaboration abilities. This approach provides effective talent support for the socio-economic development.

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