

Research on Problems and Countermeasures of University Administration in the New Era

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Abstract: Digital transformation has become a core key to improving the efficiency of administrative management in institutions of higher education. By virtue of technical means such as big data and cloud computing, universities are able to optimize resource allocation, enhance decision-making efficiency and advance management innovation. Despite the challenges brought by digital transformation, including information security risks and privacy protection issues, its positive impacts on university administration cannot be overlooked. This paper explores how digital transformation elevates the efficiency of university administrative management, analyzes the difficulties encountered in the transformation process, and proposes corresponding solutions. The research results indicate that digital technologies have significantly boosted the operational efficiency and governance transparency of universities, and provided solid technical support for institutional management innovation. Universities ought to strengthen information security assurance and advance digital transformation in a gradual and orderly manner so as to ensure its steady implementation. Administration has long been the core component that sustains the stable operation of colleges and universities. With the continuous deepening of China's higher education reform in recent years, institutions of higher learning are confronted with unprecedented opportunities and challenges. Therefore, starting from the current development status of university administration in China, this paper analyzes the problems facing Chinese universities in administrative management under the new context. It also elaborates on how to carry out innovation in university administration, aiming to provide solid and scientific theoretical and practical references for university administration under the new development landscape.

Keywords: Universities; Administration; New era; Informatization

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1. Introduction

Against the current trend of digital and informational development, universities need to renovate and refine their administrative working modes, practical approaches, management philosophies and operational facilities to keep abreast of social progress. Such improvements can better match administrative service efficiency with the actual developmental demands of higher education institutions, and further enhance the overall professional competence of administrative staff. Focusing on the practical status of university administrative management in the new era, this study conducts an in-depth analysis of existing operational efficiency and further proposes feasible strategies to promote future administrative performance.

2. Current situation and existing problems of university administration

2.1. Frequent policy changes bring instability to university operations, easily leading to resource waste and schedule delays

In terms of resource allocation, the government also shows an obvious imbalance. Local universities mainly rely on administrative means from educational authorities for resource distribution, but due to regional and institutional differences, resource supply is significantly unequal. Developed regions and research universities usually obtain more policy and social resources, while teaching-oriented and application-oriented universities suffer from insufficient investment, single funding sources and inadequate policy support ^[1].

2.2. Excessive hierarchies and rigid administrative procedures

Universities have long adopted a bureaucratic organizational structure in administrative management, which forms a multi-level management system covering university-level authorities, colleges and grassroots departments. This structure leads to overly lengthy information transmission chains and low efficiency in decision implementation. A routine fund reimbursement procedure generally requires approval from staff in charge, department heads, financial auditors and university administrative leaders, often taking several weeks or even months to complete. Excessive hierarchical settings not only raise administrative costs, but also weaken universities' ability to respond promptly to external changes. The rigid design of management procedures has created distinct functional barriers among different departments. Frequent repeated communication and redundant formalities are required for cross-departmental cooperation, which greatly undermines the service experience of teachers and students. In addition, the traditional paper-based document circulation mode makes it difficult to track work progress and conduct performance evaluation, leaving administrators unable to accurately grasp the actual implementation status of various administrative tasks ^[2].

2.3. Challenges in data security and privacy protection

University administrative affairs involve a wide range of sensitive private information, such as staff personal data, student records, financial statistics and scientific research archives. As information technologies are increasingly applied to university administration, prominent risks have emerged in terms of data security and personal privacy. Lacking sound cyber defense mechanisms, university information systems are highly vulnerable to cyber attacks, which may easily trigger massive data leakage incidents. Such incidents will not only violate the privacy rights of teachers and students but also bring severe reputational damage to universities. Hence, the application of digital technologies in university administration is inevitably confronted with difficulties in privacy protection and standardized information management. In light of the current practical situation of domestic universities, most institutional databases are persistently threatened by malware invasion. Cyber hackers access campus network systems through improper means, which severely hinders information storage and normal system operation. Overall, data security and privacy risks remain another major obstacle restricting the sound operation of information-based university administrative management ^[3].

2.4. Uneven quality of the administrative team

Although the personnel management system for university administrators is relatively complete, universities still lack competent, courageous, and experienced administrative professionals in their workforce development. At present, most administrators do not have sufficient professional management knowledge and simply rely on past working experience. While the personnel management mechanism for university administrative staff has been well-established, institutions still face a shortage of high-caliber administrative practitioners with solid professional competence, enterprising spirits and rich practical experience. Currently, the majority of university administrators are deficient in systematic professional management expertise and tend to conduct daily work merely based on accumulated work experience. In the process of conveying superior policies and collecting grassroots feedback, they are unable to deliver institutional policies in

an efficient and precise manner. This predicament leads to redundant administrative procedures, rising operational expenses and declining overall work efficiency. Furthermore, many administrators lack a macro vision and scientific long-term strategic planning for the construction and development of administrative systems, hence failing to facilitate effective cross-departmental coordination. This issue greatly impedes the optimization and upgrading of university administrative management systems. From the perspective of professional dedication, grassroots administrative personnel are burdened with prolonged working hours, intense job pressure and tedious routine duties, coupled with ambiguous career development paths. These adverse conditions gradually erode their sense of professional responsibility, giving rise to prevalent workplace problems including slack working attitudes, frequent absence from work and mutual evasion of job responsibilities. In addition, certain administrative staff are devoid of public service awareness and trapped in rigid bureaucratic thinking, who prioritize seniority over standardized services and fail to deliver high-quality services for faculty members and students. Meanwhile, the general lack of innovative working mindsets prevents administrators from adopting flexible solutions to diverse administrative issues, which further constrains the high-quality development of university administrative undertakings.

2.5. Shortage of information talents and barriers to training

The lack of skilled information professionals and inherent obstacles in talent training have become core bottlenecks that hinder the efficient application of information technology in university administrative management, further holding back the comprehensive improvement of administrative operational efficiency across higher education institutions. Firstly, the acute shortage of competent IT practitioners greatly restricts the digital transformation of university administration. The insufficiency of specialized technical personnel results in weak independent capabilities in the design, development and daily maintenance of campus information systems, forcing universities to rely heavily on external service providers. Such excessive external dependence seriously impedes the upgrading of administrative informatization construction. Secondly, the deficiency of information technology talents also leads to cognitive deviations among institutional decision-makers. Lacking in-depth cognition and practical mastery of cutting-edge information technologies, administrative managers tend to issue policies and make decisions that are neither technically viable nor forward-looking, which in turn slows down the steady progress of administrative informatization construction ^[4].

3. Countermeasures for solving problems in university administration

3.1. Advancing the implementation of the information integration strategy

The phenomena of information silos and system fragmentation are the most pressing and critical issues to be addressed in university administration. First, universities should advance the planning of information integration for administrative management. This involves adjusting the plan in line with the specific characteristics of their administrative operations, and establishing unified data architectures and system standards across the entire institution. The primary goal is to eliminate information silos and further mitigate the adverse impacts of system fragmentation. Second, universities should gradually improve the integration of administrative information and data. In the design and development of data information systems, the standardization of information and data must be adopted as a fundamental principle to ensure the consistency of data formats and definitions across different platforms. Throughout this process, advanced digital technologies should be leveraged to integrate data, unlock its full value, and thereby enhance the overall enabling effect of information technology on administrative work. Third, universities should establish a comprehensive collaborative office platform based on existing infrastructure. By utilizing the data mining capabilities of information technology, each module of university administration should be analyzed. Taking into account the distinct characteristics of financial systems, research systems, and human resource systems, universities must identify integration points between these different systems. The deployment of a collaborative office platform will significantly improve the efficiency of cross-departmental and cross-system coordination. Furthermore, integrating administrative project management tools and document information

management systems into this platform will further prevent the formation of information silos and reduce the impact of system fragmentation^[5,6].

3.2. Establish a data governance and risk prevention and control system

In the course of digital transformation, institutions of higher learning have accumulated a large volume of sensitive data, including personal information of faculty and students, teaching and research data, as well as financial and asset data. Hence, data security and privacy protection have become an indispensable bottom line to be firmly guaranteed. Universities shall establish a hierarchical data classification management system in accordance with data sensitivity and importance, and formulate targeted security measures for classified data, including differentiated access rights, standardized storage modes, transmission encryption and data backup strategies. By deploying firewalls, intrusion detection systems, vulnerability scanning and other technical tools, a sound cybersecurity defense system can be built to fend off external attacks and unauthorized access. Regular security audits and emergency drills are also essential to enhance systematic defense capability and emergency response capacity. Full life-cycle management of data utilization necessitates the establishment of operation logging and audit tracking mechanisms covering data collection, storage, application, sharing and destruction. Such mechanisms realize traceability and whole-process supervision of data flow, enabling timely identification and accountability of irregular data use behaviors. Technologies, including data desensitization and anonymization, can be adopted for privacy protection. These approaches can meet the demands of administrative management and decision-making while protecting the personal privacy of teachers and students, so as to prevent legal risks and social disputes arising from improper data abuse. In addition, it is vital to improve the data security responsibility system, clarify the specific duties of administrators and department heads at all levels in data security management, and incorporate data security performance into annual assessment and accountability assessment systems.

3.3. Implement the scientific outlook on development and practice the people-oriented management concept

Against the background of the new era, the CPC Central Committee has clearly put forward the people-oriented governance concept, which is not only the core of the Scientific Outlook on Development but also the cornerstone of building a harmonious society, and has been given an extremely important position in practical work. For a long time, university development has been limited by shortages of capital, information, knowledge and other resources. However, under the background of global economic, information and knowledge integration, these resources can flow globally, and the quality and quantity of university teachers, researchers and management talents have gradually become key factors determining their survival and development. Therefore, current university development urgently needs to establish a people-oriented management concept to fully exert and tap human potential. In university administration, the key to practicing the people-oriented concept lies in deeply understanding and meeting the needs of faculty, staff and students, effectively protecting their interests, affirming their dominant status, and jointly building a harmonious campus environment. To this end, administrators should strive to safeguard, promote and develop the fundamental interests of faculty, staff and students, properly handle the relationship between partial and overall interests, departmental and public interests, immediate and long-term interests, and ensure that power is used for the people, feelings are tied to the people, and benefits are sought for the people. Meanwhile, guided by the actual needs of faculty, staff and students, their voices and demands should be taken as the primary consideration, their satisfaction as the work goal, and the realization of their interests as the ultimate pursuit. In administration, the principles of respecting, caring for, understanding and supporting people should always be upheld, with emphasis on shaping and relying on people. In decision-making and planning, considerations should be based on the actual needs of faculty, staff and students to ensure that measures are convenient, considerate and suitable for them. This not only provides a favorable environment and broad space for the development of faculty, staff and students but also stimulates their initiative and creativity, achieving the best combination of people-oriented and scientific management, and jointly creating a harmonious, positive and creative campus atmosphere.

3.4. Perfect management system

The improvement of the management system includes the following aspects. First, strengthen the sense of responsibility and overall perspective of decision-makers. The decision-making level consists of university leaders and department directors, who are responsible for leading and deciding major issues such as institutional development strategies and plans. To ensure scientific and fair decision-making, decision-makers must abandon conformity, objectively analyze situations, dare to take responsibilities, and formulate and implement decisions from a global perspective. Second, promote coordination and cooperation among functional departments. Although different departments have different responsibilities, they share the common goal of serving teachers, students and the whole university. Therefore, all departments should establish a holistic and overall perspective, abandon the mindset of working in isolation, unite and cooperate in matters involving the overall interests and development planning of the university, and jointly promote the progress of various undertakings. Third, reform the personnel employment system to build a streamlined and efficient administrative team. In personnel selection, the principles of openness, fairness, competition and merit should be adhered to ensure rational allocation and use of talents. Meanwhile, posts and staffing should be rationally set to promote competent employees and transfer or eliminate incompetent ones, so as to maintain the vitality and efficiency of the administrative team. Fourth, improve the assessment and distribution system to stimulate the enthusiasm of administrative staff. In assessment, a comprehensive evaluation should be conducted on the administrative staff's ideological morality, management ability, work enthusiasm, and performance, combined with feedback from supervisors and colleagues. In distribution, egalitarianism should be broken to link performance with income; reasonable incentive mechanisms stimulate the potential and enthusiasm of administrative staff and improve their management ability and service quality.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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