

Original Paper

Research on the Innovation of University Human Resource Management from the Perspective of Double First-Class Initiative

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Abstract

As a crucial strategy for implementing the plan to develop a leading higher education system, the "Double First-Class" initiative represents a significant educational practice aimed at exploring the cultivation of top-tier talent. In the current context of accelerating the "Double First-Class" initiative, in addition to maintaining routine human resource management (HRM) practices, universities must actively explore new HRM models to enhance their capacity and effectiveness in supporting the "Double First-Class" construction. Based on the actual situation of HRM in universities, this paper provides a practical discussion on the existing problems in HRM and how to carry out effective management innovation, so as to promote the efficient development of HRM within the "Double First-Class" initiative.

Keywords

Double First-Class, Universities, Human Resources

1. Introduction and Literature Review

"Double First-Class" refers to the construction of world-class universities and first-class disciplines. It is a major strategic decision put forward by the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government in light of the actual conditions of the country's educational development. It also serves as a critical strategy for deepening the connotative and sustainable development of higher education in China. This initiative is conducive to enhancing the comprehensive strength of Chinese universities, enabling China's higher education to possess international core competitiveness, and providing intellectual support for the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. The "Guidelines on Accelerating the 'Double First-Class' Initiative in Higher Education Institutions" (hereinafter referred to as the "Guidelines") emphasize that the "Double First-Class" construction must adhere to the basic principles of developing distinctive strengths, connotation-driven development, reform orientation, and university autonomy. This not only clarifies the characteristics and connotative standards of the "Double First-Class" initiative but also highlights the centrality of higher education institutions and the driving force of reform. In the process of accelerating the "Double First-Class" construction, it is essential to adhere to the fundamental strategy of meticulous and refined efforts, advancing steadily along the path of distinctive and connotative development. As one of the key components of innovation in university management activities, innovation in human resource management requires not only a deep and comprehensive understanding of "how to cultivate talent" but also a profound grasp and active exploration of "how to identify and discover talent" and "how to effectively utilize talent." This is crucial for building a high-quality and highly capable talent team that can better serve the needs of the "Double First-Class" initiative.

2. A Practicality Analysis of Innovative Human Resource Management in Universities under the "Double First-Class" Initiative

The "Double First-Class" initiative constitutes a long-term and systematic undertaking. Its inherently dynamic and continuously evolving context necessitates a commitment to bold breakthroughs and thoughtful innovation, precluding any rigid or unvarying approach. Similarly, human resource management, which must advance in tandem with the "Double First-Class" initiative, requires proactive innovation to effectively align with its developmental demands.

2.1 Innovation Is an Intrinsic Requirement for Enriching the Functions of Human Resource Management

Distinct from the traditional positioning of human resource management (HRM) in higher education institutions, HRM in the context of "Double First-Class" initiative assumes significantly broader functions. On one hand, HRM continues to perform its conventional roles—such as talent recruitment, development, allocation, and performance evaluation—providing foundational faculty support essential for the smooth advancement of the "Double First-Class" initiative. On the other hand, HRM serves as a driver of institutional reform by actively recruiting innovative and reform-oriented talents and by

formulating and implementing transformative strategies. This enables the optimization of high-quality innovative resources within universities and strengthens their internal capacity for innovation and reform, thereby transforming HRM into a pivotal force driving the "Double First-Class" initiative. However, realizing this dual function of HRM is by no means straightforward. It requires progressive advancement through innovations in management philosophy, content, and methodology. Without such essential innovations, the role of HRM is likely to remain confined to its traditional scope.

2.2 Innovation as an Effective Means to Meet Development Needs

Needs serve as the fundamental driving force behind development. The "Double First-Class" initiative is designed to fulfill the strategic objective of building a strong higher education system, while innovating human resource management is essential to support the "Double First-Class" construction. The "Guidelines" explicitly state: "Higher education institutions should proactively align with national and regional major strategies, and improve a dynamic discipline adjustment mechanism guided by social needs and academic contributions. In building a high-quality faculty team, professional ethics and conduct shall be regarded as the primary criterion. Institutions should emphasize both talent recruitment and cultivation, with a focus on the latter, and resolutely avoid short-sighted practices such as aggressively poaching 'title-based' talents." This clearly underscores the responsibility and mission of universities to actively serve national and regional development through high-standard human resource management practices that ensure the development of a high-caliber faculty. Furthermore, from the perspective of developmental needs, innovating human resource management is not only necessary for building a high-quality faculty but also constitutes a fundamental requirement for universities to understand and respond to national and regional development demands. It is an effective strategy to ensure that human resource management remains aligned with evolving development needs.

2.3 Innovation as a Practical Necessity to Highlight University and Discipline Characteristics

The term "first-class" in the "Double First-Class" initiative refers to the comprehensive influence of universities and disciplines. Given the increasing homogenization in higher education, the initiative must place greater emphasis on distinctive development pathways. Among various developmental factors, people are the key element in highlighting unique characteristics: through scientific methods, they can identify and utilize distinctive educational resources to achieve specialized educational goals. Recognizing the crucial role of human talent in promoting distinctive development, a growing number of universities have embraced the human resource philosophy that "to build first-class disciplines, talent is the core," hoping to integrate more outstanding talents into the construction of first-class universities and disciplines. However, as competition for high-level talents intensifies, merely relying on conventional conditions and benefits to attract and retain talent has become increasingly challenging. There is a need for universities to engage in deep innovation in human resource management to create more competitive advantages for attracting and retaining outstanding talents.

3. Innovative Strategies for Human Resource Management in Universities under the "Double First-Class" Initiative

For university human resource management (HRM), the "Double First-Class" initiative represents both a mission and a strategic objective. To meet the practical demands of constructing world-class universities and disciplines, institutions must proactively innovate by thoroughly analyzing HRM principles and exploring new frontiers in HRM practices. However, HRM innovation constitutes a systematic and sustained management endeavor, necessitating adherence to clear directional guidance and scientifically grounded strategies. By adopting novel philosophies and methodologies, universities should strive to establish HRM systems that align with the elevated standards of the "Double First-Class" initiative.

3.1 Establishing First-Class Human Resource Management Concepts

The "Double First-Class" initiative is a scientific decision made by the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government based on the actual conditions of the development of socialist education with Chinese characteristics. It plays an active role in promoting Chinese education on the global stage and highlighting its distinctive features and strengths. In the process of advancing university and discipline development, higher education institutions should progressively explore and establish first-class human resource management concepts characterized by openness and dynamism, enabling these concepts to better guide management practices.

Open human resource management requires universities to adopt a resource-oriented perspective to attract and utilize high-quality resources, thereby expanding the resource base for the construction of first-class universities and disciplines and facilitating innovation in human resource management. It is important to note that high-quality resources here include both human talent and technology. From the human perspective, universities should move beyond a narrow focus on recruitment examination results as the primary criterion for talent acquisition, and instead actively introduce industry elites and high-level overseas talents to enrich the faculty and provide substantial human resource support for the development initiative. From the technological perspective, universities should fully recognize and rationally leverage the positive value of new technologies such as big data and artificial intelligence in human resource management, using advanced information systems to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of management practices.

Dynamic human resource management requires universities to pursue continuous improvement to enhance the capability and effectiveness of human resource management in serving the development of universities and disciplines, and to actively build a distinctive human resource ecosystem. Human resource management involves a series of personnel-related functions, including talent recruitment, training, assessment, performance and salary management, and employee relations. These diverse and complex responsibilities necessitate a dynamic process-oriented approach to continuously identify, analyze, and resolve issues, ensuring that human resource management better aligns with the requirements of the "Double First-Class" initiative. Therefore, universities must abandon rigid

management thinking and methods, and instead adopt continuously updated philosophies to meet the demands of the development initiative.

3.2 Enhancing Precision in Talent Recruitment and Cultivation

Talent recruitment and cultivation are two fundamental aspects of human resource management and critical factors influencing its effectiveness. Human resource management within the "Double First-Class" initiative must introduce and cultivate truly suitable talents based on the actual needs of building first-class universities and disciplines, avoiding 盲目性和短期性 (blind and short-sighted) human resource practices.

First, carry out frontline demand-oriented talent recruitment. The key to the "Double First-Class" initiative lies in faculty, whose positive role is reflected in the process and outcomes of frontline teaching. Therefore, talent recruitment in universities should align with frontline teaching needs. Decisions regarding the specialties and quantity of teachers to be recruited should be based on the actual demands of frontline teaching activities. Furthermore, alignment with frontline teaching requirements should serve as a basic indicator for evaluating the effectiveness of talent recruitment, ensuring that introduced talents meet the needs of frontline education.

Second, construct a result-oriented dynamic talent cultivation system. Talent recruitment is only the first step in human resource management; how to cultivate and utilize talent is the emphasis. In accordance with the actual requirements of the "Double First-Class" initiative, universities should establish a dynamic and precise cultivation system addressing faculty training, utilization, and assessment. This system should provide continuous development of talents' knowledge and skills, enabling them to have the opportunity and capability to constantly adapt to developmental demands and create greater value through self-breakthroughs.

3.3 Optimizing Human Resource Management Evaluation

In recent years, with the increase in national resource investment in the "Double First-Class" initiative, competition among universities for high-quality resources has intensified. Under these circumstances, some universities mistakenly regard the number of high-level talents such as Changjiang Scholars, Distinguished Young Scientists, and academicians as the criterion for judging first-class universities and disciplines, leading to a significant gap between the introduced talents and actual development needs. To address this issue, universities should take corresponding measures starting from the improvement of human resource management evaluation methods.

First, highlight the emphasis on teaching and research. The "Double First-Class" initiative primarily emphasizes cultivating first-class talents through first-class universities and disciplines, and the cultivation of first-class talents is gradually achieved through teaching and research. Therefore, teaching and research achievements should be regarded as key indicators in human resource management evaluation, reducing the weight of indicators such as titles, seniority, and paper counts. This enables the evaluation process to better reflect talents' educational contributions and influence, stimulating teachers' enthusiasm and creativity in participating in the development initiative.

Second, focus on differentiated evaluation. The "Double First-Class" initiative is a distinctive education based on the varying strengths of universities and disciplines, and these differences often reflect variations in teachers' teaching knowledge and abilities. Although unified evaluation standards can standardizedly assess teaching capabilities, they hardly highlight teachers' teaching strengths. Therefore, in the process of human resource management evaluation, scientific assessment should focus on strengths and distinctive features, accurately grasping and utilizing the positive value of teachers in the "Double First-Class" initiative to enrich the development activities.

4. Conclusion

As a fundamental component of the "Double First-Class" initiative, human resource management plays a vital role in promoting its implementation. Given this context, innovation in human resource management within higher education institutions is necessary, feasible, practical, and urgent. Universities should facilitate innovative practices in human resource management by establishing first-class management concepts, enhancing the precision of talent recruitment and cultivation, and optimizing evaluation methods. These strategies will collectively support the effective implementation of the "Double First-Class" initiative.

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