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Research on the Construction of Teaching Teams for Cruise Catering from the Perspective of Integration of Post, Course, Competition, and Certificate

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Abstract: ***This study explores innovative approaches to constructing teaching teams for cruise catering programs from the perspective of "Post, Course, Competition and Certificate" integration. By analyzing the gap between industry talent demands and current teaching practices, it proposes strategies including dynamic curriculum design, competition-driven teaching innovation, and certification-linked evaluation systems. A case study validates the feasibility of these approaches, offering theoretical and practical insights for enhancing industry-education integration in vocational education.***

Keywords: Integration of Post, Course, Competition and Certificate; Cruise Catering; Teaching Team Construction; Vocational Education; Industry-Education Integration.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development of the cruise industry, catering services, as a core component, have placed increasing demands on the professional competence of talents. However, traditional vocational education models suffer from issues such as disjointed job requirements, fragmented skill training, and incomplete certification systems, making it difficult to meet the industry's urgent need for versatile professionals. The concept of "post, course, competition and certificate" integration offers an innovative approach to teaching team development by combining job practice, curriculum design, skill competitions, and vocational certification.

This study focuses on the cruise catering discipline, aligning with trends in vocational education reform, and explores how to build a dynamically adaptive teaching team through the four-dimensional integration of "post, course, competition, and certificate." Through literature analysis, case studies, and practical investigations, this paper proposes strategies including curriculum redesign, integration of competition and certification resources, and cultivation of dual-qualified teachers. The aim is to provide theoretical and practical guidance for talent cultivation in cruise catering within higher vocational institutions. Findings indicate that the integration mechanism significantly enhances the comprehensive capabilities of teaching teams and promotes seamless alignment between talent development and industrial demands.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CORE CONCEPTS

2.1 Connotation and Value of "Post, Course, Competition and Certificate" Integration

The "post, course, competition and certificate" integration represents an innovative pedagogical model in vocational education, centered on the organic alignment of four dimensions: post requirements, curriculum design, skill competitions, and vocational certifications. This approach constructs a talent cultivation system that bridges theory and practice by prioritizing industry-specific job demands. It aligns course content with occupational standards, enhances practical competencies through competitive training, and ensures standardized, internationally recognized qualification systems via certification mechanisms. Beyond elevating students' employability, its significance lies in fostering dynamic synchronization between educational outputs and industrial needs, offering a replicable blueprint for vocational education reform [1].

2.2 Talent Demand Analysis in the Cruise Catering Industry

As a premium service sector, cruise catering demands professionals with diversified expertise and stringent skill

sets. Practitioners must master culinary techniques (e.g., Chinese and Western dishes), beverage knowledge, and service etiquette, while also demonstrating cross-cultural communication, crisis management, and teamwork capabilities. With the globalization of cruise tourism, certifications such as international bartending licenses and food safety qualifications have become mandatory entry criteria. Data indicates a widening gap in "dual-skilled" talents—those combining operational proficiency with certified credentials—posing urgent challenges for vocational institutions to innovate their training paradigms [2].

2.3 Theoretical Basis for Teaching Team Development

Teaching team development requires grounding in educational theories. Constructivist learning theory advocates knowledge construction through authentic practices, underpinning the "post-course-competition-certificate" model's curriculum design. Collaborative learning theory emphasizes team-based interaction to enhance pedagogical efficiency, aligning with the shift from traditional instructor roles to facilitative teamwork. Competency-Based Education (CBE) further defines occupational ability as the core training objective, providing a framework for integrating skill competitions and certification systems. Together, these theories form the theoretical foundation for constructing adaptive, industry-responsive teaching teams [3].

3. CURRENT STATUS AND CHALLENGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRUISE CATERING TEACHING TEAMS

3.1 Limitations of Existing Teaching Models

Traditional cruise catering education models exhibit significant shortcomings, particularly in aligning curricula with industry demands. According to a survey conducted by a maritime vocational college in Zhejiang Province, 70% of courses remain theory-centric, with practical training accounting for less than 30% of instructional time. Simulated training scenarios are overly simplified, lacking immersive environments that mirror real cruise ship operations. For instance, Western dining service training relies heavily on campus-based labs rather than integrating standardized dynamic workflows adopted by international cruise lines, such as Royal Caribbean's scenario-based emergency service drills. Course content updates lag behind industry trends, omitting emerging service formats like molecular gastronomy and themed banquet design from compulsory modules. This gap is exacerbated by findings that 85% of graduates report no exposure to intelligent catering management systems (e.g., CruiseSuite reservation software) during their studies, directly impairing their digital adaptability post-employment. Assessment methods are overly reliant on final exams (exceeding 70% of total grades), neglecting process-oriented evaluations and vocational certification integration. Consequently, graduates often demonstrate inadequate service efficiency and emergency response capabilities in practical assessments conducted by cruise companies, making them ill-prepared to meet the demands of international cruise lines for dual-skilled talents equipped with both operational expertise and certified qualifications.

3.2 Implementation Challenges of "Post, Course, Competition and Certificate" Integration

Although the "post, course, competition and certificate" integration concept is widely promoted, its practical implementation faces multiple barriers. Curriculum redesign requires harmonizing corporate job standards, competition evaluation criteria, and certification requirements—three elements that often conflict in metrics. For example, cruise lines prioritize service efficiency, while skill competitions emphasize creative presentation, creating misalignment in teaching objectives. The teaching team faces a notable skills gap: 65% of instructors lack vocational certificates related to cruise services, and 80% have no overseas cruise work experience, hindering precise alignment with industry demands. Corporate participation remains limited, as cruise companies withhold operational data due to confidentiality concerns, reducing "post-course" integration to superficial compliance. High resource costs—such as the multi-million-dollar investment required for simulated cruise restaurant facilities—also deter most institutions. Additionally, the linkage between certification and curriculum design is flawed; some colleges prioritize certificate pass rates over competency development, fostering a "teaching-to-the-test" mentality that undermines core educational goals.

3.3 Deficiencies in Teaching Team Capacity Structure

Current cruise catering teaching teams exhibit "three lows, one high" challenges: low industry practical experience, low interdisciplinary integration capacity, low participation in international certification training, and a high proportion of aging faculty. A case study from Tianjin Maritime Vocational College reveals rigid internal divisions,

with culinary and etiquette instructors operating in silos, making it difficult to deliver integrated "service and management" courses. Faculty members demonstrate weak proficiency in emerging technologies (e.g., intelligent ordering systems, cruise catering big data analytics), resulting in curriculum content lagging behind digital trends. Furthermore, 70% of instructors lack international exposure, with their understanding of global standards (e.g., ISO 22000 food safety management systems) confined to theoretical knowledge. This skills gap directly impedes the effective implementation of "post, course, competition and certificate" integration. Urgent measures are needed to restructure team expertise through systematic training and industry immersion, facilitating the transition from traditional lecturers to "dual-qualified" facilitators capable of bridging theory and practice [4].

4. PATHWAYS FOR TEACHING TEAM DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE "POST, COURSE, COMPETITION AND CERTIFICATE" INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK

4.1 Curriculum Restructuring Guided by Post Requirements

Curriculum restructuring must prioritize industry post demands, breaking traditional disciplinary boundaries to establish dynamic modular course structures. Shanghai Maritime University collaborated with Royal Caribbean Cruises to implement a "post-requirement-curriculum design" bidirectional feedback mechanism, regularly analyzing task lists from cruise catering departments and translating core skills like service workflows, emergency response, and cross-cultural communication into teaching modules. For instance, "Cruise Themed Banquet Planning" was upgraded from an elective to a required course, integrating advanced content such as molecular gastronomy and intelligent ordering system operation, while incorporating enterprise case libraries (e.g., 2024 global cruise menu design demands). Assessment adopted a "corporate mentor and academic instructor" dual scoring system, ensuring alignment with evolving post standards. Data shows students participating in this model achieved a 35% higher pass rate in cruise company practical assessments, with significantly improved job readiness.

4.2 Deep Integration of Skill Competitions into Teaching Processes

To transcend the "competition-for-competition's-sake" model, skill competitions must be systematically integrated into daily teaching resources. A maritime vocational college in Qingdao developed a competition-task-driven teaching framework by aligning scoring criteria from the "National Cruise Catering Service Competition" with instructional objectives. For instance, the "blind wine tasting" segment—evaluated on beverage characteristic description accuracy (30%), service etiquette compliance (40%), and emergency response efficiency (30%)—was decomposed into specific learning targets within the Wine Knowledge and Service course. The curriculum adopted a "three-stage task progression approach": initial skills training via virtual simulation software, followed by team-based practical rehearsals in simulated cruise bar settings, and culminating in enterprise-mentor-led comprehensive assessments. Post-competition data analysis revealed critical improvement areas—e.g., 2024 metrics showed an 18% operational timeout rate among students. In response, the college introduced a standardized service timeline module, reducing bottle-opening actions to 8 seconds. This closed-loop mechanism decreased timeout rates to 5% and improved etiquette scores by 22% in the 2025 provincial competition. Additionally, an "Excellence Repository" was established to convert award-winning student works, such as themed beverage menu designs, into actionable industry projects—15 student submissions were adopted by cruise lines in 2024, achieving seamless alignment between educational outputs and operational demands [5].

4.3 Alignment Mechanism Between Vocational Certifications and Teaching Objectives

Certification alignment requires establishing a "course, certificate and post" correspondence map to avoid disconnects between credential acquisition and competency development. An International Maritime College in Zhejiang embedded knowledge points from certifications like the International Bartenders Association (IBA) and ISO 22000 food safety qualifications into its Catering Service and Management course. For example, the "wine storage standards" chapter was linked to IBA certification's practical requirements, incorporating "certificate simulation assessments." Additionally, enterprise certification systems were integrated, such as collaborating with Star Cruises to develop the "Cruise Catering Service Specialist" certification, incorporating corporate post standards into course evaluations. In 2024, 68% of students attained dual certifications, exceeding industry averages by 15%, with third-party assessed certificate-post alignment reaching 92% [6].

4.4 Capacity Enhancement Strategies for Dual-Qualified Teachers

Dual-qualified teacher development demands a three-dimensional approach combining "enterprise practice, international certification and research feedback." One Maritime Vocational College in Tianjin implemented a "teacher enterprise internship program," requiring professional instructors to complete at least 30 days of annual rotation in cruise catering departments, engaging in practical projects like service process optimization and menu design. Teachers were also encouraged to pursue international cruise certifications (e.g., Cruise Lines International Association credentials), achieving an 85% dual-qualified rate by 2024—a 40% increase from 2020. Furthermore, a "teacher-enterprise mentor" collaboration mechanism was established, such as partnering with MSC Cruises to co-develop the Cruise Catering Digital Management course, where corporate mentors provided real-world cases and instructors transformed them into teaching materials. This "industry-education collaboration" model improved teaching satisfaction by 32% and corporate evaluation scores by 25%.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study explores innovative pathways for developing cruise catering teaching teams under the "post, course, competition and certificate" integration framework. Findings reveal that traditional pedagogical models suffer from curriculum-post disconnection, inadequate practical training, and simplistic assessment systems, resulting in a mismatch between students' vocational capabilities and industry demands. By restructuring curricula, integrating skill competitions, aligning certification systems, and enhancing dual-qualified teaching capacities, dynamic alignment between educational outputs and industrial requirements can be achieved.

Practical implementations include Shanghai Maritime University's "post requirement-curriculum design" feedback mechanism, which translates cruise service standards into modular courses. Qingdao Ocean Shipping Mariners College embedded competition criteria into teaching, forming a closed-loop "teaching, competition and enhancement" model. Zhejiang International Maritime College established a "course, certificate and post" alignment map, raising students' dual certification rate to 68%. Teacher development initiatives, such as Tianjin Maritime Vocational College's enterprise internship program, increased dual-qualified faculty to 85%.

The "post, course, competition and certificate" integration model significantly improves students' job readiness and competitiveness while facilitating the transformation of instructors from lecturers to "dual-qualified" facilitators. Future efforts should focus on deepening industry-academia collaboration and advancing digital resource development to provide replicable paradigms for vocational education reform.

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