

The Necessity of Labor Education for Undergraduate College Students

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ABSTRACT

Labor education is an important way for undergraduate colleges and universities to cultivate high-quality specialized talents, and doing a good job in labor education for college students is also an inevitable requirement for practicing the core socialist values and the urgent need of society for talents. As the main front for carrying out labor education for college students, colleges and universities should fully realize the importance of carrying out labor education, combine the theory and practice of labor education, construct and improve the curriculum system of labor education for college students, guide college students to form reasonable labor values, establish a pragmatic career development outlook and learn to self-education, so as to promote their all-round development.

Keywords: College students, Labor education, Necessity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Labor education is not independent. On a macro level, it should be in line with the stage of economic and social development, and on a micro level, it should complement the moral education, intellectual education, physical education, and aesthetic education of college students. Starting from the actual learning and life of college students, based on the school and academic situation, it is a must to innovate the methods and ways of labor education in the we-media era, educate and guide students to form a new concept of loving and advocating labor. Labor education plays an important role in the growth and development of college students. University educators should educate and guide students to master professional knowledge in labor education theory and practice, promote their physical and mental health and comprehensive development through labor education, and enhance the effectiveness of education.

2. RAISE OF THE PROBLEMS

"In 2022, the total number of students enrolled in various forms of higher education was 46.55 million, an increase of 2.25 million compared to the previous year; the gross enrollment rate of higher education was 59.6%, an increase of 1.8 percentage

points compared to the previous year." [1] Nevertheless, higher education still needs to transform from scale expansion to connotation enhancement in order to provide talent and intellectual support for the construction of a socialist strong country and demonstrate educational value.

"The implementation of labor education should be in line with the age characteristics of students, allowing them to experience the labor process firsthand and improving the effectiveness of education." [2] At the same time, it is necessary to "clarify the purpose and role of labor education, the content and methods of labor education, the time allocation for labor practice in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools, strengthen the organization and management of labor education, and enhance the effectiveness of labor education". [3] It is also necessary to "guide students to worship and respect labor". [4]

"Labor is a way of human existence and the primary necessity of life." [5] Engels believed that "labor is the first fundamental condition of human life, and to such an extent that we have to say, in a sense, that labor creates human beings themselves." [6] Labor education, as an important component of comprehensive literacy education for college students, aims to help students form correct labor

values, improve their comprehensive quality, and promote their comprehensive development. "Literally speaking, it refers to education conducted through labor, which runs through the entire process of labor." [7] Wang Ying et al. proposed that "labor education for college students is an educational and teaching practice activity aimed at promoting the formation of labor values and cultivating labor literacy among students". [8] In his article "Understanding the Concept of Labor Education", Tan Chuanbao defines labor education as "an educational activity aimed at promoting students to form labor values (i.e. establishing correct labor views, positive labor attitudes, loving labor and the working people, etc.) and cultivating labor literacy (having certain labor knowledge and skills, forming good labor habits, etc.)" [9].

In daily educational and teaching activities, "many universities have a phenomenon of neglecting labor, such as low learning difficulty and easy graduation, 'sweeping the floor for credit', disciplinary punishment for cleaning, and outsourcing environmental sanitation to domestic service companies. Some students have the phenomenon of avoiding labor, such as 'gnawing on the elderly', hoping for overnight wealth, enjoying leisure and avoiding work, and competing for and deceiving educational resources. The marginalization or even 'emptiness' of labor education poses a serious challenge to higher education institutions in comprehensively improving their talent cultivation capabilities, and also has a significant negative impact on the cultivation of socialist builders and successors with comprehensive development in morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor in the new era of higher education." [10]

After briefly introducing the positioning and concept of labor education, this article attempts to sort out the necessity, current problems, and practical paths of labor education, hoping to promote the smooth implementation of labor education in practical education and teaching work.

3. THE NECESSITY OF LABOR EDUCATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Education guides college students to actively participate in labor theory courses and deepen labor practice, which can enhance their physical fitness, help them adjust their psychological state, maintain mental health, learn necessary labor skills, achieve

the unity of theoretical teaching and practical application, and achieve the goal of fostering virtue.

3.1 Being Beneficial for College Students to Form Reasonable Labor Values

"The core of labor education is to establish correct labor values." [11] Practice leads to true knowledge, whether it is material wealth or spiritual wealth, it must be created through labor. Because, "labor is not only a means of making a living, but also a medium leading to the objective and subjective world, and a necessary path to achieve the ultimate beauty, goodness, and complete freedom of human nature." [12] As the backbone of achieving national prosperity and national rejuvenation, college students can only grow into high-quality labor forces that society needs by constantly refining their character and willpower through labor, and closely combining theory with practice.

3.2 Being Beneficial for the Comprehensive Development of College Students

Marx regarded "the comprehensive development of human freedom" as the ultimate goal. "At present, in the process of realizing a communist society in China, which is in the primary stage of socialism, it is necessary to continuously improve social productivity, cultivate workers with comprehensive development, lofty communist beliefs and ideals, and labor education is indispensable." [13] Under the perspective of global economic integration, the group of college students will inspire labor enthusiasm and patriotism in labor education, cultivate innovative and creative abilities, and actively integrate personal pursuits into the new journey of realizing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and the Chinese Dream. Adapting individual comprehensive development to economic and social development to achieve harmonious progress between individuals and collectives, as well as between individuals and society, is also an educational direction that educators, families, and society are striving to explore.

3.3 Being Beneficial for Guiding College Students to Learn Self-education

Building China into a modernized socialist power and realizing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is the greatest dream of every Chinese

person, and it is also an inevitable historical responsibility that contemporary young college students need to undertake. Only by doing a good job in knowledge accumulation, consolidating consensus, releasing wisdom, and working hard can Chinese achieve this goal. Through process education, labor education is integrated into moral education, intellectual education, physical education, and aesthetic education, forming a situation of "five educations" simultaneously, enabling college students to develop the quality of hard work, perseverance, and fearlessness, stimulating college students to actively participate in labor education at the ideological level, and creating a new pattern of ideological and political education for college students. "Only education that can inspire students to engage in self-education is true education." [14]

3.4 Being Beneficial for College Students to Establish a Pragmatic Career Development Perspective

In the post-pandemic era, the global economy is generally sluggish, and the effective employment opportunities provided by various industries to previous college graduates are gradually decreasing. Labor education, as an important part of talent cultivation in colleges and universities, has both fundamental characteristics and a valuable and irreplaceable position. Actively participating in labor practice can help college students recognize their personal strengths and weaknesses from both theoretical and practical perspectives. For example, college students with strong hands-on abilities are confident in labor education and are more confident in applying for positions that require high levels of operability through their learned labor skills. As the main body of knowledge transmission in colleges and universities, educators should take the acceptance state that students can reach as the benchmark, [5] so that the labor process can guide students to start from their own actual situation and learn self-positioning and self-improvement in the process of career development.

4. THE PROBLEMS IN LABOR EDUCATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, labor education in China has gone through different stages of development. The explicit and implicit characteristics presented at each stage are closely related to the level of

economic and social development at that time. At present, there are still several issues with labor education for college students.

4.1 Insufficient Emphasis on Labor Education for College Students

For a long time, China has adhered to the basic education policy of combining education with productive labor. "From the perspective of educational status, the status of labor education for college students has been weakened, even marginalized, which does not meet the requirements of China's promotion of building an education system with comprehensive development in morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor." [7] "In educational practice, some educators even use physical labor as a means of punishing students, which to a large extent cultivates the concepts and emotions of learners' aversion to labor, resistance to labor, and even 'anti-labor'." [15] In fact, its ultimate goal is to make learners understand through labor education that labor should enable "humanity to achieve self-realization in the process of transforming the world, and to confirm its own power in the objectification of products in order to achieve its own development". [16]

4.2 Disconnected Theory and Practice of Labor Education for College Students

The common problem in the implementation of labor education for college students is the serious disconnect between theory and practice. "Traditional labor education lacks the characteristics of interaction or interaction, extremely reflecting the instrumental rationality of education, ignoring the subjective initiative of students, mainly manifested as indoctrination education," [17] and students are in a passive receiving state. Jiang Dayuan pointed out that the serious problems of labor education in China are manifested in two aspects: first, the disconnection between education and labor practice, and second, the disconnection between education and labor and education through labor. This dual deficiency phenomenon greatly shortens the time for learners to participate in labor and receive labor education, and greatly compresses the space for labor and labor education.[18]

4.3 Imperfect Curriculum System of Labor Education for College Students

"Curriculum is the fundamental basis of education and teaching, as well as the fundamental guarantee for achieving educational goals." [19] Without the support of systematic labor education courses, it is impossible to impart complete labor theory to students, and students' correct understanding of labor cannot be consolidated in practice. "Under the influence of subjective intellectualism, emphasizing intellectual education and neglecting labor education, labor education accounts for less credits in school curriculum, and is even occupied or misappropriated by other teachers from time to time. The marginalization of labor education courses makes it difficult for them to carry out systematic knowledge transmission and theoretical explanation." [15] This fragmented labor curriculum leads to a complete separation between the actual labor experience of college students and classroom theoretical learning, and cannot implement the principle of combining theory and practice.

5. PRACTICAL PATH OF LABOR EDUCATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

The object and form of labor education in undergraduate universities have undergone significant changes in the era of we-media. Both the subject and object of reeducation through labor education are facing new missions and challenges. It is necessary to carry out labor theory education and practical exploration based on the new content of labor education in the era of we-media and the new characteristics of college students, so that students can achieve the unity of knowledge acquisition, literacy improvement, and conceptual reconstruction in the process of labor, and promotes their comprehensive development.

5.1 Fully Recognizing the Importance of Labor Education for College Students

Kaiser Steiner pointed out that "the primary purpose of education is to make them love labor and improve work efficiency." [20] At the school level, it is a must to fully recognize the importance and sense of mission of combining labor education with moral education, intellectual education, physical education, and aesthetic education to provide systematic education for college students, and to achieve people-oriented, student-centered,

and personalized teaching. Based on the characteristics of the physical and mental development of college students and the needs of social employment, labor education is used to help students master basic job seeking skills, stimulate their subjective initiative, improve their personality, cultivate healthy physical and mental health, educate students to love and admire labor, and achieve educational effects.

5.2 Combining Theory and Practice of Labor Education for College Students

"The biggest difference between college students and primary and secondary school students is that they have already mastered certain labor abilities and habits, and possess certain knowledge and skills. Therefore, at this stage of labor education, it should not only be satisfied with the deepening of labor habits and cognition, but also focus on the transformation of labor cognition and emotion into action." [8] Labor education should attach importance to the high frequency of students personally participating in labor practice, regard practice as the main battlefield of labor education, organize students to carry out various forms of volunteer public welfare services into the community and participate in a wide range of practical activities, increase the proportion of practical teaching, enrich students' practical experience, achieve the unity of knowledge, intention and action, and improve the quality of practical education.

5.3 Constructing and Improving the Curriculum System

"A new era of labor education curriculum system consisting of professional courses, integrated courses, and practical courses should be established around labor education." [19] This includes offering a series of "labor +" courses such as labor philosophy, labor ethics, labor culture, labor sociology, labor economics, and labor education, conducting in-depth theoretical discussions on labor education, enriching labor knowledge, improving labor theory literacy, and enhancing labor value recognition. [21] At the same time, the curriculum of labor education should keep up with the development of the times, continuously optimize the teaching methods and content of labor education according to the changes in the subject and object of labor education, and make the labor education curriculum realistic, objective, and forward-looking.

6. CONCLUSION

To demonstrate the educational orientation and value of labor education, it is necessary to fully recognize that strengthening labor education for college students is an urgent need to cultivate qualified builders and successors in the new era, an important way to improve the labor quality of college students, and a key measure to cultivate their innovative spirit and sense of responsibility. Only through labor education can college students learn how to work and master labor skills and learn to innovate to make labor education more valuable for the times.

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