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A Practical Analysis on the Integration of College Students' Labour Education into Rural Revitalisation from the Perspective of “Hundred, Thousand, and Ten Thousand Project”

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(Received 26 January 2024; revised 29 January 2024; accepted 20 February 2024; first published online 30 March 2024)

Abstract

The key to rural revitalisation lies in the revitalisation of talents, the core of which lies in the cultivation of high-quality talents who are united in knowledge and action. Colleges and universities, as the gathering place of high-quality talents, should give full play to their important role in cultivating talents through labour education. Labour education has the important value of improving college students' sense of social responsibility and self-worth, and promoting employment and entrepreneurship. In practice, it is necessary to raise the awareness of the importance of labour education for rural revitalization, establish a robust management mechanism for labour education and a sound safeguard mechanism for talents, organically integrate labour education with on- and off-campus social practice, build a diversified evaluation system with the sense of achievement of the students as the core, and build a system of labour education for colleges and universities at the conceptual, systemic, practical and evaluation levels, to explore a new path for labour education to integrate into rural revitalization, and to promote rural revitalization in a powerful and effective way.

Keywords: Labour education; rural revitalization; college and university talents; practice

1. Introduction

On February 18, 2024, the Guangdong Provincial Party Committee and the Provincial Government held a province-wide high-quality development conference, focusing on the dual promotion of industry and technology to continuously create new momentum and new advantages for development. Zhu Kongjun, Director of the Guangdong Provincial

Department of Education, stated at the conference that Guangdong will continue to enhance the support capacity of education for high-quality development, persistently implementing the “Hundred Thousand Project” education action and the “Hundred Schools Supporting Hundred Counties” action to assist the “Hundred Thousand Project”. Education is at the crucial intersection of technology as the primary productive force, talent as the primary resource, and innovation as the primary driving force. Leveraging the unique advantages of college students’ strong capabilities, lofty ideals, and large group size, education can continuously empower rural revitalization. Among them, the labor education model with Chinese characteristics highly aligns with the goal of “rural revitalization, talent first.” Therefore, it is essential to highly value the importance of college students carrying out labor education to aid rural revitalization and actively explore effective ways for integrating college labor education into rural revitalization.

2. The Strategic Push of Labor Education Empowering Rural Revitalization

2.1 Policy Support: Precise Efforts in Talent Cultivation for Rural Revitalization

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China first proposed the “Rural Revitalization Strategy”, and the 20th Congress clarified the “two-step” strategic arrangement for building a socialist modernized country comprehensively. This is not only a strategic arrangement concerning the overall construction of Chinese modernization but also the fundamental basis and policy support for implementing the rural revitalization strategy. Whether the goals and tasks of the rural revitalization strategy are scientific and reasonable and can be successfully achieved directly relates to the grand goal of building a modern socialist country in all respects as scheduled. In December 2020, Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of talent in rural revitalization at the Central Rural Work Conference, stressing the need to attract various talents, including wealth leaders, returning entrepreneurial college students, and retired military personnel, to contribute to rural revitalization. In February 2021, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued the “Opinions on Accelerating the Promotion of Rural Talent Revitalization”, encouraging localities to select a batch of higher vocational schools to offer agriculture-related majors based on rural revitalization needs and adopt methods such as in-school learning, flexible education systems, alternating agriculture and learning, and sending teachers to the countryside to cultivate a group of in-village college students and rural governance talents .

The implementation of the rural revitalization strategy plays a crucial role in promoting the coordinated development of urban and rural areas, the comprehensive construction of a moderately prosperous society, and the comprehensive building of a modern socialist country. College students, as high-quality talents with advanced scientific and cultural knowledge and advanced technology, are urgently needed in the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy. In March 2020, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued the “Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening Labor Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the New Era”. In July of the same year, to further strengthen the application value of labor education in practice, the Ministry of Education issued the “Guidelines for Labor Education

in Primary and Secondary Schools (Trial)” (hereinafter referred to as the “Guidelines”). Both responded to several major and difficult issues hindering rural revitalization, such as severe talent outflow, insufficient professional reserves, and lack of practical experience in rural areas, and issued a strong policy voice for the reform of the rural revitalization talent cultivation system in China.

2.2 *The Demand of the Times: The Strong Driving Force for Realizing the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation*

General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed that “strengthening the foundation and consolidating agriculture is the foundation for people’s livelihood and the key to governing the country”. Rural revitalization is the current need for national economic and modernization development, the inevitable requirement of the times, and the strategic requirement for the development of urban–rural relations. Integrating labor education with rural revitalization is necessary for building a modern socialist country and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

At the current stage, rural revitalization faces various practical dilemmas, such as a lack of local talent reserves and a low degree of alignment between professional skills and rural practical needs . The “Guidelines” point out that “labor education is a new requirement of the Party for education in the new era, with significant practical characteristics, and must be oriented towards the real world of life and work, guiding students to gain valuable experiences through hands-on practice” . The new era endows labor education with new connotations, and labor education will usher in new historical opportunities in the new era. In the new development stage, the connotation of combining education with productive labor has undergone significant changes. Higher education institutions must improve their positioning, strengthen the direct connection between school education and social life and productive practice, use labor education as an effective carrier for students to understand, serve, and transform society, and transform the practices of scientific research, policy consultation, and social services into vivid education scenarios.

2.3 *Practical Characteristics: Activating the Important Driving Force of Rural Revitalization*

The primary way of labor education should be through labor course practice, allowing students to learn through practice and transform the results of labor education into an important driving force for rural revitalization. As the main practice front for labor education, rural areas provide specific practice contexts for the results of labor education. The values of moral cultivation, intelligence enhancement, physical strengthening, and aesthetic education contained in labor education will further enhance and improve rural revitalization.

Higher education institutions gather a large number of professional talents with strong capabilities but face problems such as low willingness to return to rural areas, lack of practical experience, and poor physical fitness, resulting in a group characteristic of “more knowledge but less experience”, directly leading to the development dilemma of “talent scarcity” in rural areas and indirectly hindering the inheritance and promotion of labor virtues and the ethos of respecting agriculture in rural areas. Under the rural revitalization strategy,

university classrooms are no longer the end of higher education, and vast rural areas become a beneficial extension of higher education. Many young students with professional qualities but lacking practical experience will bring targeted professional guidance to rural areas, driving the economic and cultural development of rural areas and ultimately achieving the comprehensive and all-around development education goals in rural areas, completing the closed-loop tasks of higher education. Fundamentally, rural talent revitalization requires labor education to take the lead. Education should proceed from the direction of "cultivating well-rounded people" to promote the improvement of rural labor force quality, thereby boosting the development confidence and momentum of rural areas.

3. Value Analysis of College Labor Education under the Rural Revitalization Strategy

3.1 Enhancing College Students' Sense of Social Responsibility through Labor Practice

Starting from the students themselves, actively participating in rural revitalization work can deepen their understanding of the rural revitalization strategy, improve their cognitive system regarding agricultural, rural, and farmer issues, and generate additional positive effects on economic development, social stability, national prosperity, and national rejuvenation related to the "three rural" issues. Therefore, on the basis of labor education, rural revitalization projects are an effective way and beneficial exploration to further enhance college students' sense of social responsibility through labor practice. As the carrier of college students' labor education, rural revitalization projects have the important characteristics of returning to the countryside and changing cognition through personal practice. Through labor practice, college students return to the countryside, expanding their vision from books to the vast rural land, applying what they have learned to rural labor positions, making themselves participants and contributors to rural construction, enriching their life experience and spiritual perception, thereby changing old cognition and realizing the heavy responsibility and mission on the shoulders of young students.

3.2 Enriching College Students' Sense of Self-Worth through Labor Practice

Self-worth refers to an individual's subjective evaluation and dynamic cognition of their abilities, value, and status, influenced by education, social environment, personal experiences, and other factors. A healthy and good sense of self-worth is an important manifestation of mental health and plays a crucial role in personal development. Rural revitalization projects open up new paths for college students to enhance their sense of self-worth through labor practice. Through rural social practice, college students are no longer limited to the old value evaluation system. They can contact various field challenges and practical difficulties through labor practice, use their strengths and innovative thinking to address new situations and solve new problems, innovate their original life experiences through labor practice, force the improvement of labor methods and production efficiency, stimulate their innovation and creativity, further enhance the conversion level of knowledge achievements, and greatly enrich their sense of self-worth.

3.3 Promoting College Students' Employment and Entrepreneurship through Labor Practice

Guiding college students into the vast countryside to participate in long-term construction should be an important trend after the popularization of higher education. College students have considerable professional quality and productive motivation, but due to the lack of practical experience, their ability to meet market competition needs is not strong. Rural revitalization projects can effectively enhance the learning and conversion effects of college students through practical activities. Higher education even has some phenomena where knowledge ability stops at the classroom, and the investment in learning is not proportional to the output, which is not conducive to self-discipline and self-motivation of college students. As the last stop before entering society, integrating labor education into rural revitalization practice can help young students go back to the basics, introspect, think about how to keep up with the times, solidify the foundation, serve society, and truly become builders and successors of the socialist cause. This has very important practical significance for the career planning and career ability improvement of college students after entering society.

4. Practical Paths for Integrating College Labor Education into Rural Revitalization

The integration practice of college students' labor education and rural revitalization can focus on exploring from four aspects: updating concepts, improving mechanisms, practical activities, and diversified evaluation, constructing a new era college students' labor education system with internal motivation.

4.1 Conceptual Level: Enhancing the Understanding of the Importance of Labor Education Empowering Rural Revitalization

Integrating college labor education into rural revitalization requires colleges and universities to update labor education training concepts, comprehensively improving the understanding of the importance of labor education, and cultivating the internal motivation of college students to serve rural revitalization through labor practice.

First, improve the labor education curriculum, fully utilizing the curriculum's positive role in guiding students to form the awareness of serving rural revitalization. According to central requirements, colleges and universities should set up compulsory labor education courses and labor weeks, ensuring necessary labor practice time, while emphasizing that other courses should organically integrate labor education content and requirements. A systematic and complete labor education has important practical significance. On the one hand, it can fully play the guiding role of value orientation in the critical transition stage of young students' value formation and development, enabling college students to deeply realize that labor education is an education combining theory and practice and an important way for self-realization, self-development, and self-improvement. On the other hand, it can enable young students to deeply understand the positive impact of labor education on rural revitalization, establishing correct life views, values, and world views.

Second, fully utilize the advantages of the immersive education environment on campus, cultivating college students' awareness of serving rural revitalization through multiple channels. Besides curriculum settings, effectively utilize the rich resources of higher education

institutions, diverse extracurricular activities, and long student stay times on campus to emphasize labor culture promotion in daily campus life through various channels such as setting up publicity slogans, developing campus radio programs, conducting online and offline knowledge lectures, and setting up scholarship and grant projects. This immersive education model can fully play the important role of colleges and universities in guiding correct value orientation in the process of educating people and teaching, comprehensively enhancing the understanding of the importance of labor education empowering rural revitalization, and incubating the youth force of rural revitalization at the conceptual level.

4.2 Institutional Level: Establishing and Improving the Labor Education Management and Talent Guarantee Mechanism

Integrating college labor education into rural revitalization requires colleges and universities to establish and improve the labor education management mechanism, ensuring the systematization and long-term effectiveness of labor education; it also requires rural areas to have corresponding talent introduction policy mechanisms, providing relatively complete guarantee mechanisms and working environments for professional talents with labor practice experience.

At the college level, the in-depth implementation of the “Hundred Thousand Project” education action and the “Hundred Schools Supporting Hundred Counties” action to assist the “Hundred Thousand Project” action requires, on the one hand, establishing and improving the labor education management system and mechanism in schools, perfecting the work execution mechanism, supervision mechanism, and reward and punishment mechanism; on the other hand, recognizing, responding to, and adapting to changes, fully opening up the education mechanism of “discovering real difficulties – carrying out labor education – solving real problems”, dynamically adjusting the existing labor education system according to the beneficial commonalities between rural labor needs and college labor education, and handling the relationship between “change” and “no change”.

At the macro mechanism level, actively establish communication mechanisms between localities and colleges, ensuring the relevant adaptation system guarantees for talent introduction and retention. On the one hand, try to adopt the talent joint training model, actively promote the talent delivery mechanism of colleges and the talent introduction mechanism in rural areas, and jointly build a school-county talent circulation collaboration platform. On the other hand, while doing a good job in talent introduction, promote the establishment and improvement of talent guarantee mechanisms and work reward mechanisms, encouraging talents to carry out innovative development work. China has formed a relatively comprehensive legal system in terms of system guarantees, such as the “Rural Revitalization Promotion Law of the People’s Republic of China” and the “Opinions on Accelerating the Promotion of Rural Talent Revitalization”. People’s governments at the county level and above should establish incentive mechanisms for various talents to participate in rural construction, build social work and rural construction volunteer service platforms, support and guide various talents to serve rural revitalization through multiple ways. Additionally, accelerate rural environmental and cultural construction, providing a feasible working environment for talents.

4.3 Practical Level: Organically Integrating Labor Education with Social Practice Inside and Outside the School

The “Guidelines” point out that production labor training should be placed in an important position, guiding students to discover needs from real life, create valuable material labor achievements in labor practice, and enhance the value recognition of labor practice. Labor education should be integrated into social practice activities inside and outside the school, actively innovate labor education practice methods and channels, and further enhance the attractiveness and effectiveness of labor education by aligning labor education with students’ study, life, and internship employment needs.

4.3.1 Organically Combine Labor Education with Off-campus Social Practice

The most significant feature distinguishing college labor education from primary and secondary school labor education is its social professionalism. College education should be aligned with social and professional development, focusing on social practice activities such as production labor and service labor, allowing young students to return to real society in an era of rapid change and development. Colleges and universities can encourage students to fully play their subjective initiative to understand and transform the world through various labor forms, including volunteer service activities, social research activities (Three Going to the Countryside, Internet +, College Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition), and professional off-campus internships.

The Guangdong Provincial Committee of the Communist Youth League carried out the Guangdong Youth College Students’ “Hundred Thousand Project” commando action in 2023, building a work docking platform for college Youth Leagues to assist county-level development. According to the actual needs of counties and towns, they utilized the scientific research and talent advantages of colleges and universities to provide services in the form of “going to the countryside for docking and long-term follow-up”, focusing on county-level industrial development, key projects, entrepreneurial assistance, youth cultivation, and other aspects. Teachers and students of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies actively participated in the “Hundred Thousand Project”, organizing 17 batches of 232 teachers and students to the school’s rural revitalization counterpart support work site in Ruyuan for social practice during the summer. They helped rural revitalization through activities such as e-commerce assistance to farmers, planning and producing Ruyuan promotional videos, and conducting research on rural elderly care issues.

4.3.2 Organic Integration of Labor Education and On-campus Practice Activities

Fully and actively utilize the practical functions and integration value of campus practice activities in promoting rural revitalization, deeply integrate labor education into on-campus practice activities, and actively create campus practice activity brands with labor education characteristics to further enhance students’ attention and participation in labor education. Student work-study positions can be set up in areas such as campus greening maintenance, public area cleaning, classroom, library, coffee shop, and student canteen management. For example, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies’ “Yunshan” brand series of work-study bases have 22 innovation and entrepreneurship entities, providing more than 2,300

work-study positions for students annually, and have delivered a batch of excellent talents with innovation and practical abilities to society. It can be seen that on-campus practice activities can allow students to learn by doing and do by learning, participating as part of the school's "management team", which has a positive impact on labor education and student development. This not only enhances the influence of labor education in real activities, applying educational content to real needs, aligning personal professional abilities with social talent demands. At the same time, on-campus practice activities can also help students clarify their positioning and career planning during actual labor, forming a positive and healthy labor value in the labor-oriented campus atmosphere, and lay a solid foundation for future work through comprehensive physical and mental development.

4.4 Evaluation Level: Constructing a Diversified Evaluation System with Students' Sense of Gain as the Core

In the new era, integrating college labor education into rural revitalization must be people-oriented, constructing a diversified evaluation system with students' sense of gain as the core. Any labor activity relies on the internal initiative of the producer and a higher level of self-worth recognition condensed from labor practice.

When evaluating the effectiveness of labor education, we must base the evaluation on the similarities and differences among the various subjects participating in labor education: for example, the evaluation focus of the effectiveness of education should be on the sense of gain of students participating in labor practice; and in evaluating the sense of gain of students' labor practice, it should cover the depth and breadth of students' participation in labor concepts, spirit, habits, and skills according to the specific labor practice. By participating in labor education, each subject should correspond to different target choices and different performance requirements, constructing a scientific system, well-structured, and operable performance evaluation indicator system, comprehensively and truly reflecting the students' sense of gain in different forms of labor education.

5. Conclusion

Colleges and universities should incorporate labor literacy into the comprehensive quality evaluation system, gradually exploring students' self-awareness during the practice process, forming a new era education model that values both results and processes, with students at the center and a diversified evaluation system as the measurement standard. On the basis of a diversified evaluation system, higher-level self-worth recognition with students' sense of gain as the core will gradually occupy a place, forming an "internal motivation driving labor practice – changing self-recognition through consciousness – confirming or correcting recognition through practice – sublimating self-evaluation" education closed loop. Students will gradually form a more comprehensive self in this process, and thus will not be easily impacted by the mixed thoughts and ideas from the outside world, becoming the "well-rounded people who possess their own essence" as described by Marx.

Fund

This article is a phased research result of the 2023 Guangdong Higher Education Teaching Reform Project “Exploration and Practice of Labor Education Courses for College Students in Guangdong from the Perspective of the ‘Hundred, Thousand, and Ten Thousand Project’” (Project No. 648) and the 2024 Guangdong Science and Technology Innovation Strategy Special Fund (College Student Science and Technology Innovation Cultivation) Project “Research on Rural Elderly Care Models from the Perspective of the ‘Hundred, Thousand, and Ten Thousand Project’—Taking Guitou Town, Ruyuan County, Shaoguan as an Example” (Project No. pdjh2024b162).

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Journal of Rural Revitalization and County Economy

ISSN 2664-5378 (print), ISSN 2664-5386 (online), DOI 10.6914/jrce, Volume 6 Issue 1, was published by Creative Publishing Co., Limited on 30 March 2024, ISBN 978-988-79866, <https://rrce.cc>, <https://cpcl.hk>, Email: wtoocom@gmail.com, kycbshk@gmail.com.