

Research on the Value Implications and Practical Approaches of Integrating Labor Education for New Era College Students into Ideological and Political Education

Chu Yange

Changsha University of Science and Technology, 410114, Changsha, China

Abstract: Labor education and ideological and political education tend to converge in their educational goals, integrate in their educational contents, and cooperate in their teaching methods. There exists a natural intrinsic connection and a logical basis for collaborative education between the two. Integrating labor education into the ideological and political education of universities is the inevitable path for achieving the basic task of cultivating virtue in the new era. It encompasses deepening the theoretical understanding of ideological and political education, cultivating the operational and creative abilities of college students, and shaping the excellent sentiments of diligence and hard work, etc., encompassing rich value connotations. However, the current integration of the two also faces problems such as value obfuscation due to cognitive deviations, separation of knowledge and action caused by operational devaluation, and resource barriers due to insufficient cooperation. To solve these problems, it is necessary to start from the perspective of constructing "large labor education", strengthen top-level design, optimize institutional support, update carrier forms, expand educational space, deepen value guidance, cultivate the labor perspective of the new era, and make labor education and ideological and political education change from "physical superposition" to "chemical integration", achieving the complementary effect of "cultivating virtue through labor" and "cultivating through labor".

Key words: Labor education, Ideological and political education, Collaborative education, College students, Value connotations

I. The Proposal of the Issue

The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China incorporated "labor" education into the comprehensive education system of "morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor", elevating the status of labor education to an unprecedented strategic level. In 2020, the "Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council on Comprehensively Strengthening Labor Education in All Levels of Schools in the New Era" clearly stated that labor education is an important guarantee for

cultivating builders and successors of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and it directly relates to the labor spirit, labor value orientation, and labor skills of such builders and successors. The "Guidelines for the Construction of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Courses" issued by the Ministry of Education also pointed out that we should make full use of the educational function of each course to achieve the organic combination of ideological and political education and knowledge teaching.

Under the strong advocacy of policies, all universities are conducting practical research on the

integration of labor education and ideological and political education. However, in reality, they have fallen into a dilemma of "having labor but no thought" and "having knowledge but no action": Some labor education only focuses on skill training and physical labor, neglecting its due ideological guidance and value shaping functions; some ideological and political education [1]-[8] merely emphasizes classroom theoretical explanations, lacking life-oriented and practical carriers, and is difficult to achieve the effect of embedding in the mind and integrating knowledge and action. The existence of the "two-layered" phenomenon hinders the implementation of the fundamental task of cultivating virtue and fostering individuals capable of undertaking the great responsibility of national rejuvenation.

Therefore, discussing the value implications of integrating labor education into ideological and political education, analyzing the problems that arise during the integration process, and scientifically constructing a collaborative educational practice path are of great theoretical significance and practical importance for enhancing the effectiveness of ideological and political education in universities and cultivating new era individuals capable of undertaking the great responsibility of national rejuvenation.

II. The Logical Foundation for the Integration of Labor Education and Ideological and Political Education

Although labor education and ideological and political education are in different educational fields, they have a close logical connection in terms of educational goals, educational content, and teaching methods, thus forming a favorable foundation for collaborative education.

(1) The High Convergence of Educational Goals

Both ideological and political education and labor education aim to achieve the goal of cultivating moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor skills for the socialist builders and successors. Ideological and political education regards the shaping of values and the cultivation of moral qualities as its main tasks, and these tasks run through the entire process of university education; labor education enables the educated to participate in production and service labor, thereby cultivating their love for labor and forging their spirit of enduring hardship and striving forward. Both are based on Marx's theory of human all-round development and expect to enable students to develop comprehensively and form a complete personality trait. Labor education enables participants to "determine their own essential abilities in the process of labor", while ideological and political education gives this determination a value orientation and spiritual guidance, and the three fundamental questions of "what kind of person to shape", "by what means to shape", and "the goal of shaping" of the two are consistent.

(2) The Deep Coupling of Educational Content

The contents covered by labor education and ideological and political education all originate from Marxist classic theories and Chinese excellent traditional culture. Labor education in the new era is not merely about teaching labor skills, but a process of cultivating correct labor value concepts, developing good labor spirit qualities, and correcting labor attitudes. It inherently possesses the attributes of ideological and political education. The spirit of model workers and the spirit of craftsmanship belong to the category of labor education, and they are also the visualized expressions of socialist core values such as patriotism, collectivism, and dedication. Ideological and political education textbooks contain many parts related to labor education, such as Marxist views on labor, socialist labor ethics, and the materialist view of history that labor creates history. There is a phenomenon of interweaving and

infiltration between the two, and there is also the possibility of integrated education in the content level.

(3) The Advantageous Complementarity of Teaching Methods

Ideological and political education focuses on theoretical exposition and value guidance, "being good at reasoning", but it may easily deviate from reality; labor education focuses on practical experience and skill training, "being good at practicing", but it rarely has a high theoretical level. The two can complement each other well: theoretical teaching gives labor practice a value coordinate system and methodological guidance, enabling students to "know what it is and why it is so", and practical experience makes abstract theory concrete and vivid, deepening understanding and internalizing it as belief through "learning by doing", and incorporating labor practice into ideological and political courses or observing the labor process with ideological and political theories, which can roughly achieve "integration of knowledge and action", which will further filling the gap between ideals and reality, cognition and action.

III. The Value Implications of Integrating Labor Education into Ideological and Political Education for New Era College Students

Integrating labor education into ideological and political theory education represents an improvement in educational methods and a deepening of educational concepts. Such integration holds significant contemporary significance in many aspects.

(1) Deepening the theoretical understanding of ideological and political education: Transforming theory into concrete practice

There is a challenge in ideological and political

education, which is how to turn seemingly high-level ideological theories into things that students can feel, understand, and accept in their daily lives. Labor education serves as a key solution to this problem. When students go to the fields, factories, and communities and participate in production and service-oriented labor, the difficult-to-understand ideological theories such as Marxist labor views, the history of socialism, and socialist core values gain vivid real-world explanations. For instance, when students participate in volunteer activities, they experience "serving the people", understand "technology is the primary productive force" in the process of innovation and entrepreneurship, and appreciate "common prosperity" during rural revitalization visits. This kind of education based on real labor scenarios makes ideological and political theories come alive, enabling students to shift from "knowing what it is like" to "knowing why it is like this", thereby significantly enhancing the precision and appeal of ideological and political education.

(2) Cultivating the practical innovation ability of college students: Promoting thinking leaps through real problems

Labor education provides students with an opportunity to step into society and deal with practical issues. In complex labor scenarios, students need to analyze problems using knowledge from various disciplines, plan and solve them. This process is also a process of cultivating improvement skills. Integrating this operational improvement direction into ideological and political education can effectively improve the traditional situation of "emphasizing theory but neglecting operation, emphasizing memory but neglecting consideration" in ideological and political education. It helps students develop the habit of "finding problems through operation and solving difficulties through consideration". Especially when social investigations, public services, and innovation and entrepreneurship operations are added, when students serve society and contribute to the country, they deeply realize that

their own value aligns with the value of society, and their sense of honor and pride in participating in the creation of the Chinese-style modernization is enhanced.

(3) Cultivating the virtue of diligence and striving:
Practicing value concepts as one's own beliefs

At present, some college students exhibit phenomena such as "wanting to enjoy but not striving, wanting to take but not contribute". This is related to a lack of labor experience and a weak sense of labor. Labor education has the direct participation of the body and the direct experience of emotions, allowing students to feel the hardship of labor while sweating profusely and experiencing the joy of creation when there are abundant fruits. Using the simple ideas such as "labor creates value" and "happiness is achieved through striving" generated from their own personal experiences, these ideas are more real and profound than those presented in textbooks. Embedding these contents into ideological and political education helps guide students to consciously resist the erosion of incorrect thoughts such as "reaping without working" and "seeking comfort", cultivate the habit of diligence and frugality, and form an attitude of respecting labor and ordinary workers. It also helps build a spiritual defense line against negative emotions such as "laziness" and "internal competition".

IV. The Practical Challenges of Integrating Practice

Although there is consensus on the educational value of integrating labor education with ideological and political education, there are still many structural obstacles and operational difficulties in its actual implementation.

(1) Cognitive Bias: Value Concealment and Function Narrowing

Some university teachers and students have

insufficient understanding of the connection between labor education and ideological and political education, and hold the idea of "two separate skins". The first incorrect understanding is to equate labor education with "physical labor" or "training skills", without realizing the ideological guidance and value shaping role of labor education, resulting in "doing labor but lacking thought" - students do labor but do not receive ideological improvement. The second incorrect understanding is to narrowly interpret ideological and political education as "classroom theoretical teaching", failing to expand ideological and political education to labor practice, leading to "knowing but lacking action" - students are aware of the importance of labor, but lack the desire and habit of labor in daily life. The reasons for this are the insufficient understanding of the "integration of five educations", or the habit of disciplinary and compartmentalized educational methods.

(2) Practice Devaluation: Form Over Content and Disconnection between Knowledge and Action

In actual operation, some universities' labor education has the phenomenon of "emphasizing form but neglecting content". First, although the curriculumization and differentiated management of labor education have been widely implemented, its teaching content lacks systematicness and has not integrated the content of ideological and political education, merely being "check-in-style" or "photo-taking-style" labor experiences; second, some labor practical activities lack close connections with professional learning and ideological and political education, resulting in low participation enthusiasm and unguaranteed educational effects. Additionally, the ideological and political education practice section also shows a "going through the motions" situation, with students not conducting in-depth research and experiencing insufficiently genuine, thus making it difficult to have effective cognitive transformation. The two are separated at the practical operation level, making collaborative education difficult.

(3) Lack of Synergy: Resource Barriers and System Shortcomings

Labor education is generally managed by the student affairs department, the logistics department, and the educational affairs department respectively, while ideological and political education is managed by the School of Marxism, the Student Affairs Department, etc. This fragmented management model leads to many resource, faculty, course, and assessment barriers between labor education and ideological and political education, failing to form a teaching synergy. From the actual situation, in terms of faculty, ideological and political teachers lack practical operation experience and course development capabilities for labor education, while counselors and labor education teachers lack Marxist theoretical cultivation; in terms of courses, labor education courses and ideological and political courses operate independently and do not communicate with each other, and do not cooperate with each other; in terms of evaluation, the evaluation of students' labor literacy and ideological and political literacy is two independent systems, without comprehensive evaluation of students' "integration of knowledge and action". The lack of a synergy mechanism has become an important obstacle to the integrated development of the two.

V The Practical Approach of Integrated Development

To solve the above difficulties, we need to start from various aspects such as updating concepts, innovating systems, expanding carriers, and reforming evaluations, and shape an ecosystem that integrates labor education with ideological and political education to educate people.

(1) Conceptual Reshaping: Establishing a Collaborative Education Concept of "Labor+Ideology and Politics"

Firstly, to promote a profound understanding of the ideological and political education value of labor education among college teachers and students.

Labor education is not simply skill training, but an important way to form values. Its educational functions, such as ideological guidance, character development, social integration, and physical and mental adjustment, are in line with the goals of ideological and political education. Universities can promote the concept of "Five Education Integration" through specialized training, cross departmental seminars, and innovative teaching projects, breaking the rigid model of "labor education belongs to labor education, and moral education belongs to moral education".

The second is to establish a two-way interactive view of "cultivating virtue through labor" and "cultivating morality through labor". One is to make labor education a practical channel for ideological and political theory, and the other is to enrich the spiritual connotation of labor education through ideological and political theory, so that the two interact and promote each other in the process of educating people, forming the effect of "1+1>2".

(2) Curriculum Restructuring: Developing an Integrated Curriculum Matrix of "Labor+Ideological and Political Education"

Curriculum is the channel for educating people. Integrate all elements of labor education into ideological and political courses, and enhance the ideological content of labor education courses. The method is as follows:

Firstly, establish specialized modules on labor education in ideological and political theory courses. For example, strengthening the understanding of Marxist labor concepts in the course of "Basic Principles of Marxism"; Emphasize the teaching of labor ethics, labor legal awareness, and other aspects in the course of "Ideology, Morality, and Rule of Law"; In the course of "Introduction to Mao Zedong Thought and the Theory of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics", the spirit of model workers, the spirit of craftsmanship, and the spirit of industry serving the country are interspersed.

Secondly, develop integrated public elective courses such as "Labor Practice and Life Values". This type of course should effectively combine the purpose of

ideological and political education with labor operation tasks, and design a teaching closed loop of "value guidance - practical experience - reflection and improvement", so that students can experience the significance of theory in real labor and improve their practical operation level in theory.

Thirdly, delve into the labor ideological and political elements in professional courses. Professional course teachers should integrate the spirit of labor, professional ethics, and craftsmanship into their professional teaching, taking into account the characteristics of the subject, and achieve an organic combination of imparting knowledge, solving problems, and educating students.

(3) Field expansion: creating a fusion education platform that combines virtual and real elements

The establishment of a comprehensive ideological and political education course should combine the small classroom of ideological and political education with the large classroom of society. "Labor education" serves as a bridge for ideological and political education to connect with society. Universities should expand the places for nurturing students from three aspects:

The first is to establish a practical base for labor education within the school. By conducting regular and standardized labor practice activities through farms, training workshops, volunteer service posts, and other positions on campus, we can integrate ideological and political education into our daily lives and experience the "big truth" in the "things around us".

The second is to broaden the scope by combining extracurricular labor operations with ideological and political education. Long term cooperation is carried out in rural areas, factories and enterprises, red sites, public welfare organizations, etc., taking students to grassroots levels for social inspection, participating in production labor, and performing voluntary public welfare services, so that students can benefit from national education and labor tempering in the actual social environment.

Thirdly, use digital technology to assist in integrated education. Develop a VR labor training system,

create an online "labor+ideological and political" resource library, and use big data to draw a portrait of labor literacy for students... Let technology become a powerful lever for expanding the field, teaching students according to their aptitude, and precise evaluation.

(4) Mechanism Innovation: Building a Collaborative Guarantee and Comprehensive Evaluation System

To institutionalize and normalize integrated education, there must be a system to ensure it. One is to establish a cross departmental collaborative work mechanism. Break down the barriers between departments such as the Student Affairs Department, Academic Affairs Office, and Logistics Service Center, establish a "Labor+Ideological and Political" integrated education leadership group, and be responsible for curriculum design, practical activities, personnel deployment, funding arrangements, and other affairs. The second is to build a combination of full-time and part-time teaching staff. On the one hand, provide theoretical and practical training on labor education for ideological and political teachers and counselors; On the other hand, part-time mentors such as model workers, craftsmen, and inheritors of intangible cultural heritage are introduced to form a complementary teaching force. The third is to establish a process oriented and value-added evaluation system. Include students' work attitude, participation in activities, level of reflection and insights, and value experiences gained as one of the performance evaluation indicators for ideological and political courses, and improve the assessment system for teachers' educational effectiveness, achieving a closed cycle of "evaluation feedback improvement".

VI. Conclusion

The deep integration of labor education with ideological and political education has become the inevitable path for implementing the fundamental task of fostering virtue in the new era and forming a "five-education-parallel" educational system. The two share a common educational goal, mutually

reinforce each other in educational content, and learn from each other in teaching methods. This forms the logical basis for collaborative education. Moreover, the various functions of labor education, such as "cultivating virtue through labor", "enhancing intelligence through labor", "strengthening physical fitness through labor", and "cultivating beauty through labor", have opened up new paths for improving and upgrading ideological and political education. To address the cognitive errors, practical inefficiency, and insufficient collaboration that exist in the current integration process, it is necessary for universities to start from aspects such as refreshing concepts, reshaping courses, expanding venues, and improving systems. They should create a new model of "labor + ideology and politics" collaborative education, thereby transforming the ideological and political education role of labor education into concrete achievements in cultivating new era individuals.

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