

Research on the significance and effective path of strengthening middle school students' labor education in the new era

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Abstract: Labor, as a unique activity of human beings, is an essential characteristic that distinguishes humans from animals, and is also the basis for the survival and development of human society. Labor is the origin of human beings, but also the source of education. It is for this reason that labor education has naturally become the theme of education. On March 20, 2020, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening Labor Education in Universities, Middle Schools, and Primary Schools in the New Era" (hereinafter referred to as the "Opinions"). On July 11th of the same year, the Ministry of Education issued the "Guidelines for Labor Education in Universities, Middle Schools, and Primary Schools (for Trial Implementation)" (hereinafter referred to as the "Guidelines"), which systematically elaborated the significance, guiding ideology, and basic principles of strengthening labor education in the new era, clarified the overall requirements, system construction, support, organization, and implementation of labor education, and provided top-level design and action guidance for the comprehensive promotion of labor education in universities, middle schools, and primary schools. Labor education is an important component of quality education, and education without labor is one-sided. This article intends to explore the significance and effective path of strengthening labor education for middle school students based on the current situation of labor literacy among middle school students, with a view to enriching the research on labor education.

Keywords: New era; Middle school students; Labor education.

1. The current situation of middle school students' labor literacy

The Marxist view of labor believes that labor creates the world, labor creates history, and labor creates human beings themselves. Labor is the essential feature and mode of existence of human beings, and is an important way to achieve the comprehensive development of human beings. Labor has played an important role in promoting the progress of human civilization and social development. Marxist political economics emphasizes the theory of labor value and advocates socialist economic principles such as distribution according to work. In Marxist educational thought, cultivating people who develop comprehensively in physical and mental abilities, and "combining education with productive labor" have always been important indicators of socialist educational practice. In China's education policies and related education policies, labor education has always been highly valued. It can be said that labor education is the need of socialist construction, and the emphasis on labor education is one of the fundamental characteristics of socialist education. For a long time, various regions and schools have adhered to the combination of education and productive labor, and have achieved certain results in practical education.

However, with the establishment of a market economic system, the continuous advancement of industrialization and urbanization, the implementation of population and family planning policies, and other factors, society's understanding of labor has constantly changed. In addition, under the baton of the high school entrance examination, schools have placed a one-sided emphasis on intellectual education development, all of which have a subtle impact on middle school students' understanding of labor:

(1) The understanding of the concept of labor is relatively narrow. According to field research, the most intuitive manifestation of labor cognition among most middle school students is limited to narrow concepts. The traditional concepts represented by personal care and household work are deeply rooted in people's hearts, while little is known about social welfare, productive labor, and social practice.

(2) The attitude towards labor is generally relatively positive. Most middle school students are relatively active in participating in household work, school labor, social labor, and various social practices, while only a few holds an aversive attitude towards labor.

(3) Lack of interest in labor to support. Due to the lack of a comprehensive outlook on labor among students, they still remain stuck in the narrow sense of traditional "labor" and "labor is the most glorious" value judgments. They lack a fundamental understanding of labor and unilaterally believe that labor affects learning, is useless, and wastes time, making it difficult to generate real interest.

(4) The degree of emotional identification with labor is relatively low. However, through interviews and surveys, it is found that students' emotional identification with labor is not high and needs to be improved.

(5) There are relatively few labor opportunities to participate in off-campus practice. The Ministry of Education, the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, and the National Committee for Children's Work in 2015 pointed out in the "Opinions on Strengthening Labor Education for Primary and Secondary School Students": "To organize off-campus labor, it is necessary to incorporate off-campus labor into the school's educational work plan. Each primary, middle, and high school segment must arrange a certain amount of time for labor practices such as agricultural production,

industrial experience, commercial and service industry internships." However, in fact, based on safety factors, most schools are reluctant to allow students to leave campus. The labor that students participate in mainly focuses on ordinary physical labor such as personal care, campus labor, and household chores, while there are relatively few opportunities to participate in more meaningful types of high-quality, high-standard, and high-connotation labor such as social practice, discipline hands-on, and social welfare labor.

(6) The ability to innovate and create is relatively low. In the survey, it was found that students believed that their most possessed and excellent abilities were the ability to take care of themselves in daily life, the ability to complete household chores, and the ability to work on duty at school, followed by hands-on practical skills, while the ability to research projects and innovate and create were the most lacking.

2. The Significance of Strengthening Labor Education for Middle School Students in the New Era

The increasingly severe pressure of entering higher education and employment competition has placed a heavy "cross" on secondary school education. Parents maintain unattainable expectations, viewing their children as substitutes and extensions of their own life goals, and simply pursue academic performance. As long as their scores are high, they can cover a hundred ugly faces with a handsome face. Parents and teachers, fearing that their studies will be affected, give special attention to the green light all the way, and even if students are willing to work, they must be discouraged. Emphasizing only the development of students' intellectual education, neglecting quality education, and neglecting labor education has resulted in a weak sense of labor among most students. They despise physical labor, fear of being dirty and tired, have poor ability to take care of themselves, and do not cherish the labor achievements of others, seriously affecting the overall development of students' physical and mental health. To ignite children's desire for labor is not only to improve the quality of education and cultivate a new generation of all-round development, but also to further improve the quality of the nation. The Opinions emphasize that labor education is an important content of the socialist education system with Chinese characteristics, which directly determines the labor spirit, labor value orientation, and labor skill level of socialist builders and successors. As the builders of the future society, the labor literacy of current middle school students is closely related to social production, national development, and the future of the nation. Therefore, strengthening labor education for middle school students is of great significance.

2.1. Improve the working spirit of middle school students

A nation will prosper only when its young people thrive. Young students are the future of the country, the workers and new forces in building socialism. Socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era. To achieve the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and to build a prosperous, strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious, and beautiful socialist modern power, as middle school students in the new era, they shoulder a significant historical mission. To successfully accomplish this historical mission, the working spirit of today's middle school students will play

an extremely important role. Currently, China is moving from a manufacturing power to a manufacturing power. To successfully achieve this transformation, we urgently need to cultivate a large number of workers with craftsmanship spirit in their work. The situation where labor education has been diluted and weakened in recent years must be changed. Therefore, the Opinions particularly emphasize the need to strengthen the education and guidance of middle school students' labor spirit, model worker spirit, and craftsman spirit, so as to further enhance the labor spirit of middle school students in the new era. Through labor education, we can cultivate them to form correct labor values and good labor quality, while experiencing that labor creates a better life, recognizes that labor is equal in value, and loves labor. These will help us continue to strive to achieve the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

2.2. Point out the direction for the labor value orientation of middle school students

Labor is the foundation of our individual existence. Marxism believes that labor creates man himself and is an important means of promoting man's free and comprehensive development. For middle school students in the new era, labor education is a necessary way for their growth, with a comprehensive educational value of cultivating morality, increasing intelligence, strengthening the body, and cultivating beauty. As a middle school student in the new era, we should take the values of respecting labor, loving labor, advocating labor, and creative labor deeply into our hearts, guiding our future production and life.

2.3. Improve the labor skill level of middle school students

The key point of implementing labor education among middle school students is to systematically learn cultural knowledge while organizing students to participate in daily life labor, production labor, and service labor in a purposeful and planned manner, so as to further improve the labor skill level of middle school students in the new era. As a student, labor may not directly create wealth, but it can cultivate good qualities. Accepting labor education is beneficial for middle school students to pay a lot of labor in classroom teaching, self-study, experimental practice, and other educational links, and build themselves into useful talents in the future; It is beneficial for middle school students to cultivate strong psychological qualities through experiencing hardships and sweating, and to hone their will through hard work and tenacious struggle, thereby obtaining valuable spiritual wealth that benefits them for a lifetime; It is beneficial for middle school students to form a positive outlook on employment and entrepreneurship, find a balance between national and social needs and the realization of personal values, professional learning, and job matching, form an independent and diverse positive outlook on employment, and enhance their awareness and ability of entrepreneurship and innovation.

3. Effective Ways to Strengthen Labor Education for Middle School Students in the New Era

Labor education can be conducted in both simulated labor situations and real labor environments. It can be implemented through school curriculum, but also requires experiential

school activities to cultivate. Labor education should cultivate students' feelings of love for labor and life through the subtle influence of family, school, and society, as well as through words and deeds, so that students can work happily and grow happily. At the same time, during school, it is necessary to cultivate students' labor emotions, labor skills, and labor knowledge with goals, plans, expectations, and directions through subject courses, comprehensive practical activity courses, and extracurricular practical activities, to enhance the curriculum and logic of labor education, and to enhance the purpose and direction of labor education.

(1) Understand the importance of labor education by offering labor education courses. The implementation of labor education needs to rely on courses, and there must be a certain amount of time to ensure it. In terms of curriculum, the Opinions highlight "optimizing school curriculum as a whole", building a labor education curriculum system, setting up compulsory courses and labor weeks in universities, middle schools, and primary schools, and emphasizing the organic integration of other courses into labor education content and requirements. Through the teaching of labor education theories, middle school students can understand and form Marxist labor concepts, understand the important role of labor in creating the material world and human history, and thereby respect labor and workers; Understand that labor is the source of all social wealth, and that "distribution according to work" is a just social distribution principle that rejects the idea of getting something for nothing.

(2) Integrate curriculum resources and offer comprehensive practical courses. Schools can carry out comprehensive practices with high quality, high standards, and high content, and comprehensive social practices integrate curriculum resources in the form of themes. In comprehensive social practice, students have absolute control and leadership over the entire activity, and can focus on themselves and teams to promote the implementation of the activity, effectively cultivating and developing students' problem-solving ability, exploration spirit, and comprehensive practical ability.

(3) Establish a labor education atmosphere through thematic class meetings. The class teacher shall organize a theme class meeting to emphasize the importance and basic content of labor education. Students are required to attach importance to their thoughts, implement their actions, supervise and promote each other, and form a positive labor education atmosphere.

(4) Through holding parent meetings, families and schools jointly conduct labor education for students in a timely manner. In the family, parents give secondary school students necessary and within their capabilities labor tasks. Start your daily life, such as tidying up your room and learning equipment, cleaning the yard, sewing and cleaning your clothes, cooking, and so on. Self-serving work in the family can make students feel like they are a member of the family. I have a responsibility to care about everything at home. Cultivate the ability to exercise self-care in daily life. Families should pay more attention to student labor education, cultivate the correct idea of consciously working and working

to create their own good environment, lead students to participate in labor together, enable students to directly participate in the labor process, enhance their labor experience, experience labor hardship, share labor joy, master labor skills, develop labor habits, and improve their hands-on ability and ability to identify and solve problems.

(5) Strengthen student labor education through the allocation of labor education areas. The school will allocate the entire campus to each class in blocks, serving as a designated student labor education area, and doing some campus labor within its capabilities. Including green space maintenance, cleaning, hoeing, weeding, fertilization, pruning, etc. in the education area. Invite professional teachers to guide students in labor, improve their labor literacy education, let students experience the labor process, and cultivate their feelings for the grass and trees of their alma mater.

(6) Strengthen students' labor awareness by setting up a labor week. By setting up a labor week, students' labor awareness is enhanced. The specific form is to take classes as a unit, take turns on duty, have a clear division of labor, and perform their respective duties. For example, the arrangement of books, the cleaning of sanitary corners, the duty of civilized posts, the maintenance of campus discipline, and so on.

(7) Actively engage in volunteer service. Middle school students should actively participate in various voluntary activities organized by government departments at all levels, the Communist Youth League, the Women's Federation, the Disabled Persons' Federation, the Red Cross, welfare homes, and non-governmental organizations, such as poverty alleviation, helping the weak, helping the young and the elderly, charitable donations, environmental protection, civilized persuasion, community services, emergency rescue, and large-scale activities, to cultivate team spirit, assistance spirit, dedication, and cultivate a good personality and character, Strengthen social responsibility in public welfare labor and voluntary services, and have a dedication to take the initiative in the face of crises such as major epidemics and disasters.

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