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# Exploring and Innovating the Path of Strengthening Labor Education in Applied Undergraduate Universities in the New Era of Pass College of Chongqing Technology and Business University

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**Abstract:** Labor is not only a fine traditional virtue of the Chinese nation, but also the practical foundation of Marxist worldview. Labor education is the core content of Marxist educational thought, one of the essential characteristics of socialist education, and the internal requirement of comprehensively implementing the educational policy of the CPC. This study adheres to the guidance of Marxism, takes the new era as the research background, and takes the group of applied undergraduate students in the new era represented by Pass College of Chongqing Technology and Business University as the main research object. It analyzes the reasons for the problems from aspects such as school education, social impact, family education, and self-awareness. Based on comprehensive research data, it can be seen that college students in application-oriented undergraduate universities represented by Pass College of Chongqing Technology and Business University, have a sense of participation in labor practice, and actively learn labor knowledge through a combination of traditional and emerging channels. They are able to learn and practice labor values in labor education practice, and actively accept and participate in various types of labor education organized by university organizations. The research results indicate that in the new era, applied undergraduate universities should strengthen labor education by keeping up with the development of the times, strengthening labor model demonstration, creating an open ecosystem of labor education, constructing a multi-module labor education curriculum structure and form, and promoting the integration of labor education and campus culture construction. Through this study, innovative ways of implementing labor education in applied undergraduate universities in the new era can be explored, and innovative paths for strengthening labor education in applied undergraduate universities in the new era can be explored.

**Keywords:** Labor; Labor Education; The New Era; Applied Undergraduate Universities

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## 1. Introduction

The connotation of labor education has a distinct contemporaneity and is enriched, developed, and improved with the development of the times. The Marxist views on labor and historical materialism clarify that human labor promotes the progress of social civilization. In the context of the new era, China is in a new stage of “innovation-driven” development. It

is necessary to combine the Marxist labor concept with the new stage of socialist development in China to further explore the connotation and value of labor education in the new era.

In March 2020, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued the Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening Labor Education in Universities, Middle Schools and Primary Schools in the New Era<sup>[1]</sup>, emphasizing that labor education is an important part of the Socialism with Chinese characteristics education system, and that labor education should be included in the whole process of talent training. At the same time, labor education directly determines the labor spirit, labor value orientation, and labor skill level of socialist builders and successors.

The cultivation goal of comprehensive development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor poses new tasks for talent cultivation in universities in the new era. This study comprehensively examines the practical needs and significance of labor education in the new era, comprehensively explores the labor education mode and effective implementation path of applied undergraduate universities in the new era, and thus cultivates young college students with comprehensive development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor.

This study will determine the relationship between the innovative path of strengthening labor education in applied undergraduate universities in the new era and factors such as “value guidance, subject participation, collaborative education, structural form, and campus cultural construction”. At the same time, the analysis of research results provides inspiration for strengthening labor education in applied undergraduate colleges in the new era. Finally, explore innovative labor education models for applied undergraduate universities in the new era.

## 2. Literature Reviews

In recent years, although the research on labor education in applied undergraduate universities has entered the perspective of the academic community in Chinese universities, and the national top-level design has made arrangements for the implementation of labor education measures, practical measures for labor education in universities still need to be improved, and the exploration path is still long. From data analysis, labor education in China can be divided into the following types of research:

### 2.1. Research on the Connotation and Essence of Labor Education in Applied Undergraduate Universities

Huang Ji, a famous educator and professor of education at Beijing Normal University, pointed out that the definition of labor education from different perspectives will have different connotations. Generally, labor education can be defined by its basic content, quality and task<sup>[2]</sup>. Scholars have formed a consensus in the educational community on labor education from a diverse perspective, that is, labor education promotes students to develop good moral behavior and acquire labor technology skills that meet career needs. However, the focus of scholars’ research on the connotation of labor education is showing a state of blooming flowers. Scholar Feng Jianxiong highlights the inseparable relationship between labor education and practice through the current situation of youth labor education, integrating labor resources for students to practice<sup>[3]</sup>. Scholar Cheng Xianying referred to “labor” as equivalent to “productive labor”. In the article “Ten Years of Labor Education in New China”, labor mainly refers to physical labor mainly focused on industrial and agricultural production, with agricultural labor being the main focus<sup>[4]</sup>. In the special context of the times, the connotation of labor has changed to meet the needs of social development and become a powerful carrier for promoting social progress. Scholar Ji Xiaoping believes that labor education not only includes emotions, attitudes, and values. Feng Zhenfei, an expert in the basic education discipline group, links labor education with the innovative talent cultivation path that people struggle to explore. Labor education also includes cultivating students’ ability to use both hands and brains and forming interests and hobbies, allowing them to actively use their scientific knowledge to solve practical problems<sup>[5]</sup>.

## 2.2. Research on the Content of Labor Education in Applied Undergraduate Universities

In ancient China, the focus of labor education was on self-service. The content of self-service reflected in labor, such as “starting at dawn, sweeping the courtyard”<sup>[2]</sup> and “why not sweep a house to sweep the world”. The content of labor in ancient China ranged from personal life, daily life, to routine household chores, and then to school group life. Scholar Wen Xinhua divided labor into four categories and eight aspects: physical and mental labor; Simple and complex labor; Material and spiritual production labor; Productive and service-oriented labor<sup>[6]</sup>. Scholar Yang Xianjiang believes that education belongs to a field of labor, where schools are just places for centralized training of labor. The role of teachers is to ensure the quality and quantity of labor production in society. The cultivation of knowledge and skills for students is due to the needs of social production organizations, in order to meet the needs of society<sup>[7]</sup>. The famous educator Tao Xingzhi also pointed out that the process of education and life follows the same trajectory, “education is life, society is school, and teaching and doing are integrated”<sup>[8]</sup>. Guo Li, a scholar, emphasized that the scope of labor education carried out by the school has expanded from simple physical labor to mental labor. In a highly information-based society, labor education is the combination of information science technology, physical labor and mental labor<sup>[9]</sup>. In the context of cultivating new generations, the content of labor education in the new era includes production labor education, daily labor education, and service-oriented labor education under the guidance of Marxist labor concept<sup>[1]</sup>.

There are varying degrees of research on labor education in universities in Eastern and Western countries, and labor education presents different ways of discourse expression and forms of existence under different social systems. The research on labor education in other countries has achieved the following results:

## 2.3. Research on the Essential Connotation of Labor

The meaning of “labor education” involved today is a true portrayal of the Marxist labor concept. In the West, it mostly refers to “On-the-job training”. In the 1946-1948 experimental report, many universities carried out planned worker education activities in their courses. In the summer of 1948, the On-the-job training or labor education service (Caroline F. Ware, America) in all the universities and colleges established by the Institute in 1946 and other projects established since then were reestablished in the form of projects, such as the Itchka Roosevelt College, the University of Illinois and the University of California, which all went from planning to implementation<sup>[10]</sup>. Edwin E. Witte pointed out that On-the-job training is worker education, and he always believed that the development of labor education in all aspects is one of the most important responsibilities of universities. The labor education provided by universities to students mainly includes knowledge and technical education on labor contracts, terms, and other related knowledge, allowing students to understand in advance the possible labor problems they may face in their career, and to quickly and rationally find ways to deal with these problems<sup>[11]</sup>. C. Lessler and A. Luger believed that humans achieve self-liberation through labor, which is a tool for participating in world activities. Nietzsche believed that labor should be regarded as a means of punishment to restrain people, thereby regulating their behavior. Erich Fromm believes that labor can showcase a person’s abilities<sup>[12]</sup>.

## 2.4. Research on Labor Education in Colleges and Universities as a Means and Approach to Educating and Cultivating People

Robert Owen, a British Utopian socialism, proposed that labor education is an important means of education to shape human character<sup>[13]</sup>. Comenius mentioned in “The Great Teaching Theory” that education should conform to nature and achieve educational ideals through labor. Pestalozzi pays attention to students’ manual labor and regards manual labor as a fundamental course for cultivating students. The philosopher Rousseau, who advocated naturalistic education, proposed to cultivate “free men” through education in labor skills<sup>[14]</sup>. Labor education can equip people with various ideological qualities and enable them to rely on their own resources. Dewey advocated in his book “Democracy and Education” that education is life, and that education is the transformation and reorganization of experience. He advocated that children “learn by doing” and only by delving into social practice and labor production can they obtain true knowledge<sup>[15]</sup>.

### 3. Research Results

A total of 389 questionnaires were distributed in this survey, with 378 questionnaires collected and 377 valid questionnaires. The effective rate of the questionnaire was 96.92%. After data processing, representative and authentic research content has been obtained, and a certain understanding of the basic information and labor education status of students in Pass College of Chongqing Technology and Business University has been gained. Objectively reflecting the students' labor views and the current status of labor education in Pass College of Chongqing Technology and Business University, as well as their opinions on carrying out labor education in Pass College of Chongqing Technology and Business University, provides basic data for the research on innovative paths to strengthen labor education in applied undergraduate universities in the new era.

#### 3.1. Regarding University

Cross analysis of the survey results of “Does your school (secondary college) attach importance to labor education for students?” and “Is there a credit setting related to labor courses in the talent cultivation plan?” The researcher can see that the frequency of choosing labor education in the school is 209 people, and the frequency of choosing labor course related credit setting in the talent cultivation plan is 192. The above two options are both ‘yes’, with a total of 159 students, accounting for 42.29% of the total. Some schools have a sense of strengthening labor education for college students.

The research results indicate that 53.92% of college students reported that the school has already offered labor courses in the talent cultivation plan and set corresponding course credits. More than half of the college students were unsure whether to offer courses or directly replied that the school did not offer labor-related courses in the talent cultivation plan.

#### 3.2. Regarding the Family Aspect

When asked about “parents’ attitudes towards labor” and “parents’ attitudes towards labor outcomes”, over 96% of parents have a positive attitude towards labor, respect labor and the working people, and participate in creative labor to be self-sufficient. Cherishing the fruits of labor is an important manifestation of respecting labor and the working people. Nearly 90% of parents understand how to cherish the fruits of labor. More than 80% of parents often educate their children to love labor and have a positive attitude towards their children’s participation in labor.

Research data shows that in their view, labor practice and scientific and cultural knowledge are equally important for the growth and success of college students. Encouraging college students to complete basic education while participating in labor indicates that most parents recognize the importance of labor and have the awareness of allowing their children to continuously improve their comprehensive quality through labor practice on the basis of completing self-service.

#### 3.3. Regarding College Students

The main ways for college students to understand the “labor spirit” are through social practice and online new media platforms, which are different from mandatory learning platforms such as “campus classrooms” and “lecture activities”. At the same time, students from Pass College of Chongqing Technology and Business University have learned and mastered the “labor spirit” through platforms such as “online new media” and “traditional media such as newspapers and radio”, demonstrating that applied undergraduate college students represented by Pass College of Chongqing Technology and Business University can actively absorb and master labor knowledge through various channels, and have an urgent expectation of self-improvement.

Correspondingly, the question “What are the main ways you cultivate the ‘spirit of labor’?” shows that nearly 50% of college students cultivate their own ‘spirit of labor’ through practical activities, and ‘practical activities’, especially ‘social practical activities’, have become the main way for college students to understand and learn about the spirit of labor. Furthermore, it reflects that application-oriented undergraduate college students, represented by Pass College of Chongqing Technology and Business University, tend to enhance themselves in practice, test and master truth through subjective and active labor practice. At the same time, it indirectly reflects that campus theoretical courses and cultural activities cannot

meet the needs of college students for labor practice.

## 4. Discussion & Conclusion

As an applied undergraduate university in the new era, it is crucial to strengthen the overall planning of innovation and implementation paths in labor education. In particular, the top-level design of the guarantee system for the implementation process of labor education in the new era should be done well. The innovative path of strengthening labor education in applied undergraduate universities in the new era needs to reflect the five elements of labor education. The innovative path of strengthening labor education in applied undergraduate universities in the new era can be explored from five aspects: value guidance, subject participation, collaborative education, structural form, and campus cultural construction.

Based on data analysis and results, from a quantitative research analysis perspective, researchers hope to construct a labor education model for applied undergraduate universities in the new era.

In the context of the new era, the development of modern technology and industrial transformation require application-oriented undergraduate universities to reconstruct labor education models to adapt to new requirements and characteristics. Aiming at the application of new technologies, new social services, and new forms of labor, we will improve the labor education methods of applied undergraduate universities through the integration of industry and education, and systematically design the purpose, content, methods, and evaluation of labor education.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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