

A Discussion on Deng Xiaoping Thought of Combining Education and Labor and Its Enlightenment to College Students' Ideological and Political Education

LAN Ying^{[a],*}

^[a]Lecturer, Rongchang Campus, Southwest University, Chongqing, China.

*Corresponding author.

Supported by Central University Fundamental Scientific Research Funded Project (Ministry of Education Instructor Training and Research Base Project (Southwest University) (SWU1409208); Central University Fundamental Scientific Research Funded Project (SWU1109065); Southwest University Ideological and Political Education Research Project (SWU1409534).

Received 9 February 2015; accepted 9 May 2015

Published online 26 June 2015

Abstract

The thought of combining education with labor is an important part of the basic principles and educational philosophies of Marxist education. Based on the inheritance of combination of education with labor of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping gives it new meaning and characteristics of the time, and establish the second milestone of the thought of combining education and labor in China. The profound Deng Xiaoping thought of combining education and labor has an important implication for strengthening and improving college students' ideological and political education, and has a great significance for guiding China's educational reform and development, and cultivating qualified socialist builders and reliable successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physique and aesthetics.

Key words: Deng Xiaoping; Thought of combining education and labor; Ideological and political education

Lan, Y. (2015). A Discussion on Deng Xiaoping Thought of Combining Education and Labor and Its Enlightenment to College Students' Ideological and Political Education. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 8(6), 1-6. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/7094> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/7094>

INTRODUCTION

The thought of combining education with productive labor (abbreviated as “jiao lao jie he”) is a part of Marxist Educational Thought. Deng Xiaoping deepens the practical and theoretical explorations of combination of education and labor in China, and forms a unique Deng Xiaoping thought of combining education and labor. Grasping the essence of Deng Xiaoping thought of combination education with labor, and using it to guide college students' ideological and political education has a great practical significance for the realization of the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

1. HISTORICAL ORIGIN OF DENG XIAOPING THOUGHT OF COMBINING EDUCATION WITH LABOR

Deng Xiaoping thought of combining education with Labor is the new development of Marxist-Leninist thought of combining education with labor in China, is the inheritance and development of Mao Zedong thought of combining education and labor.

1.1 Marxist Thought of Combining Education and Labor

For the mid-19th century, when capitalist society presented a situation that education was separated from labor, based on critical inheritance of the “integrating education with labor” thoughts of John Bayless, Rousseau, Salle Fourier and Robert Owen, etc. the great revolutionary tutor Marx proposes the scientific theory of “combining education with labor”. Engels points out, “education should be integrated with material production.” (*Selected Works of Marx and Engels [Volume I]*, 1995, p.294) Marx and Engels point out: “Abolished the current form of children factory labor, combine education with material production.” (*Selected Works of Marx and Engels [Volume*

III], 2009, p.53) Here, the education of Marx refers to the specific organized school education, including intellectual, physical, technical education and other aspects; productive labor refers to the modern machine large-scale industry physical labor in the capitalist society, rather than intellectual and manual labor. Therefore, Marx's combination of education with labor, in fact, refers to the integral combination of specific, organized school education and material production labor.

Marx once pointed out, "the early combination of productive labor and intellectual education is one of the most powerful means to transform modern society." (*Selected Works of Marx and Engels [Volume III]*, 1995, p.318) He also stresses: "the combination of productive labor with intellectual and physical education is not only a method to improve social production, but also the only way to create people with a comprehensive development." (*Ibid.*, p.673) Engels also points out, "In a socialist society, labor and education will combine to ensure a wide range of practice-based technical training and science education." (*Selected Works of Marx and Engels [Volume XX]*, 1971, p.347) "This society will create a generation of producers with comprehensive development, whom know the scientific basis of whole production, and everyone of whom actually experiences the entire range of productive sectors from start to finish, so that this society can create new productivity." (*Selected Works of Marx and Engels [Volume III]*, 1996, p.647)

1.2 Leninist Thought of Combining Education With Labor

Lenin not only inherits the Marxist thought of combining education with labor, he also applies this thought into the educational practices of socialist countries. Lenin puts forward in the party programme of the eighth national congress of the Russian Communist Party that, free, compulsory, general and comprehensive technical education shall be implemented to all boys and girls under 17 years old to ensure that teaching can be closely linked with social productive labor. Lenin requires young people to participate in voluntary labors on Saturday, to help manage gardens and carry out other public welfare voluntary labors. Thus, the "labor" of Lenin means all labors including physical labor, productive labor and welfare obligatory labor.

Lenin attaches great importance to the combination of education and labor. He says,

Without a younger generation's combination of education and productive labor, the ideal of future society is inconceivable; no matter the education separated from productive labor, or the productive labor without teaching and education, they cannot achieve the height required by modern technological level and scientific knowledge. (*Complete Works of Lenin [Volume I]*, 1984, p.461)

From the height of promoting the development of social production, Lenin emphasizes the purpose

of combining education with labor is to achieve the requirement of modern scientific and technological level and current situation.

1.3 Mao Zedong Thought of Combining Education and Labor

Based on the reality of China, Mao Zedong creatively adheres to and develops Marxist-Leninist thought of combining education and labor, and erects the first milestone of combination of education and labor in china.

Mao Zedong thought of combining education and labor is throughout Mao Zedong education thought. In the period of the new democratic revolution, Mao Zedong held that the general policy of the Soviet culture and education was "to educate the majority of people with the spirit of communism, to make culture and education serve for the revolutionary war and class struggle, and to combine education with productive labor." (*Selected Important Documents Since the Founding of P. R. China [Volume XI]*, 1995, p.418). After the founding of New China, Mao Zedong pointed out, "Education must serve the proletarian politics, and must be combined with productive labor. Working people should be educated, intellectuals should participate in work. The separation situation of education from labor must be completely broken." (*Selected Important Documents Since the Founding of P. R. China [Volume XIX]*, 1998, p.68). "Our educational policy must make people be educated in the aspects of morality, intelligence and physique, and make them become workers with a socialist consciousness and culture." (*Works of Mao Zedong [Volume VII]*, 1999, p.226) Mao Zedong emphasizes that the intellectuals should combine with workers and peasants, theories should combine with practices. This is not only the enrichment and development to Marxist-Leninist thought of combining education and labor, but also further defines the new China's education policy, pointing out a direction for the promotion of education and the socialist modernization.

2. ACCURATELY GRASP THE SCIENTIFIC CONNOTATION OF DENG XIAOPING THOUGHT OF COMBINING EDUCATION WITH LABOR

Based on the inheritance of Mao Zedong thought of combining education with labor, Deng Xiaoping further promotes the development of combination of education with labor in China, and establishes the second milestone of combining education with labor in China.

2.1 Basic Meaning of Deng Xiaoping Thought of Combining Education With Labor

Fundamentally, Deng Xiaoping's combination of education and labor is an organic combination of modern

education and modern production. This combination contains two levels of meaning. On the macro level, that is, the entire educational undertaking including different educations at all levels must adapt to the developmental trend of the national economy and the development of modern science and technology. This requires that education must start from the actual needs of the socialist modernization, optimize educational structure, deepen education reform, adjust the educational scale, innovate educational content, method and means. On the micro level, that is, during the educational and teaching process, we should pay attention to the unity of theory and practice, unity of knowledge and action, take cultivating the “four halves” talents required by the socialist modernization as the fundamental educational task and goal.

2.2 Main Content of Deng Xiaoping Thought of Combining Education With Labor

Deng Xiaoping thought of combining education with labor is rich in content. To sum up, it mainly includes the following aspects.

Firstly, the various types of education at all levels must adapt to the developmental requirement and trend of the national economy. In his speech at the 1978 National Education Conference, Deng Xiaoping stressed that “in order to train qualified talents needed for the socialist construction, we must seriously study the new conditions on how to better implement the guideline of combining education with productive labor.” (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume II]*, 1994, p.107) He further points out that

all types of schools at all levels must have appropriate arrangements on what kind of labors the students participate in, how they work in factories and countryside, how much time they take, and how to combine labor with teaching. More importantly, the education undertaking must adapt to the requirement of the national economic development. Otherwise, what a student has learned will be incompatible with the future occupation which he is engaged in. One does not do what one has learned, or what one has learned has nothing to do with the job he takes, this will fundamentally undermine the guideline of combining education with productive labor. Then how can we mobilize students' enthusiasm for learning and labor? How can we meet the great requirement of the new historical period presented to education? (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume II]*, 1994, pp.107-108).

Therefore, he stresses that firstly, “our national economy is a planned proportional development. There should also be a suitable and careful plan to train specialists and labor reserve army.” (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume II]*, 1994, p.108) Secondly, “the National Planning Commission, Ministry of Education and various departments should work together to make the educational plan become an important part of the national economic plan.” (Ibid.) Thirdly, “we should integrate the educational plan into the national labor plan, and practically consider the needs of employment development.” (Ibid.) From a

macro point of view, Deng Xiaoping studies the adaptation problem of the entire education undertaking to the national economy, not only making new interpretations to the combination of education with labor, but also giving new contents to the thought of combining education with labor.

Secondly, combination of education with labor is the fundamental way to cultivate newcomers with a unity of knowledge and action and comprehensive development. Deng Xiaoping once said,

Marx, Engels, Lenin and Comrade Mao Zedong all attach great importance to combining education with productive labor, and hold that this is one of the most powerful means to transform society in the capitalist society; after the proletariat's seizure of power, this is the fundamental way to develop newcomers with combinations of theory and practice, learning and application and a comprehensive development. (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume II]*, 1994, p.107)

We hope that all the young students in China study hard and actively prepare to take productive labor to construct the motherland, whose first requirement is physical labor. The young people engaged in brain work should also participate in a period of physical labor, which is necessary for their full development of morality, intelligence and physique. (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume II]*, 1994, p.277).

Thus, Deng Xiaoping adheres to and develops Marx and Engels' thought that “a combination of education and productive labor is the only way to create a man with a comprehensive development”.

Thirdly, the content and method of combining education and labor must continue to innovate in the development of modern science and technology. “The rapid development of modern economy and technology requires a rapid increase of educational quality and educational efficiency, and requires us to constantly explore new development on the content and method of combining education with productive labor.” (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume II]*, 1994, p.107) “We should not only see the recent needs, but also anticipate the long-term needs; not only meet the development of production and construction, but also fully assess the developmental trend of modern science and technology.” (Ibid., p.108) Only in this way we can achieve the desired height of modern science and technology.

3. ENLIGHTENMENT OF DENG XIAOPING THOUGHT OF COMBINING EDUCATION WITH LABOR TO COLLEGE STUDENTS' IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

Deng Xiaoping thought of combining education with labor is profound and has important enlightenment on strengthening and improving college students' ideological and political education in China.

3.1 College Students' Ideological and Political Education Should Carry Out Social Practices

Deng Xiaoping points out that, "Whether what we talk about can resolve problems or whether problems can be resolved properly relies in whether our theory combines with practice." (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume II]*, 1994, p.144) The combination of theory and practice requires that in college students' ideological and political education, we should not only use theories to arm students' minds, but also guide them to actively participate in social practices, and deepen their thinking and understanding in social practices. "Adhere to the combination of political theoretical education and social practice. Attach importance to classroom education, and also pay attention to guide students to understand the society and serve the society." (*Selected Important Documents Since the Sixteen National Congress of CPC [Volume II]*, 2006, p.179) "It turns out that if students only study behind closed doors, don't participate in labor, don't touch social practices, don't go understand how workers and peasants work hard to create social wealth, don't cultivate a feeling with the working people, it is not conducive to their healthy growth and comprehensive development (*Selected Works of Jiang Zemin [Volume I]*, 2006, pp.372-373).

Social practice is an important way to enhance the social responsibility of college students. Social responsibility of college students is their understanding and belief on their responsibility to themselves, to others, to the society and to the country, is the power source for them to learn knowledge and serve the country and the people.

Social practice is an important part of college students' ideological and political education, has an irreplaceable role for students to understand the society, understand the country, increase their abilities, contribute to the society, exercise willpower, cultivate character and enhance social responsibility. (*Selected Important Documents Since the Sixteen National Congress of CPC [Volume II]*, 2006, p.183)

Social practice makes college students clarify the connotation of social responsibility during in-depth contact with the social life, which not only strengthens their perceptions on social responsibility, but also create a strong atmosphere of respecting for social responsibility, so that they will realize the value and meaning of life during the service of society, internalize it as an inner spiritual pursuit, thus have a lasting power for social responsibility to truly "be the first to show concern and the last to enjoy oneself."

Social practice is an important way to cultivate the innovative spirit of college students. Innovation is the core of education reform, and cultivating the innovative spirit and innovative capability is an important part of the quality education. Social practice is an important way to inspire college students' creative thinking and innovative spirit. In a more open environment and in the face of changing social practical conditions, college students' enthusiasm of

an active subject is fully mobilized. They tend to break the existing mindsets and stimulate creative thinking abilities to produce creative results. By participating in various forms of social practices, college students can learn to creatively learn, and strive to cultivate the innovative spirit to question and challenge the authorities.

Social practice is an important way to enhance the practical ability of college students. College students' practical ability is the comprehensive abilities manifested in solving practical problems in learning, living and working. Social practice provides opportunities for college students to formally contact with the society, lets them go out of schools and carry out practical activities in the society and among the grassroots. They can not only put the theoretical knowledge they have learned in the classroom into application, but also learn knowledge that they cannot learn in books, so that theoretical knowledge and social practice can be effectively combined. Social practice provides a platform for developing practical ability for college students so that they can get sufficient practices, trainings and improve the practical abilities.

3.2 College Students' Ideological and Political Education Should Promote the Comprehensive Development of Students

Deng Xiaoping says,

Our school is a place to train talents for the socialist construction. Does talent training have any quality standard? Yes. As Comrade Mao Zedong says, students should be educated in terms of morality, intelligence and physique, and become workers with the socialist consciousness and culture. (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume II]*, 1994, p.103)

The 16th central document states that college students' ideological and political education should be targeted on the overall development of students and carry out quality education.

College students' ideological and political education should improve the students' ideological and moral quality. Ideological and moral quality is the relatively stable ideological quality, moral quality and political quality formed and developed by school education and the impacts of social environment. Good ideological and moral quality makes college students form good moral characters, and form an impetus to study and work. The ideological and political education should focus on improving students' correct moral awareness, cultivating a high moral character and strong moral will, helping them establish a firm moral conviction, transforming the external ethics code gradually into an inherent moral quality and to be shown as a good moral habit.

College students' ideological and political education should improve the students' scientific and cultural quality. Scientific and cultural quality refers to the scientific and humanistic quality formed by the students in the long process of education. In our higher education system, the

professional education occupies an important position. The process of professional education is the process that students learn professional knowledge and skills, and also to improve their scientific and cultural qualities. College students' ideological and political education should combine with the professional education, combine with the characteristics of the students and disciplines, integrate into professional knowledge learning and professional skill training, pay attention to carry out the education of humanistic spirit, promote the students' scientific quality and humanistic quality, and achieve the integral combination of "education" and "humanity".

College students' ideological and political education should improve the students' physical and mental health. Physical quality is demonstrated by the physical ability, physical fitness and energy of college students. In college students' ideological and political education, we should promote the healthy development of their physique so as to allow them to be engaged in study, work and life. Psychological quality is a relatively stable psychological quality gradually formed based on innate quality and influenced by the environment and education. In college students' ideological and political education, we should consider the characteristics of college students' psychological development, conduct targeted mental health education and psychological counseling, and strive to cultivate their good psychological qualities.

3.3 College Students' Ideological and Political Education Should Combine With Reality

Deng Xiaoping points out: "Education must be combined with reality." (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume III]*, 1993, p.144). College students' ideological and political education combining with reality requires the ideological and political education to be close to the era, to life, and to college students.

College students' ideological and political education should be close to the times. Marx and Engels once pointed out, "People's awareness changes in the changes of people's living conditions, social relations and social existence." (*Selected Works of Marx and Engels [Volume I]*, 1995, p.29). Since the three decades of the reform and opening up, our society has undergone profound and huge changes. Under the great background of economic globalization, society informatization, institution marketization and culture diversification, the environment, content and object of college students' ideological and political education have experienced new situations and new changes, requiring the ideological and political education to keep pace with the times.

College students' ideological and political education should be close to life. In the ideological and political education, we need to express the theoretical content of ideological and political education with college students' language, take the way and carrier which is loved and accepted by them, based on their concerned actual issues,

resolve their ideological problem with the practical problems.

College students' ideological and political education should be close to college students. The ideological and political education should fully respect the ideas and personalities of college students, respect the healthy playing of their individuality, give full consideration to their different levels of awareness and acceptance, carry out highly targeted and personalized ideological and political education, and promote their healthy physical and mental development.

3.4 College Students' Ideological and Political Education Should Remain Innovated

Deng Xiaoping points out,

we must put the ideological and political work in a very important position, earnestly do a good job and can not relax. This work should be carried out by party committees at all levels, by every party member. It should be targeted, detailed, in-depth and willingly accepted by the people. (*Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping [Volume II]*, 1994, p.342).

Therefore, college students' ideological and political education must remain innovated with the development and practice of the times.

Innovating college students' ideological and political education is an important guarantee to ensure a smooth development of college students' ideological and political educational activities. Report of the Party's 18th National Congress clearly states that "we should carry out the study and education of the socialist core value system, lead social thoughts of the socialist core value system, and unite the social consensus." (Hu, 2012) Under the new historical conditions, the CPC Central Committee stresses the socialist core value system. The whole process of integrating it into the ideological and political education enriches and develops college students' ideological and political educational theory and practice." Socialist core value system enriches the content of college students' ideological and political education. We should integrate the core system into the entire process and all aspects of ideological and political education." (Huang, 2008) Educating college students in the socialist core values is the need of the times, and is a necessary requirement of leading social thoughts and uniting social consensus.

Innovating the carrier of college students' ideological and political education is the inevitable requirement of adapting to the changing times and the changes of college students' thoughts and demands. The carrier of ideological and political education is the link between educators and the educated, and is the important condition to ensure the effectiveness of ideological and political education. Report of the Party's 18th National Congress proposes to "strengthen and improve ideological and political work, deepen people's construction of spiritual civilization, and extensively carry out voluntary services." (*Counseling Reading of Report of the Eighteenth National Congress*

of CPC, 2012, p.249). Voluntary service has an important ideological and political educational function, is an important way of educating people in practices. Voluntary service adapts to the innovation needs of the times on college students' ideological and political education, and is the new carrier of college students' ideological and political education. It enables the integral combination of ideological and political education and practical education, education and self-education, promotes the unity of knowledge and behavior. Therefore, by relying on the important new carrier of voluntary service, colleges can enhance the effectiveness of ideological and political education to college students.

REFERENCES

Complete Works of Lenin (Volume II). (1984). Beijing: People's Publishing House.

Counseling Reading of Report of the Eighteenth National Congress of CPC. (2012). Beijing: People's Publishing House.

Hu, J. T. (2012). *Unswervingly Step Forward along the Socialist Road with Chinese characteristics, struggle to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects—Report of the Eighteenth National Congress of Communist Party of China* (p.31). Beijing: People's Publishing House.

Huang, R. S. (2008). Time requirement of college students' ideological and political education. *Theoretical Front in Higher Education*, (3), 43-46.

Selected Important Documents Since the Founding of P. R. China (Volume XI). (1995). Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House.

Selected Important Documents Since the Founding of P. R. China (Volume XIX). (1998). Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House.

Selected Important Documents Since the Sixteen National Congress of CPC (Volume II). (2006). Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House.

Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (Volume I). (1994). Beijing: People's Publishing House.

Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (Volume III). (1993). Beijing: People's Publishing House.

Selected Works of Jiang Zemin (Volume I). (2006). Beijing: People's Publishing House.

Selected Works of Marx and Engels (Volume I). (1959). Beijing: People's Publishing House.

Selected Works of Marx and Engels (Volume III). (1995). Beijing: People's Publishing House.

Selected Works of Marx and Engels (Volume XX). (1971). Beijing: People's Publishing House.

Works of Mao Zedong (Volume VII). (1999). Beijing: People's Publishing House.