



## ARTICLE

# To Give Full Scope to Labor Quality Evaluation of Youth of the New Era as the Baton

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### ABSTRACT

Labor quality evaluation, an important part for carrying out labor education, plays the role as “baton” for labor education. This paper will figure out the reasons for labor quality evaluation from its importance. The paper will also classify key evaluation indicators for labor qualities as cognition, emotion, ability and qualities of labor, dividing dynamic indicators to figure out “what to evaluate”. Meanwhile, the author will solve the problem of “how to evaluate” and “who will evaluate” by promoting evaluation subjects diversities and innovating evaluation methods. When labor quality evaluation, the “baton”, guides the direction and strategy, attention should be paid to integrated education to cultivate labor quality in an all-round way. The “baton” will also guide characteristic education with collaborative innovation of labor education, professional education and vocational education. Moreover, labor quality evaluation guides the optimization of resources to create integrated labor qualities and lead innovation education to nurture innovative talents.

## 1. Introduction

Productive labor is the ideological basis of Marxism. Labor, which creates human society, is the basic means for human to develop the society. In the new era, the goal of labor education is to improve students’ labor qualities comprehensively and realize people’s development. In September 2018, during National Education Conference, General Secretary Xi Jinping clearly pointed out that “we should advocate spirit of labor among students and guide students to advocate and respect labor as well as believing that labor is the most glorious, the most sublime, the greatest and the most beautiful

activity, so they can work hard, honestly and creatively when they grow up.” On March 26, 2020, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council unveiled *The Guideline on Comprehensively Strengthening Labor Education among Students in Universities, Secondary and Primary Schools in the New Era* (hereafter referred to as *The Guideline*), stressing that “we should improve labor quality evaluation system by integrating labor qualities into students’ comprehensive qualities evaluation system, formulating evaluation standards and establishing incentive mechanism”. General Secretary Xi Jinping delivered important speeches on

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labor education many times, considering labor education as the important content of personnel training. The core purpose of labor education is to improve students' labor qualities and nurture new people who are able to work, willing to work and good at working.<sup>[1]</sup> An objective and comprehensive evaluation for young students' labor qualities is the premise and an important part of developing labor education, which directly determines the direction for labor education and students. Specifically, in order to play the "baton" role of labor quality evaluation, special attention should be paid to the following points:

## **2. Comprehensively Understanding Labor Quality Evaluation in Order to Answer the Question "Why We Should Evaluate"**

### **2.1 The Connotation of Youth Labor Quality Evaluation**

The concept of "quality" literally refers to daily accomplishment. Namely, it is the quality developed from life and study. Labor quality, which is formed in life and study, refers to the quality related to labor. In the narrow sense, labor quality refers to labor ability, including the cognition of labor knowledge and the mastery of labor skills. In a broad sense, labor quality includes correct understanding of labor and good qualities associated with labor.<sup>[2]</sup> The labor quality in this paper refers to the broad sense of it, including the cognition, attitude, ability, and quality of labor.

### **2.2 Cognitive Function: Focusing on Comprehensive Labor Qualities Rather Than Limiting to Labor Skills**

At present, college students have some misunderstandings for labor quality. Most of them have a one-sided understanding for labor quality. The survey found that 78.2% of the students chose skills and technology as one of the labor qualities. 64.8% of the students chose labor knowledge and professional knowledge and 48.1% chose habits of labor. 43.5% of the students chose attitude and view toward labor. Only about 21.2% of the students classified the cultivation of labor emotion as a part of labor qualities. It can be seen that students have different understandings of labor quality, which are one-sided and limited. Most of the students equate labor quality with labor skills, but have less cognition of emotion for labor, attitude towards labor and other spiritual aspects. From the connotation of labor quality evaluation, it can be seen that labor quality is a comprehensive concept, including cognition, attitude, ability and quality. We

can help students to pay attention to all aspects of labor quality and comprehensively understand the connotation of labor quality by systematically sorting out labor quality evaluation indicators.

### **2.3 Guiding Role: Establishing Correct Labor Values**

Youth labor quality evaluation is vividly compares to "baton". It means that labor quality evaluation for youth can positively guide students to set up correct outlook on labor, develop work habits and improve labor capacity. To some extent, it can popularize and deepen labor education in colleges and universities by urging the reasonable allocation of labor courses and thematic education. It can also nurture new talents with labor quality by boosting the formation of outlook on labor. General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that the whole society "must firmly set up the concept that labor is the most glorious, the noblest, the greatest and the most beautiful activity." Labor education, as an important way to strengthen moral education and cultivate people in colleges and universities, is centered on building correct values of labor. However, the value of utilitarianism and materialization is relatively obvious in college students. This phenomenon, which is inconsistent with the value that "labor is the most glorious and the noblest activity", is mainly manifested in three aspects. First, labor values with a clear tendency toward individualism exist. In the survey, 45.3 % of the students think making money and developing career are the top values of labor. Only 18.8 % of the students think the value of labor is "for social development and national rejuvenation." Second, some students take labor as a means of obtaining "paid and beneficial" interests or evaluation. When there is voluntary service arrangement, the first consideration of students is not the meaning of voluntary service itself and its help to other people and the society, but whether it can add comprehensive evaluation score or help with getting awards. Third, unearned motivation exists. Graduates elude jobs that need grassroots work and pursue "stable, comfortable and easy" jobs. The key point of evaluating students' labor quality is to make colleges and universities face up to the deviation of young students' outlook on labor and strengthen the leading role of ideology.

### **2.4 Corrective Function: Correct the Phenomenon of Weakening Labor Education**

At present, there are problems of weakening, blurring and marginalizing the labor education, which are mainly reflected in the following three aspects. First, the

proportion of labor education in colleges and universities is low. Specialized labor education courses carried out in colleges and universities are not enough. Labor education which is integrated in political and professional courses are not enough, either. In integrated education, labor education is easy to be weakened. For example, in the integrated education of professional and labor education, the proportion of credits related to labor education is relatively low. The content of labor education is also reduced. Second, the misunderstandings which consider labor as a kind of punishment exist in labor education. In the school activities of the past, if the student made mistakes, the teacher often use physical labor such as cleaning the classroom and copying blackboard newspapers as punishment. It is easy to mislead student, and the student will consider labor as a disgraceful activity. This is opposite to the view that labor is the most glorious and the noblest activity. Comprehensive understanding of labor quality evaluation can correct the misunderstandings and errors of weakening, blurring and marginalizing labor education.

### 3. Classifying Key Evaluation Indicators for Labor Qualities to Figure Out “What to Evaluate”

On the basis of clarifying connotation, the classification for college students’ labor quality are continuously improved. TAN Chuanbao divides the labor quality into four aspects: correct labor values and spirit, certain labor knowledge and skills, creative labor potential and good working habits.<sup>[2]</sup> The *Chinese Students’ Core Quality Development* published by Beijing Normal University summarizes labor quality into four points: Positive labor attitude, certain labor skills, innovative work methods, and recognition of labor value.<sup>[3]</sup> *The Guideline* issued by the State Council points out that the goal of labor quality is to “build the concept that labor is glorious and beautiful, cultivate spirit of diligence, thrift, struggle, innovation and dedication, and develop basic working ability and good working habits”. This shows that the evaluation dimension of labor quality should contain the characteristics of the new era as well as the basic characteristics.

Labor quality is a relatively dynamic concept. Different majors, periods and social environments have different requirements on workers’ quality, which are reflected as the different standards in labor quality evaluation. There is a “one-size-fits-all” phenomenon in the current labor quality evaluation. Classifying and setting up labor quality evaluation indicators based on different industries and majors is the basic requirement of innovating labor

quality evaluation mechanism. The basic indicators of labor quality evaluation are relatively fixed, which can be constructed from four aspects: cognition and emotion of labor, abilities for labor and qualities of labor. The labor quality evaluation indicators with characteristics of the times is relatively dynamic. The formation of outlook on labor, the cultivation of specialized labor skills and the ability to innovate in labor should be highlighted.

Cognition of labor is the premise to cultivate emotion, ability, and quality of labor. Correct cognition can guide students to build up positive labor values, respect labor, love labor, as well as correctly understand the personal value and social value of labor education. It can also help students to realize the correlation between labor education and their own growth, forming the concept that labor creates better lives and that labor is the source of all happiness and wealth. Cognition affects emotional development. Emotion of labor can be divided into two secondary dimensions: attitudes toward labor and interests for labor. It means that students can overcome negative emotions and develop positive emotions in the working process as well as actively participate in work and enjoy working. Abilities for labor, which is inseparable from continuous learning and hands-on practice, can be divided into two secondary dimensions as knowledge and skills for labor. Knowledge for labor includes the comprehensive and the specialized labor knowledge as well as the ability to apply them in practice. Skills for labor include the ability to cooperate, to practice, to solve problems, to innovate and to continually improve skills. Qualities of labor, referring to the spirit and habit of labor, is the aggregation of cognition, emotion of labor and abilities for labor. Laborers embody the elegant demeanour in living, working and learning process. They also form excellent labor habits, including five kinds of labor spirits, which namely are professional dedication, honesty, spirit of craftsman, perseverance and devotion, as well as the active and diligent working habits.<sup>[4]</sup>

**Table 1.** Key evaluation indicators

Cognition of Labor	Value of Labor	Understanding the correlation between labor education and self-development, realizing that labor creates better lives and that labor is the source of all happiness and wealth (personal value)
		Realizing one’s social value, contributing to others, the society and the country (social value)
	Status of Labor	Recognizing that labor is glorious and indolence is shameful; advocating and respecting labor

Emotion of Labor	Interests for Labor	Loving labor, obtaining happiness from labor, and believing that labor is a kind of enjoyment instead of punishment
		Participating and exploring interesting labor activities
	Attitudes toward Labor	Obtaining something from labor and being able to conduct labor continuously
		Being able to conduct labor actively
Abilities for Labor	Knowledge for Labor	Actively participating in basic labor courses, learning laws and norms of labor and other knowledge (different majors have different focuses)
		Actively participating in professional practice, professional training and other courses (Different types of major have different practices. For instance, arts, science, engineering and art are different majors, respectively requiring professional practice such as research, practice, experiment, design, etc.)
		Ability of learning for practical applying and applying practically for learning (dynamic)
	Skills for Labor	Being able to integrate into the group, obey arrangements, and conduct teamwork
		Hands-on ability (dynamic)
		Being able to discover and solve problems (dynamic)
		Having the spirits of innovating and pioneering, being able to adapt to new forms of business and creating new labor in the new industrial environment (dynamic)
		Being able to improve skills continuously
Qualities of Labor	Spirits of Labor	Professional dedication
		Honesty
		Spirit of Craftsman (spirit of assiduous study) (dynamic)
		Perseverance
	Habits of Labor	Devotion
		Consciousness habits: having active consciousness, being able to take the initiative to labor
		Behavior habits: developing good habits for labor, being able to practice immediately, and sticking to good habits throughout daily life and study

Establishing key evaluation indicators of college students' labor quality is to provide a reference for the construction of evaluation indicator system. It is also necessary to evaluate each indicator and judge the proportion through empirical research in practice and monitoring. Particularly, dynamic labor quality evaluation indicators should be determined according to different majors and different education stages. Dynamic labor quality evaluation indicators are mainly reflected in new requirements with characteristics of the times. In particular, to nurture talents in the new era to undertake the great task of national rejuvenation, there are three key points of indicators which should be highlighted.

First, talents need to grasp the ability and methods to cope with the problems and challenges in the new era. Second, indicators should be combined with professional knowledge to cultivate specialized labor skills. Third, the spirit and ability for forging ahead and innovation should be taken into consideration.<sup>[5]</sup> Given the extensiveness of majors, the author only analyzed and set up key points of immobilized labor quality evaluation indicators. Every major and university can supplement and improve them according to their own requirements.

#### 4. Solving the Problem of “Who Will Evaluate” by Promoting the Diversification of Evaluation Subjects

The process of college students' labor quality evaluation is actually a process in which the evaluation standard is applied to college students by evaluation subject. Even if unified labor quality evaluation standard is adopted, different evaluation subjects may get completely different results due to different standpoints, thinking pattern and values. Therefore, to promote labor education, it is necessary to introduce diversified evaluation subjects and carry out labor quality evaluation for college students from different perspectives. The existing student quality evaluation mainly focus on the evaluation of teacher in charge of classes and students themselves. However, labor quality itself is life-oriented and professional. For indicators such as the development of labor skills, labor knowledge, work habits in life and labor quality are difficult to be accurately judged if the teacher in charge of classes doesn't notice or manage well. College students' labor quality itself is a comprehensive concept. Hence, we should explore a three-dimensional evaluation subject network and reasonably define the evaluation boundary of each subject according to the evaluation indicators, so as to form all-round evaluation subjects dominated by the school with participation of teacher in charge of classes, professional teacher, counselor, social organization and family.

#### 5. Solving the Problem of “How to Evaluate” by Innovating Evaluation Methods

The evaluation method, which has a direct impact on the evaluation results, is a part with the biggest innovation potential in quality evaluation. Just as the evaluation content is divided into immobilized and non-immobilized types, the evaluation should also follow the combination of regular evaluation and special evaluation to carry out labor quality evaluation regularly. For immobilized evaluation indicators, regular evaluation

can be used to highlight the rigid fairness of evaluation. For non-immobilized major as well as innovative and entrepreneurial evaluation indicators, special evaluation can be implemented in a relatively flexible and specific way to avoid “one size fits all” evaluation. Regular evaluation is used to periodically evaluate students’ labor quality, which needs time to cultivate and cannot be accomplished overnight. Therefore, the evaluation period can be appropriately extended to prevent the phenomenon of improving labor quality with “eager for quick success and quick profit”.

## **6. Labor Quality Evaluation “Baton” Guides the Direction and Strategy**

### **6.1 Guiding the Integrated Education and Nurturing Labor Qualities in All-round Way**

The significance of carrying out labor quality evaluation is to finish the task of “nurturing people with moral integrity” in colleges and universities, as well as training socialist builders and successors with all-round ability in areas such as morals, intelligence, physical fitness, work and aesthetics. The Guideline unveiled by the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council pointed out that labor education has the comprehensive educational value of “building virtue, enhancing intelligence, strengthening physical fitness, cultivating aesthetic ability and promoting innovation”. In 2019, the Ministry of Education proposed that one of the main tasks of deepening education reform is to “promote the close combination of ideological and political education, professional education, physical education, aesthetic education and labor education to create the ‘five-education platform’”. Cultivating students’ labor quality requires the grasp of embodiment and path of the labor quality cultivation in other four education dimensions, so we should guide labor education integrate into them. When establishing evaluation indicators, we should combine students’ evaluation of labor education with evaluation of social practice, ideological and political education, innovation and entrepreneurship education and voluntary service organically. Particularly, to set up “concentric” labor quality evaluation system, labor quality evaluation in life such as in the dormitory and family, as well as labor quality evaluation in society such as in social practice, internship and start-ups should be included.

### **6.2 Guiding Characteristic Education with Collaborative Innovation of Labor Education, Professional Education and Vocational Education**

Universities and majors should be guided to develop

distinctive and specialized labor education according to their own characteristics. Higher education itself is a profession-guided education process, which leads labor education to be integrated into the professional talents nurturing plan and enables students to form a relatively complete and systematic labor quality nurturing system based on the process from basic theoretical knowledge of freshman year to the practice on campus and then to the outside-campus practice. We should blend in guidance of labor values in the cognitive integration of professional education. Moreover, we should stress the training of practical operation in the theoretical learning stage and blend in professional cognitive education in the process of practice education. We should guide exploration of cooperative innovation mechanism of labor education, professional education and vocational education in colleges and universities. For one thing, we should establish university-enterprise cooperation between labor education and professional education with selected enterprises, welcoming outstanding entrepreneurs, model workers, industry pioneers to teach professional working knowledge in life and promote spirits of craftsman and model workers. For another, we should build cooperative education base of labor education and professional education, so that explicit classroom education, practical activities and the second classroom can be integrated and carried out in centralized places.

### **6.3 Guiding the Optimization of Resources and Developing Integrated Labor Qualities**

Nurturing students’ labor qualities requires linkage of the whole school as well as the integrated and optimized resource management. We can build students’ integrated labor qualities from two aspects. For one thing, in the organization of departments, we can build innovative education management mode of participation of teaching and research departments, student affair teams and teacher development departments with school’s organization and guidance. In the design of students’ labor quality evaluation subjects, the teacher in charge of classes, counselor, and professional teacher should be included. For another, to perfect integrated teacher’s troop, we should improve labor qualities of teachers. For professional teachers, we should strengthen study and comprehensive knowledge training led by labor values. For counselors and teachers in charge of classes, we should introduce professional contents of major, and organize labor education training combined with professional knowledge. In short, the goal is to build a team of teachers with professional knowledge, innovation capacity and work abilities.

#### 6.4 Guiding Innovation Education and Nurturing Innovative Talents

*The Guideline* put forward the basic principle of “reflecting characteristics of the times” for students’ labor qualities in order to adapt to the scientific and technological development as well as industrial structure adjustment in the new era. So there are new requirements and changes for students’ labor qualities. In the new era, new technology revolution has come and will continue to impact people’s life, production and ideas profoundly. Technology breakthroughs such as big data, artificial intelligence, biological engineering and 5G promote new industries’ emergence and new forms of business, so there are urging needs for specialized innovative labor personnel with strong practice abilities. In the background of “business start-ups and innovation”, innovative labor ability is an important evaluation indicator of labor quality. Some students’ low evaluation of labor quality is not reflected in their outlook on labor or indolence, but mainly in their low labor qualities of adapting to the times and lack of innovation ability and challenging spirit. Therefore, the design of labor quality evaluation indicators should follow characteristics of the times, comply with new requirements of new industries and emphasize innovation abilities. Therefore, in the new form, the direction of labor evaluation and the required labor qualities of the times will not be disjointed.

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