

The Enlightenment of Tao Xingzhi's "Generative Doctrine" on the Curriculum Reform of Five-year Higher Vocational Education

Qian Zhang*

Foundation Department, Zhenjiang Branch of Jiangsu Union Technical Institute, Zhenjiang, Jiangsu, China

**Corresponding Author.*

Abstract: The idea of "Generative Doctrine" is an important component of Tao Xingzhi's vocational education theory. Vocational education is aimed at cultivating talents with vocational skills and practical abilities under the guidance of profit-oriented education, so as to meet the needs of life and serve the social and economic development. With the development of society, China's five-year higher vocational education has also achieved significant progress, which is reflected in the continuous expansion of its scale and the continuous improvement of its quality. However, there are also many problems existing. By re-recognizing and re-studying Tao Xingzhi's profit-oriented vocational education theory, further exploring curriculum reform will have extremely important guiding significance for the development of five-year higher vocational education.

Keywords: Generative Doctrine; Five-Year Higher Vocational Education; Curriculum Settings; Talent Cultivation; Curriculum Reform

1. Introduction

Tao Xingzhi is a great educator and thinker in modern China. His educational thoughts can not only grasp the macro trends of educational development with foresight, but also pay close attention to the micro details of educational practice. "Vocational Education Based on Generative Doctrine" is an important statement by Tao Xingzhi on vocational education. Tao Xingzhi's vocational education ideology has played a crucial guiding role in the development process of modern Chinese vocational education, leading the reform and development of vocational education, and it also has profound enlightenment significance

for the reform and development of today's five-year higher vocational education.

2. The Connotation of "Generative Doctrine" and Its Embodiment in Vocational Education

2.1 The Connotation of "Generative Doctrine"

The core of a profession lies in profit-making, and vocational education should be conducted around the concept of "Generative Doctrine". Generative doctrine is embodied in two aspects: firstly, producing beneficial things, such as farmers planting crops and craftsmen making tools, which directly bring benefits to society through material products; secondly, engaging in beneficial activities, such as merchants promoting commodity circulation and doctors treating patients, which also create value for society through service behaviors [1]. The key to judging whether a person belongs to the professional world is whether he or she can produce profits; and the criterion for evaluating whether an education is vocational education lies in whether it can cultivate people with the ability to produce profits, namely, whether it can create material wealth and social value for society. Therefore, generative doctrine takes "production" as its foundation and aims to serve the social economy and enhance people's well-being [2]. This concept not only embodies the core value of vocational education, but also emphasizes the significant role of vocational education in social development.

2.2 The Embodiment of "Generative Doctrine" in Vocational Education

Vocational education, also known as technical and vocational education, is one of the four major types of education, alongside

basic education, higher education, and adult education[3]. Generative doctrine serves as the core philosophy and ultimate goal of vocational education, representing the "righteous path" that vocational education should pursue and practice. Based on this perspective, Generative doctrine must be deeply ingrained as a core principle in every aspect and phase of vocational education, from curriculum design, teaching methods, practical training, to the cultivation of students' professional qualities. Only by doing so can we truly realize the value and significance of vocational education, cultivating high-quality talents who meet social needs and possess practical production and service capabilities.

2.2.1 Vocational Teachers

Vocational teachers play a crucial role in imparting the philosophy of Generative doctrine. They must possess not only rich experience and profound knowledge in profit-making but also master effective teaching methods related to profit-making. "No one who has never experienced profit-making can teach others how to make profits." Vocational teachers themselves must be practitioners with hands-on experience. Only those who have been through actual production and service can better guide students in how to generate profits. Furthermore, mere profit-making experience is insufficient; teachers also need profound knowledge in profit-making to provide guidance and direction for their experience, while maintaining continuous learning and improvement. Additionally, vocational teachers need to master teaching methods for profit-making, be familiar with students' psychology and the nature of teaching materials, and ensure that the content and methods taught help students grasp the methods of profit-making.

2.2.2 Vocational Equipment

Creating conditions for profit-making is the material foundation for the development of vocational education. Vocational education must be equipped with various necessary equipment and facilities, which are prerequisites for practicing profit-making skills. The equipment required for profit-making can come from two sources: one is the equipment provided internally by the school, and the other is the utilization of existing equipment in the vocational sector. The core role of these

equipment in vocational education is not only to provide students with a platform for practical operation, but also to offer them opportunities to engage with and understand the real vocational environment.

2.2.3 Vocational Curriculum

The core of vocational education lies in the inheritance of generative doctrine. Tao Xingzhi advocated that the setting of vocational curriculum should be "focused on profit-making," and its resource allocation should be "based on the standard of sufficient profit-making." Specifically, the curriculum should be structured in a way that "one thing from start to finish is one course," ensuring that each course is an independent unit of profit-making. After completing a course, students should be able to master a profit-making skill. The curriculum design in vocational schools should focus on practice, emphasizing the close integration of theory and practice. Only by learning profit-making through practical operation can students truly be considered to have received vocational education.

2.2.4 Vocational Students

The core objective of vocational education is to cultivate students who are capable of creating profits. Each student possesses their own unique talents and interests, which serve as the foundation for their future success in their careers. The school should observe and evaluate students to understand their aptitudes and interests, providing them with courses and practical opportunities that match their profiles. Additionally, the school should guide students to understand the characteristics and requirements of different professions, helping them develop correct career perspectives and master appropriate methods for choosing a career, ensuring that they can select a profession that suits them well.

3. The Inevitability of Curriculum Reform in Five-Year Higher Vocational Education

Five-year higher vocational education, as a form of vocational education within the tertiary education level, has increasingly demonstrated its developmental advantages against the backdrop of "vertical connectivity and horizontal integration [4]." Compared to traditional programs connecting secondary and higher vocational education, the

five-year integrated training approach allows for the comprehensive design of the curriculum system and the coordinated arrangement of teaching plans, ensuring the continuity of students' learning in terms of knowledge and skills. Additionally, five-year higher vocational education emphasizes the enhancement of students' comprehensive qualities and lifelong development, laying a solid foundation for their future career paths. While five-year higher vocational education has achieved significant achievements, its development is not flawless, and there are still many issues that need to be addressed.

3.1 The Positioning of Talent Cultivation Goals is not Precise

When setting talent cultivation goals, some five-year higher vocational colleges fail to fully consider the needs of local economic construction and industry development trends, resulting in excessively high or low goal positioning, or even being disconnected from local demands. This makes it difficult for the talents cultivated to meet the actual needs of the market, leading to dual issues of employment difficulties for students and difficulties in recruiting talents for enterprises. Moreover, in practical teaching, some five-year higher vocational colleges focus excessively on theoretical teaching and neglect the cultivation of students' practical abilities. This results in students lacking practical operational skills, unable to adapt to the needs of work positions, and affecting their employment competitiveness.

3.2 The Majors and Curriculum Settings are Unreasonable

In terms of curriculum design, there is a relatively low proportion of practical courses, neglecting the importance of hands-on practice and skill training. This results in students having a certain level of theoretical knowledge but lacking sufficient practical opportunities, making them feel inadequate in practical applications. This impacts the cultivation of students' ability to transform theoretical knowledge into practical operational skills, leading to difficulties in adapting quickly in future work. Some professional textbooks are disconnected from industry development, failing to fully consider industry trends and future talent needs. They have not been

updated in time to reflect the latest technologies and management methods, causing students' knowledge to be unable to meet the actual needs of the industry.

3.3 The construction of the teaching staff is insufficient

The academic qualifications of teachers vary widely. While some teachers have master's degrees or higher, a considerable number of teachers in specialized courses hold only bachelor's degrees. In the teacher title structure, teachers with junior and intermediate titles account for a large proportion, while those with senior titles are relatively few. This reflects, to some extent, that the overall teaching experience and research capabilities of teachers need to be improved. Some teachers lack practical vocational experience, especially in emerging industries and high-tech fields. This makes it difficult for them to incorporate the latest industry developments and technological trends into their teaching, affecting the quality of instruction.

4. The Enlightenment of the “Generative Doctrine” Ideology on the Curriculum Reform of Five-Year Higher Vocational Education

4.1 Cultivate Innovative Skilled Talents

The student source of five-year higher vocational education mainly comprises junior high school graduates, who are in a critical period of physical and mental development, as well as the gradual maturation of their values. Their physiological, psychological, and ideological growth span is significant, with strong plasticity. The school should emphasize the cultivation of students' professional skills, continuously explore effective methods and approaches that adapt to local economic development and students' actual conditions, and cultivate professionals who meet the needs of society [5]. Taking “ability-based, service-oriented, and employment-guided” as the guiding ideology for talent cultivation; adopting the “school-enterprise cooperation, work-integrated learning” model for talent cultivation; implementing project-based, task-oriented, and scenario-based curriculum teaching, diversifying the evaluation of

learning outcomes, guiding students to improve their abilities in learning, thinking, identifying, and solving problems during the work process; strengthening practical teaching, inviting experienced teachers from enterprises to participate in professional teaching, enhancing school-enterprise cooperation; allowing students to intern in enterprises, directly participating in front-line production and management services; encouraging students to participate in skills competitions, promoting practice and learning through competitions, and enhancing their skill levels; organizing students to participate in various vocational skill certificate assessments, providing them with more capital and ability to participate in social competition.

4.2 Design Majors and Curricula Rationally

To ensure the effectiveness and practicality of education, five-year higher vocational colleges should fully integrate their unique characteristics and the actual needs of their region in the construction of the teaching staff, develop majors and curricula with local characteristics, and timely adjust existing majors and curriculum settings. Specifically, five-year higher vocational colleges should cultivate students' professional skills, broaden their knowledge base, and help them establish correct values through offering three types of courses: major foundation courses, professional courses, and general education courses. Major foundation courses lay a solid foundation for students' professional development, while professional courses further cultivate students' practical operation ability and problem-solving skills. General education courses help students broaden their horizons and enhance their comprehensive qualities.

In addition, five-year higher vocational colleges should actively collaborate with industry enterprises to jointly develop talent cultivation programs and achieve collaborative education between schools and enterprises. Through close cooperation with enterprises, the colleges can promptly grasp the latest trends in industry development and the actual needs of enterprises, thereby adjusting and optimizing curriculum design and teaching content to ensure that the talents they cultivate can meet the needs of social and economic development.

4.3 Strengthen the Construction of the Teaching Staff

Teachers must possess profound professional knowledge, rich practical experience, and scientific teaching methods. Teachers should also cultivate students' spirit of "benefiting the group" and update their educational concepts. They should possess good professional ethics and undertake the important responsibility of educating students' awareness of "benefiting the group" and cultivating their professional ethics, becoming a crucial means for the school to cultivate students' awareness of "generating profits" and enhance their comprehensive quality and abilities. Meanwhile, teachers are also the executors and implementers of talent cultivation programs. The five-year continuous cultivation of technical and skilled talents requires teachers to have a good grasp of the connection between secondary and higher vocational education, as well as the inherent laws of skill formation, rather than imparting knowledge in a staged or fragmented manner. This requires teachers to possess a high level of knowledge and teaching ability, which is today referred to as the "dual-qualification" trait, meaning that they are not only proficient in theoretical teaching but also possess professional qualifications and rich practical experience in a certain industry[6].

Five-year higher vocational colleges should actively improve the promotion and evaluation system for teachers to motivate their self-improvement and career development. By establishing incentive mechanisms, teachers are encouraged to actively participate in industry practice, scientific research activities, and project cooperation while fulfilling their educational and teaching tasks, thereby continuously enriching their practical experience and improving the quality of education and teaching.

Furthermore, the school should also provide teachers with diversified practical opportunities and platforms, such as collaborating with enterprises to conduct practical training projects, organizing teachers to visit and learn from enterprises, inviting industry experts to exchange ideas with teachers on campus, etc. This will help

teachers keep abreast of the industry's development trends, master cutting-edge technologies, and thereby better guide students in practical operations.

5. Conclusions

Tao Xingzhi's educational philosophy of "Generative Doctrine" is social, scientific, practical, and inclusive, aligning with the current developmental direction of five-year higher vocational education. Various schools should deeply analyze the fundamental purpose of vocational education, optimize majors and curricula, strengthen the construction of teaching staff, and other measures based on Tao Xingzhi's educational philosophy of "Generative Doctrine", aiming to achieve certain breakthroughs in curriculum reform.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by the Tao Xingzhi Research Project in the 14th Five-Year Plan of Jiangsu Province: Research on Vocational Education Curriculum Reform based on Tao Xingzhi's "Raw Interest" No.: TY-c/2021/25; 14th Five-year Plan" topic of Jiangsu Tao Xingzhi Research Association: "Research on the reputation improvement path of Vocational Education based on Tao Xingzhi's" profit

(JSTY14226)."

References

- [1] Tao Xingzhi. The Collected Works of Tao Xingzhi. Hunan Education Press, 1985
- [2] Tang Gaohua. The contemporary interpretation of Tao Xingzhi's "Vocational Education Based on Productiveness". Vocational Education Communication. 2007(8)31-33
- [3] Li Xiuwei. Strategies for Reducing the Dropout Rate among Secondary Vocational Students. Shandong Normal University, 2012
- [4] Hao Yunliang. Evaluation of Five-Year Higher Vocational Education: Dilemmas and Breakthroughs. Vocational Education Communication. 2021(11): 62-71
- [5] Sun Fangshuo. Exploration of the Integration Path between Tao Xingzhi's Vocational Education Thought and the Cultivation of Secondary Vocational Students. Survey of Education. 2024.2(13):98-101
- [6] Shen Rongsheng. The Research on Tao Xingzhi's Beneficial Thoughts of Education and Enlightenment. Anhui Normal University, 2018.