

# Research on the Relationship between Labor Education Concept and Vocational Identity of Normal Students in Northwest Guangdong

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**Abstract:** In recent years, labor education has received renewed attention, and the relationship between the concept of labor education and professional identity of normal students, as the key force of future education, has become an important topic worthy of further study. The objective of this research is to thoroughly examine the internal connection between the concept of labor education and the professional identity of normal university students, and offer practical suggestions for the professional development of normal university students. In this study, 311 full-time normal students in northwest Guangdong Province were sampled and a quantitative survey was conducted. The findings indicate that there is a notable positive correlation between normal students' perception of labor education and their professional identity. This not only offers a new perspective for comprehending the labor education concept and professional identity of normal students but also provides a theoretical foundation and practical guidance for the reform and development of teacher education.

**Keywords:** Normal Students; The Concept of Labor Education; Professional Identity; Northwest Guangdong; Career Development

## 1. The Question is Raised

In order to accelerate the comprehensive construction of a high-quality education system, in recent years, the state has successively released a series of policy documents concerning labor education. Starting from the promulgation of the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening Labor Education in Universities", Primary and Secondary Schools in the New Era" to the

release of the "Labor Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition)", which reflects the great importance that the state government attach to labor education, and also reflects the weakening and marginalization of labor education in primary and secondary schools. Colleges and universities shoulder the mission of establishing morality and cultivating new talents who will take on the great task of national rejuvenation<sup>[1]</sup>. Although in some colleges and universities, normal students can have access to labor education courses, but they are only limited to the form of superficial and have not been effectively implemented. Schools play an important role in guiding the labor education of normal students, and should fully understand the practical and educational value of labor education, actively respond to the call of the state, accurately grasp the national education policy, and cultivate successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor.

Domestic scholars have analyzed and demonstrated labor education from different dimensions, and scholars generally believe that labor education is conducive to promoting the formation of correct labor values and the cultivation of good labor literacy<sup>[2]</sup>, and is also conducive to cultivating talents, improving the quality of laborers, and promoting the all-round development of people<sup>[3]</sup>. In this study, labor education can refer to the educational activities that are related to production and life through manual labor, and imitate, learn, and summarize in the process. It can also refer to the educational and practical activities that help young students establish a correct concept of labor, cultivate good labor habits, stimulate positive labor emotions, shape a noble labor spirit, master the necessary knowledge of production technology, and pursue happiness in the process of labor

creation through specific educational methods under social rules<sup>[4]</sup>. Labor education is a crucial link in China's talent cultivation and has drawn attention from multiple aspects within the country. In recent years, there have been numerous studies on labor education and professional emotions of normal students on authoritative websites. However, research on the concept of labor education and the professional identity of normal students is scarce.

Labor is the foundation for the existence and development of human society and also an important driving force for the progress of human civilization. Some scholars have noted that labor is a self-driven creative act. For educators lacking a sense of identity with the teaching profession, they may fall into the alienated state of "passive work that they must undertake due to the needs of life", which in turn will impede the progress of education with Chinese characteristics<sup>[5]</sup>. A study has shown that the identification of normal students with their future teaching profession refers to their positive views and positive perceptions of the education career they are about to devote themselves to, and they are able to accept the role of teachers from the heart, and thus develop an internal psychological tendency to devote themselves to the education career for a long time<sup>[6]</sup>. Therefore, normal students with higher sense of professional identity can better adapt to the teaching environment and make more effective use of various resources to carry out education and teaching activities, which is of great significance for improving the quality of education and teaching. In addition, improving the professional identity of normal students is of great significance for the personal growth of normal students, the construction of high-quality teachers, and the development of education with Chinese characteristics. The main form of labor of normal students is educational practice, and through educational practice, normal students' sense of professional identity is at a high level<sup>[7]</sup>. The specific hypothesis proposed in this study is that there is a positive correlation between normal students' perception of labor education and vocational identity.

## 2. Research Methods

### 2.1 Subjects of the Study

The study adopted the random sampling method, with full-time normal students in northwest Guangdong as the sampling objects, and the major types involved literature and history, science and engineering, art and sports, and other categories. A sum of 311 questionnaires were handed out and 311 valid questionnaires were retrieved, having an effectiveness rate of 100%. The questionnaire was predominantly collected via the internet, and the fundamental demographic information of the acquired samples is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Population Variables**

Project	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	106	32.02
	Female	225	67.98
Specialized	Literature and History	170	51.36
	Science and Engineering	127	38.37
	Arts and Sports	4	1.21
	Miscellaneous	30	9.06
	Sum	311	100.0
Total		311	100.0

From the data in the table, it can be seen that in terms of gender, 32.02% of males and 67.98% of females are female. In the professional direction, literature and history accounted for 51.36%, science and engineering accounted for 38.37%, art and sports accounted for 1.21%, and other classes accounted for 9.06%.

### 2.2 Research Tools

#### 2.2.1 Normal Students' Labor Education Concept Scale

The compilation of the questionnaire of the Labor Education Scale for Normal Students refers to the Questionnaire on the Cultivation Status of College Students' Labor Spirit in the New Era<sup>[8]</sup>. Compiled by Qi Zhendong, which contains four dimensions, namely labor concept, labor spirit, labor habits and quality, and labor skills, with a total of 11 test items. The scale uses a five-point scale, with "1" being "strongly disagree" and "5" being "strongly agreeing". A higher score indicates a higher level of labor education for normal students. The data has passed the systematic test and the data quality is good. Firstly, Excel was used to match the samples one by one to complete the preliminary collation of the data, and then SPSSAU was used to analyze the data for educational statistics.

### 2.2.2 Occupational Identity Scale for Normal Students

The professional identity of normal students was assessed by means of the "Scale for Measuring Occupational Identity of Normal Students"<sup>[9]</sup>. Compiled by Wang Xinqiang et al., which contains four dimensions, namely occupational willingness and expectation, professional will, professional value, and occupational effectiveness, with a total of 12 test items, and the scale adopts a five-point scoring method, with "1" being "strongly disagreeing" and "5" being "very agreeing". A higher score indicates a greater level of professional identity among normal students. The data has passed the systematic test and the data quality is good. Firstly, Excel was used to match the samples one by one to complete the preliminary collation of the data, and then SPSSAU was used to analyze the data for educational statistics.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Normal Students' outlook on Labor Education and Professional Identity**

name	Sample size	minimum	maximum	Average	Standard deviation	Median
The concept of labor education for normal students	331	1.000	3.636	2.237	0.357	2.182
A sense of professional identity among normal students	331	1.000	3.667	2.052	0.433	2.000

### 3.2 Relevant Analysis

The correlation analysis (as shown in Table 3) shows that there is a significant positive correlation between the labor education concept of normal students and their professional identity, professional willingness and expectation, professional will, vocational value and occupational validity, with correlation coefficients of 0.572, 0.549, 0.323, 0.337 and 0.493, respectively.

There existed a significant positive correlation between the labor concept and the professional identity, professional will, and professional value of normal students. The correlation coefficients were 0.129, 0.167, and 0.156 respectively. However, the correlation between labor perception and occupational willingness and expectation and occupational validity was not significant, and the correlation coefficient was close to 0.

There was likewise a significant positive correlation between the labor spirit and the professional identity, professional willingness and expectation, professional will, professional value, and occupational validity of normal

## 3. Findings

### 3.1 Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis (as shown in Table 2) shows that the average value of normal students' perception of labor education is 2.237 and the average value of vocational identity is 2.052, which is relatively similar, indicating that on the whole, the attitude of normal students towards labor education and vocational identity is neutral to positive. However, the average value of normal students' perception of labor education was slightly higher than the average value of occupational identity, indicating that in the sample, normal students' perception of labor education was slightly more positive than that of occupational identity. The standard deviations of both are relatively small, indicating that the data distribution is relatively concentrated and there are no extreme values.

students. The correlation coefficients were 0.525, 0.515, 0.274, 0.312, and 0.458 respectively.

There was a significant positive correlation between labor habits and quality and normal students' professional identity, professional willingness and expectation, professional will, professional value and occupational validity, with correlation coefficients of 0.418, 0.443, 0.181, 0.252 and 0.369, respectively.

There was a significant positive correlation between labor skills and normal students' occupational identity, occupational willingness and expectation, occupational will, occupational value and occupational validity, with correlation coefficients of 0.429, 0.523, 0.224, 0.176 and 0.394, respectively.

In summary, the labor education concept, labor concept, labor spirit, labor habits and quality, and labor skills of normal students are significantly positively correlated with their professional identity and career development-related dimensions, which indicates that the labor education concept plays an important role in the professional identity of normal students.

**Table 3. Analysis of the Correlation between Normal Students' View of Labor Education and Professional Identity**

	The concept of labor education for normal students	Labor concept	The spirit of labor	Labor habits and quality	Labor skills
A sense of professional identity among normal students	0.572**	0.129*	0.525**	0.418**	0.429**
Career aspirations and expectations	0.549**	-0.056	0.515**	0.443**	0.523**
Professional will	0.323**	0.167**	0.274**	0.181**	0.224**
Career value	0.337**	0.156**	0.312**	0.252**	0.176**
Occupational validity	0.493**	0.068	0.458**	0.369**	0.394**
* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$					

#### 4. Found

##### 4.1 The overall outlook on Labor Education for Normal Students is Relatively Positive, But There is Still Room for Improvement

Through the descriptive analysis of this study, it can be seen that the average value of normal students' view of labor education is 2.237, which indicates that normal students generally have a positive attitude towards labor education. However, the standard deviation is 0.357, which reflects the significant individual differences in the attitudes of different normal students towards labor education under the positive overall trend. This difference may stem from many factors, including but not limited to personal growth background, family values, social and cultural environment, and the way labor education is implemented in colleges and universities. It is worth noting that at present, some colleges and universities have deviations in their understanding when carrying out labor education, and understand labor education as manual labor one-sidedly, thus ignoring the more essential connotation of labor education. This simplified model of labor education may lead to students' discrimination against manual labor and manual laborers, which is not only contrary to the original intention of labor education, but also is not conducive to cultivating all-round talents. The essence of labor education should be to fully cultivate students' labor concepts, labor skills, labor habits, and labor spirit, not just the participation of manual labor. Colleges and universities are able to alter the current situation of individual differences in labor education. They can do this by enhancing normal students' recognition of labor concepts and labor emotions, and by guiding normal

students to form a correct understanding of labor.

##### 4.2 The Overall Sense of Professional Identity among Normal Students is Relatively Low, A Situation that Demands Attention and Improvement

According to the descriptive analysis results of this study, the average value of occupational identity for normal students was 2.052, and the standard deviation was 0.433. This indicates that among the sample of 331 normal students, the distribution of occupational identity is relatively concentrated, but the overall level was low. Specifically, the minimum value of professional identity was 1.000, the maximum value was 3.000, and the median value was 2.000, indicating that most normal students had a lower than average level of professional identity. The distribution of this sense of identity may be related to the expectations of normal students for the teaching profession, the perception of the professional environment, and the uncertainty of personal career planning. In view of the low overall professional identity of normal students, the education department and colleges and universities need to pay attention to and improve it through education and guidance, so as to lay a solid foundation for cultivating more excellent teachers. Future research can further explore the differences in the professional identity of normal students from different backgrounds, and explore more effective strategies for improvement.

#### 5. Conclusion

In this study, a quantitative approach was used to further explore the relationship between normal students' perception of labor education and occupational identity by collecting and analyzing the relevant data of teachers'

perception of labor education and occupational identity. The results show that there is a significant positive correlation between the labor education concept and the occupational identity of normal students, so the hypothesis results can be established. This is inseparable from the role of labor education, through practical activities and skills training, so that normal students can experience success and achievement in the labor process, so as to enhance their confidence in their own ability and enhance their self-efficacy. Through educational practice and educational practice, normal students can better understand the roles and responsibilities of the teaching profession, so as to improve their awareness of professional roles; In the process of labor practice, the will of normal students is tempered, their respect and love for the profession are cultivated, and the formation of professional values is promoted. In addition, labor education improves the practical ability of normal students by providing opportunities for practical practice. When facing practical problems in educational work, normal students can use the knowledge and skills acquired in the process of labor education to effectively solve problems, and this ability improvement will help them better adapt to future education work, so as to enhance their sense of professional identity.

It has been found that the labor education concept of normal students is closely associated not only with their professional identity, but also the labor education concept, labor concept, labor spirit, labor habits and quality, as well as labor skills of normal students are closely linked to their professional identity, professional willingness and expectation, professional will, professional value and occupational validity. Moreover, there is a significant positive correlation among each dimension. This study indicates that the possible reasons for its existence are:

On the one hand, labor education is not only the teaching of labor skills, but also affects the individual's sense of professional identity and career development through labor concept, labor spirit, labor habits and quality. For example, in labor practice, normal students can not only temper their professional skills by participating in real production labor, but also obtain internal improvement while outputting their own value, constantly fill their inner

sense of individual value, and produce positive labor values and qualities, so their understanding of the profession they want to engage in is becoming clearer and clearer, and their willingness to invest in the profession will be higher and higher, so they can overcome difficult working conditions and reduce their inner work pressure and professional slackness to a certain extent. In this way, the satisfaction of normal students with their careers will be improved, and their sense of professional identity and career development will also be improved.

On the other hand, labor education can promote the all-round development of normal students and lay a solid foundation for their career development. The state lays stress on the all - round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, art and labor. In this context, "labor" generally refers to labor education. through labor education, normal students can not only acquire knowledge and skills, but also develop good labor quality, such as a sense of responsibility, teamwork spirit and innovation ability and other non-cognitive skills, these non-cognitive skills are equally important for the future career of normal students to develop benignly. By simulating a real working environment, labor education exposes normal students to skills and knowledge beyond the textbook, such as learning how to cooperate with others, how to solve problems, and how to stay calm and focused under pressure. In addition, labor education aims to cultivate students' professional quality and professional psychology, so that students can have the necessary abilities for careers. In the process of labor, students' professional ethics, professional self-awareness and career planning ability are cultivated to a certain extent, which is helpful to improve students' vocational adaptability and career development potential. In light of this, labor education has a significant influence on enhancing the professional identity of normal students. Not only does the concept of labor education among normal students profoundly affect their professional identity, but also relevant labor education indicators, such as labor concept, labor spirit, labor habits and quality, and labor skills, are closely associated with the dimensions relevant to normal students' professional identity and career development.

In conclusion, this study found a close relationship between normal students' perception of labor education and their sense of professional identity through quantitative research methods. Labor education not only enables normal students to gain work experience and vocational skills through labor practice, but also improves their self-competitiveness; It also cultivates the professional awareness and quality of normal students in the labor process, and lays the foundation for their career development. This provides a new idea for colleges and universities to carry out labor education courses for normal students, helps colleges and universities to grasp the key elements to implement the practical and educational value of labor education, and cultivate successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor. However, this study has limitations in the discussion of sample scope and mechanism, and future research can expand the sample size to improve the universality of the study, and consider the indirect influence of labor education concept on occupational identity through mediating variables, so as to contribute to promoting the career development of normal students and the long-term development of education.

### Acknowledgments

This paper is supported by Zhaoqing University College Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program, "Research on the Relationship between Labor Education Concept and Occupational Identity of Publicly-funded Normal Students in the Era of Artificial Intelligence", Project No. S202310580030;

The Ministry of Education's Industry-University-Research Cooperation and Collaborative Education Project, "Exploration of the Path of Integrating Ideological and Political Elements into Teacher Education from the Perspective of New Liberal Arts Construction", project

number, 231107594025258.

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