

Enlightenment of Liberal Education on the Cultivation of Higher Vocational College Students' Core Competencies

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ABSTRACT

Universities in many developed regions of the world today carry out "liberal education". It mainly covers: the field of language and literature, the field of humanities and society, and the field of science and art. The liberal education in Taiwan in China is based on "cultivating person" and taking "transfer ability" as the direction. Against the background of artificial intelligence on the Internet, it has reference and enlightenment for the construction of the core professional competencies in the training of talents in higher vocational education in Chinese mainland. The quality education around the core competencies of Chinese mainland higher vocational colleges should use the "liberal education center" as the organizational carrier to carry out institutionalized and systematic liberal education to enhance the core competencies of the profession.

Keywords: *Liberal education, Higher vocational colleges, Core competencies, Enlightenment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Liberal education is based on the cultivation of human subjectivity. Through the three levels of knowledge, value and behavior, educatees not only have the ability to integrate knowledge, but also have a broad vision, long-term vision, independent thinking, and a certain degree of criticism of affairs, as well as the ability to learn consciousness, self-inspection, self-examination and self-discipline to find meaning in life. [1] The idea of liberal education in ancient China has a long history. "Doctrine of the Mean" emphasizes that learning should be "learning, interrogating, thinking carefully, discerning, and practicing". "Huai Nan Tzu" says that "a person of wide knowledge and sound scholarship can gain without working". The idea of "a person of wide knowledge and sound scholarship" is also reflected in "Lun Heng": "A person of wide knowledge and sound scholarship is the person who knows the past and the present", "The person who has read more than a thousand

articles and tens of thousands of volumes or less, propagates elegant language, reviews manuscripts, and uses professors as teachers, is the person of wide knowledge and sound scholarship", "The person of wide knowledge and sound scholarship can obtain all the words from others".

2. HISTORY AND CURRENT SITUATION OF LIBERAL EDUCATION IN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES

Modern liberal education originated in Europe and the United States in the 19th century. At that time, many scholars felt that the academic division of modern universities was severe and the knowledge was severely divided. Therefore, liberal education was promoted. To the 20th century, liberal education has become a compulsory subject in European and American universities. In 1829, Professor Parkard (A. S. Parkard) of the American Bowdoin College wrote in the "North American Review", "Our college is expected to give youth a liberal education, which is the preparation of students for any professional study, providing students the knowledge teaching in all branches,

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which will enable students to have a comprehensive and comprehensive understanding of the overall state of knowledge before committing to a kind of special and specialized knowledge." [2] Packard advocates that public courses must be set up in the university curriculum, such as classical linguistics, literature, and science. He believes that all students who receive professional education should receive education in public courses. Another symbolic event of liberal education in the United States was in 1945, Harvard University published the report "Liberal Education in a Free Society". The report clearly stated that education is divided into liberal education and professional education. The goal of the former is to cultivate an independent thinking and responsible person, and the latter is mainly aimed at the training of students' professional abilities. The report pointed out the specific courses of liberal education: literary classics, western historical thought and system, physics, biological sciences, etc., covering humanities, society, nature and other courses. In 1992, Harvard University made further refinement: students need to take several courses in each of the six fields of foreign culture, world history, literature and art, morality and cultivation, natural sciences, and social sciences, and the total class hours should meet 1/4 of the class hours required for graduation. In addition to similar to Harvard University, there are two models of implementation of liberal education in American colleges and universities: the first is the diverse synthesis model. Students must take at least the prescribed number of courses or credits in different disciplines (for example: social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, etc.). The second is the autonomic choice model. The school does not make specific requirements on the field and curriculum of the liberal education curriculum. Students can choose relevant courses to study independently and complete the required credits.

There is a famous saying in Europe: there must be Greece in the words. The source of European education is the harmonious unity of sensibility and reason in Greece. The educational concept in Europe started with Greek liberal education, and after the trend of humanistic education and liberal education, it was finally finalized as the European model of liberal education. This basic process is accompanied by the evolution of Western European history and social civilization. The free spirits of the Greek sages Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato laid the foundation for the "free man" education of Europeans. The open and inclusive, free discussion model of Plato College influenced Western higher

education. After the Renaissance, the trend of humanism became mainstream. "The word humanism comes from the two words of humanist and humanities... Humanists are the people who teach the humanities, and the term humanities represents a group of disciplines. It consists of grammar, rhetoric, poetics, history and moral philosophy. From this definition, it can be clearly seen that the humanism of the Renaissance is the great rise and development of the humanities in the above sense." [3]

In the mid-to-late 19th century, the secularization of society showed a huge impact on this classical and noble tradition. After entering the 20th century, due to the tremendous role of science and technology in the two world wars, it is generally believed that universities should be proactive and pragmatic rather than empty talk. However, what followed was what Marx called "human alienation" in the 1960s. With social unrest, ecological imbalance, moral decline, spiritual emptiness, and indifferent interpersonal relationships, human alienated to be "economic animals" and "technological slave". The loss of the human spirit has prompted the return of education ideas around the world to liberal education.

3. GENERAL STATUS OF LIBERAL EDUCATION IN TAIWAN, CHINA

The Taiwan of China has been conducting liberal education since the 1980s. The course system of liberal education in colleges and universities in Taiwan basically covers: the field of language and literature, the field of humanities and society, and the field of science and arts. Due to the similarities in language and cultural traditions, Taiwan's science and technology colleges are similar to mainland vocational colleges, and the liberal education they carry has certain reference significance for the construction of Chinese mainland vocational colleges.

The universities in Taiwan, China basically set up liberal education departments. For example: Taiwan Jingwen University of Science and Technology set up a liberal education center and set up a committee, which is composed of the director of the center, representatives of teachers in various departments, experts from outside the school, and student representatives. There are 17 full-time and part-time teachers, and the course system covers: basic general knowledge (history and law), core general knowledge (life and occupation),

intellectual general knowledge (natural, social, humanities and arts, health and leisure).

Taiwan Deming University of Finance and Economics also has a liberal education center. The course system is divided into:

- Natural and technological group: including developing general courses of environment, logic, technology, etc.;
- Psychology and life wisdom group: including developing general courses of psychology and emotion, and planning execution related lectures and events;
- Liberal arts and philosophy and art group: including developing general courses in college reading, college writing, scripture, culture and philosophy;
- History and cultural group: including developing general courses in history, law and society, etc.
- Character education group: including developing the general courses on life etiquette, filial piety, character and civic literacy.

It is to cultivate talents who have Chinese literacy, character literacy, human literacy, and professional literacy.

4. CAPABILITY GOALS IN THE CONTEXT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Kai-fu Lee believes that at least 50% of the work will be replaced by robots in the future. [5] The combination of education and a rapidly developing society, in order to achieve both realism and forward-looking, will inevitably require educators to focus on the cultivation of basic capabilities for universal, sustainable, and long-term development. Based on the prospects of some artificial intelligence scientists and education experts, the following problems of talent cultivation should be solved in the future:

The first is the ability on deep thinking, logical analysis and decomposing problems. In the era of artificial intelligence, some physical and mechanical labor is bound to be replaced. In addition, some repetitive and fixed mental work can also be replaced by artificial intelligence. But for those tasks that cannot be solved by models and cannot be copied, especially those that require complex thinking in depth and deduction based on

logic, creative problem-solving work cannot be replaced by artificial intelligence.

The second is the ability to integrate interdisciplinary knowledge such as technological innovation and humanistic literacy. Cultivating innovation awareness and innovation ability is the core of talent training, and behind innovation is the integration and communication of knowledge. The Industrial Revolution emphasized social division of labor, and social operation emphasized bureaucracy, and everyone became a professional in a certain field. At present, the discipline classification of colleges and universities is very fine. In the process of formulating the talent training plan, it is only for the position, which greatly reduces the possibility of the integration of knowledge and ability. The era of artificial intelligence is an era of integration and innovation, so the division of knowledge needs to be integrated, mainly the intersection of technology and humanities.

The third is to have thinking innovation and spiritual innovation. The Internet and artificial intelligence era completely broke the linear structure of knowledge generation and flow. Combined with the social characteristics of the Internet, young people have encountered more opportunities to challenge knowledge authority. Enabling students to have critical innovative thinking skills is an important cornerstone for accelerating the cultivation of innovative talents. Critical thinking is a sign of personality independence and mature thinking, and it is also the core of integration and innovation.

5. THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF LIBERAL EDUCATION TO THE CULTIVATION OF PROFESSION CORE COMPETENCIES

The so-called professional core competencies are the abilities of people in addition to professional competencies in their careers. It is applicable to various occupations, and it can adapt to changes in social environment and changes in positions. It is a sustainable development ability that accompanies people for life, which is "transferability" that people usually talk about. For example: you are an HR, you are required to change jobs for accounting after three months, and you are required to change jobs for marketing after 6 months. Among these three seemingly different occupations, their professional knowledge varies greatly, but the core abilities are the same: the ability to quickly learn or integrate

new knowledge and information, the ability to understand each other's needs, and the ability to analyze each other's needs and solve problems creatively. This ability is the core ability of a person, that is, the ability to transfer in any industry and occupation. [6]

Currently, higher vocational education places too much emphasis on professional knowledge and basic skills of professional posts, ignoring core competencies and adaptability education to adapt to environmental and social changes.

5.1 Cultivating People: the Foundation of Liberal Education

In 1999, the higher vocational education was established in mainland China, which trained a large number of technically skilled personnel for the society, but there are undeniably many problems. The first is that the fundamental purpose of education is unclear. It puts too much emphasis on professional and technical nature, and cultivates talents purely based on posts. It has a utilitarian tendency. The fundamental purpose of education is to cultivate people, to cultivate an independent person with independent personality, sound thinking, healthy mind and body, and self-awareness and criticism.

5.2 Transfer Ability: The Direction of Liberal Education

Higher vocational education emphasizes technical skills, emphasizes "finding jobs", and emphasizes the specific ability of the posts, which has certain limitations. The unity of knowledge, ability and emotions develops students' transferred development ability. Liberal education emphasizes that at the level of knowledge, people should master historical, legal, natural, and life science knowledge, focusing on the breadth and interdisciplinarity of knowledge. At the level of ability, it mainly focuses on communication and communication ability, teamwork ability and lifelong independent learning ability.

5.3 Mechanism: The Realization Path of Liberal Education

Higher vocational colleges in mainland China also have corresponding courses, such as art appreciation, psychological counseling, and employment counseling, which are of a general nature, but many are limited to elective courses and

do not have a systematic course system. Chinese mainland higher vocational colleges can refer to the practices of universities in Europe, America and Taiwan to establish similar liberal education centers in institutional design, coordinate school resources, decentralize and centralize, and arrange general courses into the whole school credit system. Through course setting, faculty building, evaluation and monitoring, etc., it can promote the systematization, normalization and standardization of liberal education in an institutionalized manner.

6. CONCLUSION

Against the background of the Internet and artificial intelligence, vocational education needs to reposition the basic purpose, tasks, and methods of education in order to better bridge the changes of the times and the changes of social and economic operation models. The direction of vocational education should be changed from the cultivation of "job-seeking" job model to the cultivation of the core competencies of the profession, that is, "transfer ability". This transformation process requires liberal education. Liberal education is based on the subjectivity of human beings, so that students can develop freely and harmoniously in the aspects of personality and knowledge, reason and emotion, body and mind, etc., which is in line with the fundamental purpose of education and the development of the new era.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

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