The Historical Development of the Chinese Communist Party’s Thoughts on Technical Education*

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From the perspective of historical development, to discuss the development of the Chinese Communist Party’s technical education ideology. It mainly analyzes the evolution process of the technical education thought of the Communist Party of China from three historical development stages: the establishment phase, application development phase and the further new development of technical education thought phase. Since the founding of the Communist Party of China in 1921, the technical education ideas of the Communist Party of China have continuously formed new technical education ideas in practice. After the founding of New China in 1949, it has been continuously developed and deepened along with the practical needs of training professionals. After the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the Communist Party of China proposed to “accelerate the development of vocational education”, and the technical education thoughts have achieved new development.

Keywords: Communist Party of China, technical education thought, historical development stages

Introduction

Marx put forward the concept of comprehensive technical education and affirmed the important role of technical education in meeting the requirements of socialized production on the comprehensive development of labor capacity of laborers. For Marx and Engels, technical education is an important way to improve “social production” and bring up “comprehensive development”. It is the only way to promote the all-round development of people. The leaders of the Communist Party of China have inherited and developed these technical education ideologies and put forward many technical education ideologies with “China’s actual situation”. The Chinese Communist Party’s technical education thought has its historical evolution.

The Establishment Phrase of Chinese Communist Party’s Technical Education Thought

After the founding of the Communist Party of China in 1921, it proposed a program for the implementation of new democratic education in China, and actively participated in the establishment of schools of various forms of technical education, such as cadre schools. These schools of various forms of technical education have trained a large number of revolutionary leaders and laborers who have acquired various skills in each special period. They have accumulated many new contents and experiences to guide the development of technical education.

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From 1927 to 1937, the relevant educational guidelines were formulated, including many guiding ideologies about technical education. In September 1930, Mao Zedong proposed the principle of “balanced development of intelligence and labor” to guide the development of technical education in the Soviet region at that time. Later, Comrade Mao Zedong also put forward the central task of cultural education and construction in the Central Soviet Area in terms of the political direction of technical education. Among them, the “social education” and “cadre education” are mainly the forms of technical education, and they also combined the particularity of the development of technical education in the difficult war environment at that time (Zhong, Huang, Xie, & Guo, 2014). The Resolution of the Central Cultural Education Construction Conference in 1933 pointed out that youth and adults should also have the opportunity to continue learning. Although they are no longer in the stage of compulsory education, they should continue to accept other forms of technical education from “remedial schools” and “vocational schools” (Fujian Provincial Department of Culture Revolutionary Cultural History Collection Committee, 1994, p. 98).

The technical education idea of “intellect and labor must develop in a balanced manner” was first proposed by Comrade Mao Zedong. The Communist Party of China, with Comrade Mao Zedong at the core, led the masses of people to seek the truth from facts in accordance with local realities at that time. It has formed many school-running forms and teaching forms that are adapted to China’s reality and are scientific and operable. Among them, in the teaching process of technical education, the curriculum and teaching methods can also be flexibly set according to the actual situation of revolutionary wars and production construction (Zhong et al., 2014).

In the period of the Anti-Japanese War from 1937 to 1945, the Chinese Communist Party’s educational principles and policies mainly served the Anti-Japanese War and proposed the educational thought of “serving the war for a long time”. This ideological principle also provided theoretical guidance for the development of technical education. The development of technical education has always been linked to the production and construction of base areas to ensure the basic material needs, which also reflects the “do it yourself”, and links it with the actual needs of the people’s lives. On the other hand, it can help young students learn by participating in productive labor out of the need to train the young generation produce technical skills, establish a scientific concept of labor, deepen the understanding of technical education ideology and theories during the war and better acquire technological knowledge in practice and labor skills operations to serve war.

During the establishment stage of the Chinese Communist Party’s technical education thought, it mainly revolved around the three types of technological education thoughts of “balanced development of intelligence and labor”, “long-term service to war” and “cadre education first” to guide the cultivation of technical talents at that stage. The stage of establishment mainly presents the characteristics of pursuing efficiency, strong maneuverability, flexible and diverse forms, and strong scalability.

**Development and Application of the Chinese Communist Party’s Technical Education Thoughts**

After the founding of New China in 1949, with the development of large industries and the continuous advancement of science and technology, the requirements for technical laborers have continued to increase, and technical education ideas have also made new developments and practice has been continuously applied in the development of technical education.
Proposal of “Education of Specialization and Uniformity” Education Thought

The policies and tasks of the educational work in the early days of the founding of New China began to change, and the transformation of vocational and technical education was one of the performances. On the eve of the founding of the People’s Republic of China, in September 1949, my country formulated the “Common Program of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference”, and this people’s general charter played the role of a temporary constitution for a period of time. It pointed out that when carrying out a planned reform of the old education system, we must pay attention to the system, content and methods. In addition, special emphasis is placed on “emphasis on technical education” and “part-time education of laborers”.

During the first three years of recovery in the early days of the founding of New China, education was adjusted and rectified. Its focus was on the adjustment and planned development of secondary technical education to form a preliminary system of secondary technical education, which was necessary for China’s subsequent development of socialist modernization. In order to reform and replace the old vocational schools and build and develop new secondary technical schools, the State Administration of Government has made adjustments and rectifications to existing schools, focusing on adjustments and rectifications, “according to relevant conditions” and “professionalization and singulation”.

The Practice of Technical Education Thought for Socialist Modernization

During the period of socialist transformation, the “Five-Year Plan” period, China learned the Soviet Union’s experience in running schools to adjust its technical education, and put forward technical education ideas and guidance for all levels of technical education that can serve socialist modernization. Technical education work is gradually moving towards the track of serving socialist modernization.

During the period of socialist transformation, the Communist Party of China insisted on the simultaneous development of socialist industrialization and socialist transformation. The country has carried out large-scale economic construction. During this period, it is necessary to use modern advanced technology to expand and transform the original industrial sector. The foundation of China’s socialist modernization and the smooth development of industrial and agricultural production also urgently need the supplement of a large number of construction talents who understand modern technology. The foundation of China’s vocational and technical education is relatively weak, and the technical strength is lacking. At that time, talents, as well as a large number of skilled workers, are requirements for vocational and technical education.

In general, during the period of socialist transformation, the technical education can train all kinds of technical talents needed for socialist modernization in a planned and purposeful manner in accordance with the needs of the country’s social and economic development and construction, and gradually complete the technical education system.

Further Development and Application of Half-Work (Agriculture) and Half-Study Technical Education Ideas

As early as 1958, Mao Zedong advocated that the related technical schools should be self-sufficient and semi-self-sufficient, while allowing students to work half-day and study half-day (Mao, 1999, p. 355). Half-day work and half-day study are linked to work-study programs. The guiding ideology of half-work and half-study is another manifestation of the “balanced development of intelligence and labor” put forward by Comrade Mao Zedong, and it is essentially the same as the guiding ideology of combining education and productive labor put forward by Marx.
The Communist Party of China’s half-work (agriculture) and half-study technical education ideas have developed and deepened the Marxist educational theory, which has two theoretical and practical foundations. On the one hand, it comes from the theory that Marxism classic writers combined education and productive labor. On the other hand, the theoretical basis is the traditional Chinese half-farming and half-reading thought, which is the product of the combination of Marxist education and productive labor theory and the practice of Chinese vocational education, and is also its inheritance and development.

The New Development of the Chinese Communist Party’s Thoughts on Technical Education

After the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China putting forward the ideological policy of “vigorously developing vocational and technical education” in 1985, the technical education underwent prosperity and development in China. The Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China also put forward the ideological policy of “accelerating the development of vocational education”, so that the guiding ideology for technical education has a new development in the new era.

Proposal Ideological Policy of “Vigorously Develop Vocational and Technical Education”

The main focus is on “vigorously developing vocational and technical education”, and the development of vocational education has begun to shift to higher vocational education. Science and technology are “knowledge-formed” productive forces, permeating through the three elements of labor, labor tools, and labor objects, and transforming science and technology into material productivity requires education. It also requires vocational and technical education to cultivate hundreds of millions of skilled laborers and technical personnel. In 1985, “Decision on the Reform of the Educational System” required that a vocational and technical education system be established gradually from elementary to advanced level. This “Decision” also pointed out that it is necessary to pay attention to the expansion of vocational education when training scope and basic education, so as to train modern workers with strong adaptability, creativity and ability to update knowledge (Cheng, 1988).

In 1993, the country issued the “Outline of China’s Education Reform and Development” to determine the development goals, strategies and guidelines of vocational and technical education, which also emphasized the need to significantly increase the number of students in vocational schools and high school graduates are given general training so that the new urban and rural labor force can obtain the necessary “vocational and technical training” before taking up their jobs. It is necessary to create a situation in which all sectors of the society are fully mobilized to carry out various types of vocational and technical education. In July 1994, the Implementation Opinions on the “Outline of China’s Educational Reform and Development” issued, not only stipulated the training objectives of vocational education, but also put forward the intention to develop vocational and technical education for the disabled for the first time. Vocational education should train skilled laborers and talents with certain professional skills that meet the needs of social development.

In July 2002, Zhu Rongji proposed that vocational education, which undertakes the major task of providing vocational training for high-quality workers and various types of talents with specialized skills, should be “placed in a more important position”. In March 2005, the Ministry of Education issued the “Opinions on the Implementation of Rural Practical Technology Training Program”, aimed at developing practical technology training for rural areas and improving the scientific, technological and cultural quality of
the labor force. In 2010, the state put forward a ten-year plan for vocational and technical education. Under the background of the transformation of development methods and the transformation and upgrading of economic structure, the development of vocational and technical education should “reflect the concept of lifelong education”, which has reflected the “vigorous efforts” since 1985. The development of the ideological policy of developing vocational and technical education puts forward that technical education has shifted from “creating workers with culture and knowing technology” to a new height of “promoting the overall development of people”.

**The Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party Put Forward the Ideological Policy of “Accelerating the Development of Vocational Education”**

Since the Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, party and state leaders have attached great importance to scientific and technological innovation and the cultivation of talents for scientific and technological innovation. Party and government leaders has also put forward a series of profound and rich ideas about technological education. Under the new normal of my country’s economic development, it is possible to reorient the goal of cultivating technical talents. The technical education ideology should serve to promote the transformation of economic development mode and adjustment of economic structure, and reorientate the innovation-driven development strategy of benefiting the country. Xi Jinping clearly defined the strategic position of vocational education, which is an important part of the national education system and human resources development, has an important role of making the majority of young people open an important way to the door to success, and vocational education has the responsibility to cultivate diversity. The mission of transforming talents, inheriting technical skills, and promoting employment and entrepreneurship is fundamental. The fundamental task is to establish a correct view of talents, cultivate and practice the core values of socialism, focus on improving the quality of talent training, and promote glorious labor, precious skills, and creativity. The great fashion of the times, creating a good environment where everyone can become talented, and everyone can show their talents, and strive to train hundreds of millions of high-quality workers and technical skills. The party and the government put forward “accelerating the development of modern occupation education”. Xi Jinping’s speech in 2013 when he heard the report from the Ministry of Science and Technology pointed out that the strategy of “rejuvenating the country through science and education” needs to be closely linked with education. Therefore, technical education should constantly improve a series of policies on innovative technical personnel. Xi Jinping emphasized the need to accelerate the development of vocational education and training at many important meetings and inspections. In 2014, Xi Jinping made clear at the National Vocational Education Work Conference the importance of developing vocational education, working principles, fundamental tasks, school direction, support priorities, party and government responsibilities and other major issues, reflecting the new situation of Chinese Marxist technology education doctrine. The party and the country should attach great importance to vocational education and accelerate its development in ideology. It has become the work policy for the development of vocational education in China in the new era. The training of large-scale high-quality workers and technical skills requires “innovation of various types of vocational education models at all levels”. As a support, the development of vocational and technical education will be raised to the height of “providing a guarantee of upholding talents for the realization of the two centenary goals and the great rejuvenation”. In general, Xi Jinping’s guiding ideology on the development of vocational education is the most comprehensive and rich instruction since the reform and opening up, and it is
referred to the height of the development strategy of “rejuvenating the country through science and education” to promote its development. In March 2015, Zhang Dejiang pointed out at the National Enforcement Inspection Conference on Vocational Education that vigorously developing vocational education is an objective need to accelerate the transformation of economic development mode and actively adapt to the new normal of economic development. Accelerate the development of modern vocational education to promote China vocational education is better adapted to economic and social development. In May 2015, Premier Li Keqiang issued instructions “accelerating the development of modern vocational education” and “realizing the leap-forward development of vocational education” to provide a high level of quality technical personnel support for improving the level of manufacturing in China.

Under the new normal of economic development since the Eighteenth National Congress, China’s economic development has entered a period of slowdown in growth, industrial structure adjustment and optimization, and innovation-driven strategic transformation. At this stage, the Chinese Communist Party’s technical education thought has been further developed on the basis of adapting to the rapid development of the social economy and the high demand for various types of technical personnel. In the further development of the technical education ideology, there is a new height of “promoting the overall development of people” and a new position that serves the transformation of the economic development mode in the new period. It shows the trend of more open and integrated, and the ideological policy gradually develops from specialized to flat.

Conclusions

Marxist comprehensive technical education ideas, especially the educational principle of “combining education with productive labor”, in the process of combining these basic ideas with the actual conditions of China’s revolution. China has put forward technical education ideas suitable for revolutionary construction. After the reform and opening up, technical education has entered a new period of development, and it is also facing new development opportunities and challenges in serving economic construction and socialist construction. The party and government have proposed “vigorously develop vocational technical education” and the ideological policy of “accelerating the development of vocational education” to guide the further development of China’s technical education. After the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the technical education ideas of the Communist Party of China further guide the development of the technical education, and for the current stage of my country’s industrial transformation and upgrading, China’s product quality improvement, and technical literacy requirements, “craftsmanship” and other needs to train a new generation of technical laborers.

References


