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A Brief discussion on the Educational Concepts and Propositions in "Talks on Vocational Education"

Duoduo Wang ^{1,*} and Tanjing Cheng ¹¹ Jiujiang Vocational University, Jiujiang, Jiangxi, China

* Correspondence: Duoduo Wang, Jiujiang Vocational University, Jiujiang, Jiangxi, China

Abstract: "Talks on Vocational Education" is a treatise published by Mr. Huang Yanpei during the Republic of China era. The book discusses the ideas, methods, and evaluation of vocational education, which still has an impact on vocational education at that time and even now. This article sorts out the causes, overview, educational ideas, and contributions to vocational education of "Talks on Vocational Education". The educational ideas in "Talks on Vocational Education" include "the concept of applicable society and the teaching method of 'integration of doing and learning', work-study combination, and school-enterprise cooperation model, etc." The proposal of the educational concepts in "Talks on Vocational Education" points out that the vocational education goals, professional structure and professional setting, teaching materials and textbooks, vocational education teachers, and the educational evaluation of vocational education have reference value. "Talks on Vocational Education" also proposed that vocational education should be evaluated from multiple aspects. Not only should the practical evaluation of students be considered, but also the overall evaluation of students. To a certain extent, it aims to cultivate students' comprehensive quality and vocational education ability.

Keywords: vocational education philosophy; educational methodology; educational evaluation perspective; development of vocational education

1. Introduction

Today, people's understanding of vocational education is increasing day by day. It not only enables students to acquire some practical skills and enhance their social adaptability, but also promotes the development of the local economy. When it comes to vocational education, we must mention a book called "On Vocational Education", which introduces the content and characteristics of vocational education and is also very helpful as a theoretical basis for practical teaching.

It is undeniable that "On Vocational Education" interprets the concept, teaching and evaluation of vocational education from both theoretical and practical perspectives, and has significant reference value for the reform of vocational education. Reading this book thoroughly, we have a clearer understanding and grasp of the essence and laws of vocational education, which has a great guiding role in the reform and development of modern vocational education [1].

The development of vocational education is receiving more and more attention. We should draw educational wisdom from this classic work, "On Vocational Education", and integrate the educational concepts and viewpoints in the book into classroom teaching, so as to cultivate high-quality talents that are more suitable for social development and market needs. Of course, in the face of new changes and requirements in the social economy, we should constantly explore and innovate the methods and approaches of vocational education to bring new vitality to its development.

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2. Background and Overview of "On Vocational Education"

2.1. Analysis of the Writing Background

Huang Yanpei's writing of "On Vocational Education" was inseparable from the turbulent era in which he lived. At that time, the national crisis was becoming increasingly severe, and Chinese society was undergoing a profound transformation. Against this grand backdrop, there was an urgent need for "practical talents" who could truly stand on the ground of social reality. Vocational education was pinned with high hopes and was what the times demanded. Huang Yanpei devoted himself to vocational education, aiming to popularize it deeply. He wrote "On Vocational Education" with the goal of promoting vocational education.

First, the reason Mr. Huang Yanpei proposed such a vocational education philosophy stems from his deep understanding of pragmatist educational ideas and his own ideals for saving the world, which is to achieve national prosperity and ethnic rejuvenation. Mr. Huang Yanpei clearly stated that the primary demand for talent in society should be professional talents who possess skills and truly connect with society, thus meeting societal needs. In "On Vocational Education" he explicitly defined the specific connotations of vocational education and pointed out that its development must be linked to social conditions. This is the most important factor to consider in developing vocational education and will serve as the most crucial guide for its future development and improvement.

The social transformation of the Republic of China provided enormous development space for vocational education. At this time, the old feudal educational system no longer met the demands of society, while vocational education, due to its strong relevance and practicality, gradually gained attention and recognition from both society and the public. Against this historical backdrop, "On Vocational Education" is a systematic summary by Mr. Huang Yanpei of his ideas and practices in vocational education, laying a theoretical foundation for the great development of vocational education [2].

It is also necessary to point out that while Huang Yanpei actively advocated for the advancement of vocational education, he consistently upheld a people-oriented educational philosophy. He believed that the essence of vocational education was not merely to equip students with technical or specialized skills, but rather to develop the individuals themselves [3]. This people-oriented educational philosophy not only reflects Mr. Huang Yanpei's profound understanding of the nature of education but also offers significant insights for today's vocational education.

2.2. Summary of Book Content

"Vocational Education Talk" is a comprehensive monograph that covers a wide range of topics related to vocational education. It provides systematic and detailed introductions and discussions on various aspects of vocational education, from the concept and objectives to its position within the entire educational system, as well as from its implementation to evaluation systems. Through Mr. Huang Yanpei's unique perspective and insights, it offers guidance for the reform and development of vocational education [4].

In the book, Mr. Huang Yanpei first summarizes the history of vocational education. Through development cases both domestically and internationally, he highlights the experiences and significance of China's vocational education. He believes that education is not merely about imparting skills to students; more importantly, it involves a comprehensive cultivation of their qualities, which include professional ethics, innovation capabilities, and teamwork spirit. This perspective was highly forward-looking at the time and continues to offer profound insights for today's vocational education.

Mr. Huang Yanpei also analyzed the unique strengths of vocational education: compared to general education, vocational education is more practical and can adapt to the needs of social and economic development more quickly. Vocational education must closely align with industry demands, continuously adjusting and reforming its programs to ensure that educational content meets market needs. This perspective remains valuable

even in today's society, which places greater emphasis on innovation-driven growth. It is equally applicable to vocational education, which is undergoing rapid technological advancements and continuous industrial restructuring [5].

As for how to carry out vocational education, Huang Yanpei also attached great importance to the concept of integration of industry, education, school and work. He believed that cooperation between schools and enterprises in production and education could provide students with more practical opportunities and employment channels. For schools, it could also grasp the latest trends in the industry at any time, so as to timely plan and formulate teaching plans and related courses.

In terms of evaluation methods, he advocates for diversified evaluations. In his approach to evaluation, he emphasizes the mastery of knowledge and skills, as well as overall quality and innovative spirit, in vocational education students [6]. He shifts from traditional exam-oriented assessments to comprehensive student evaluations, aiming to stimulate students' interest and development through this method.

2.3. Structure and Characteristics of Books

It can be seen from the book that the chapter of "Vocational Education Talk" is clearly divided, each part complements each other and progresses step by step, establishing a complete vocational education system with theoretical basis, which is conducive to helping readers have a comprehensive understanding of vocational education and can really guide the teaching activities of vocational education.

Mr. Huang Yanpei's writing style is relatively accessible and easy to understand. When expressing his ideas, he does not prefer obscure or difficult technical terms to explain his theories to readers. Instead, he uses plain language to articulate his views on vocational education, making them understandable even to the general public. This approach not only facilitates reading but also helps to expand the text's influence and broaden its readership [7].

Secondly, "On Vocational Education" intersperses many examples and lessons learned. Mr. Huang Yanpei, drawing on his rich practical experience, explains the theories and methods of vocational education to readers through examples. He links theory with practice, providing concrete references through real cases, which stimulates reflection on the practice of vocational education.

In addition to the school-running model, Huang Yanpei's proposition on vocational education curriculum is also very forward-looking. The content of vocational education curriculum should be closely followed by the employment market and vocational quality, and should focus on practicality and application, which is in line with today's teaching philosophy of vocational education.

In addition, Mr. Huang Yanpei also shared his views on the textbook development for higher vocational colleges. He believed that a series of distinctive textbooks suitable for higher vocational education should be developed; he pointed out that higher vocational colleges should participate in textbook writing, giving practical courses and comprehensive course textbooks due attention; and vigorously develop school-based electronic textbooks. These insights have certain reference value for textbook development in the reform of higher vocational education.

In terms of faculty development, "Vocational Education Talk" also offers valuable insights. Although Mr. Huang Yanpei did not directly mention concepts such as dual-qualified teachers or dual-teacher teams, his emphasis on the comprehensive development of teacher qualities aligns well with the requirements for building a high-quality faculty in vocational education. He demands that teachers possess practical skills and theoretical foundations, as well as be adept at addressing various issues in vocational education. This has significant guiding implications for the innovative construction of faculty in higher vocational education [8].

3. Analysis of the Educational Ideas Contained in it

3.1. Vocational Education Concept

Mr. Huang Yanpei's educational philosophy on vocational education, as proposed in his work "On Vocational Education" is highly forward-looking and influential. He clearly recognized that the focus of vocational education should not be on imparting knowledge and skills but on nurturing individuals who can adapt to social changes and possess sustainable development capabilities. Mr. Huang Yanpei believed that vocational education, which is closely linked to the socio-economy, must keep pace with the times, updating its content and methods to meet societal needs. He emphasized that vocational education should emphasize practicality and application, allowing students to acquire knowledge and skills through internships and training, thereby enhancing their ability to solve real-world problems using these skills [9]. Additionally, Mr. Huang Yanpei considered vocational education from another perspective: "In today's turbulent era, talents needed by human society cannot be obtained as they were in the past; they must adapt to current trends." He realized that "a professionalized society is what the Chinese people should first understand." In this context, he argued that vocational education could fulfill both personal aspirations and societal demands, providing a path for achieving one's career goals. Moreover, the recipients of vocational education should not be confined to any specific stage of talent development, which is often referred to as "lifelong education". Vocational education should not only be connected to the socio-economy but also integrated with general education, forming a comprehensive educational system that offers diverse learning paths at different levels and fields for individuals. His thought not only broke through the shackles of the established educational concept, but also played a positive role in enlightening and inspiring the development of vocational education in later generations.

3.2. Educational Methodology

In the discussion of teaching methods, compared to modern works like "Vocational Education Talks" the insights provided still hold significant relevance for today's vocational education system. Mr. Huang Yanpei believed that teaching people science and technology must first combine experimental methods with practical training in teaching approaches, which is a method worth emulating by current vocational educators. This remains an indispensable approach for cultivating high-level skilled talents today. He realized that traditional theoretical teaching methods make it difficult for students to grasp knowledge, whereas practical teaching allows students to experience the application of knowledge through hands-on exploration [10].

Mr. Huang Yanpei's advocacy of internship teaching does not mean that students passively engage in hands-on activities. Instead, it involves deepening the understanding of relevant theoretical knowledge through practical experience under the guidance of teachers. He advocates guiding students to think about problems and seek solutions on their own in practice, fostering an inquiry-based learning approach. This enhances students' interest in problems, innovation capabilities, and problem-solving skills.

"The Vocational Education Talk" does not overlook the role of theoretical knowledge. Mr. Huang Yanpei believed that theoretical knowledge is the foundation of practical teaching. Without the guidance of theory, practice can be aimless and inefficient. Therefore, he emphasized in vocational education that theoretical teaching and practical teaching must complement each other to jointly promote students' development.

"Vocational Education Talk" adopts the teaching philosophy of "integration of doing and learning" criticizing the traditional teaching model that separates theory from practice, focusing on armchair theorizing. It advocates for the integration of doing and learning, combining theory with practice, learning through practice, and practicing while learning; learning to apply knowledge effectively and gaining practical benefits. Students learn by doing and do while learning, verifying and consolidating their knowledge in the process.

They encounter new things and need to acquire new knowledge, with theory guiding practice and testing their theories in real-world scenarios. This continuous cycle of learning and application helps them constantly discover new issues and acquire new knowledge, ultimately enhancing their professional competence and overall capabilities [11].

3.3. Educational Evaluation View

Mr. Huang Yanpei expounded his evaluation ideas on vocational education in "On Vocational Education". He was clear that vocational education is not merely technical training but aims at the all-round development of students' morals, knowledge, and skills, enabling them to better adapt to future social and professional work. Therefore, he proposed various standards and evaluation methods.

Practical assessment, this is one of the most favored evaluation methods by Mr. Huang Yanpei. He believed that vocational education students should learn and improve through practice. Assessing students' practical abilities is an essential and crucial part of evaluating their academic achievements. Such an assessment method can truly reflect students' skill levels while also motivating them to continuously enhance themselves in practice [12].

In addition to practical assessment, Huang Yanpei also advocated comprehensive evaluation. He believed that a good student should not only have technical foundation but also have excellent quality. Comprehensive evaluation can make students' knowledge, skills and attitudes be considered in many aspects, which can evaluate students more truly.

In "Vocational Education Talk", Mr. Huang Yanpei did not limit himself to improving students' academic performance. He placed the cultivation of professional ethics at a significant position, considering it the foundation for students' career paths and the prerequisite for their standing in society and earning respect. Therefore, while vocational schools focus on developing students' professional knowledge and skills, strengthening their professional ethics can effectively reinforce students' cognition and values, as well as enhance their overall qualities.

4. The Influence and Evaluation of "Vocational Education Talk"

4.1. Contribution to the Development of Vocational Education

The role of "Vocational Education Talk" goes beyond elucidating the philosophy and elevating the ideological level of vocational education; it also promotes practical activities and guides their impact. By explaining the essence and fundamental goals of vocational education, "Vocational Education Talk" encourages people to pay attention to and focus on vocational education itself, thereby promoting its spread. This shifts public awareness from the periphery to a more prominent position. Under Mr. Huang Yanpei's advocacy, vocational education began to move from the fringes toward the mainstream [13].

In addition, Mr. Huang Yanpei's "Talks on Vocational Education" also strengthened the cooperation between vocational education and industry. Emphasizing practical teaching, Huang Yanpei strongly advocated for collaboration between schools and industries, providing students with more practical training and career opportunities. This increased the industry's ability to absorb graduates, offering them more chances to enter the workforce and become skilled professionals needed by the industry, thus promoting the healthy development of educational-industrial cooperation [14].

More importantly, "Vocational Education Talk" clearly points out that vocational education serves as a lifeline and an economic driver, making it a crucial approach to addressing China's livelihood issues and promoting social and economic development. Mr. Huang Yanpei emphasized that vocational education is the fundamental solution to China's livelihood problems and a significant force in driving social and economic pro-

gress. This highlights the direction for the positioning and development of vocational education, indicating its effective role in achieving social and economic goals and serving the nation's prosperity and people's well-being.

4.2. Influence on Later Educational Thought

"Vocational Education Talk" is not only a specialized treatise on vocational education but also an important work that enlightens future generations with its educational ideas. In "Vocational Education Talk", Mr. Huang Yanpei's educational views and propositions, due to their forward-thinking and innovative significance, provide valuable references and inspiration for later educational reformers.

Vocational education and general education should develop in a coordinated manner. Mr. Huang Yanpei proposed that vocational education is not just about vocational training; it also involves the interaction and coordination between vocational and general education to ensure that both can cultivate individuals with comprehensive qualities and corresponding social functions. Subsequent generations have further developed the concept of integrated development between vocational and general education, laying a solid foundation for their mutual integration and advancement [15].

"Vocational Education Talk" breaks through outdated educational ideas. In Mr. Huang Yanpei's educational philosophy, not only does he not emphasize the transmission of knowledge, but he also places great importance on cultivating students' abilities in education. He particularly opposes the old school's focus on theory and overemphasis on explanation, which rarely put into practice. Instead, he proposes revolutionary educational concepts such as "using both hands and mind" and "integrating doing and learning". These ideas have been revered by later generations and have been passed down and implemented, continuously renewing educational concepts and thoughts.

"Vocational Education Talk" provides theoretical support for the independent development of vocational education, promoting educational equity and improving educational quality. Mr. Huang Yanpei advocated that vocational education should be accessible to all students, emphasizing practice and application, with the aim of cultivating students' employability and entrepreneurial skills. This provides clear guidance for the positioning and development direction of vocational education, enabling it to become an important part of the educational system independent of general education. Additionally, he emphasized issues of educational equity, advocating for equal access to educational opportunities and resources for every student. Such ideas have been widely embraced and practiced in subsequent generations.

4.3. Book Evaluation

The high praise for the book "Vocational Education Talk" in academic circles is beyond doubt. Besides providing significant and foundational importance to the development of vocational education ideas, it has also actively promoted ideological changes in China's education system. It offers a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of relevant knowledge about vocational education, establishing a systematic and all-encompassing framework. This serves as a valuable resource and foundation for future thinkers and practitioners.

"Vocational Education Talk" as an extended text of "Vocational Education Lecture Notes", demonstrates the author's solid theoretical foundation, rich educational experience, and deep concern for current educational realities in analyzing the fundamental concepts, methods, and evaluation principles and standards of vocational education. Many of its perspectives, viewpoints, and propositions have shown significant influence in practice due to their forward-thinking nature, innovation, subsequent validation, and application. Undoubtedly, these insights have injected strong momentum into modern vocational education during a critical period of transformation.

What is even more commendable is that "Vocational Education Talk" not only discusses the current state and causes of vocational education but also elaborates on strategies for further development and reform plans. These proposals and plans not only offer practical solutions to the prominent issues and real challenges faced by vocational education at the time but also provide forward-looking guidance for the future development of vocational education, offering valuable lessons that can be referenced.

In addition to its high academic value, the book also has very important historical value. "Talks on Vocational Education" is an important material for understanding and studying the development of vocational education thought, and its emergence is also a great wealth for the theoretical research of vocational education, contributing an invisible force to the development and progress of the whole educational theory.

5. Conclusions

"Vocational Education Talk" is not only a classic work in vocational education but also a masterpiece among all educational works. The educational ideas and concepts it carries will certainly guide the reform of vocational education and provide an inexhaustible theoretical foundation for its development. Mr. Huang Yanpei's profound reflections on vocational education outline a blueprint that is both down-to-earth and forward-looking.

The exposition in "Huang Yanpei on Education" regarding vocational education concepts, methodologies, and educational philosophies is highly forward-looking, demonstrating his unique innovation. Huang Yanpei's teaching method of integrating work and study, emphasizing practical instruction while imparting theory, is a valuable asset for guiding current educational reforms. The ideas he proposed at the time also represent bold innovations even today.

Thirdly, it promotes the integration of vocational education with industry, making education more close to reality and more in line with social and economic development. At the same time, by elaborating on the responsibilities of vocational education in relation to people's livelihood and promoting social development, Mr. Huang Yanpei elevates the importance of vocational education to a new level.

It is worth affirming that the educational philosophy and propositions in "Vocational Education Talk" have reference value for the development and improvement of the entire education sector. Whether it is the advancement of educational equity, the enhancement of educational quality, the cultivation of students "comprehensive qualities, or the strengthening of students" innovative abilities, "Vocational Education Talk" offers us many excellent ideas, which are highly enlightening.

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