

A Historical Investigation of the Labor Education Model of Jiangxi Communist Labor University

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Abstract: Jiangxi Communist Labor University is a new type of school founded under the guidance of the Marxist educational ideology of “combining education with productive labor”, which has impressed the exploration and practice process of socialist education with its special characteristics, among which the labor education model of Jiangxi Communist Labor University is the most characteristic. It can be found that the labor education model of Jiangxi Communist Labor University has five characteristics: firmly establishing a unified view of labor, formulating labor education and teaching systems based on facts, self-reliance to expand the labor teaching practice base, flexible and versatile expansion of the teaching staff, and multiple measures to create a strong labor atmosphere.

Keywords: Jiangxi Communist Labor University; Labor education; Historical Investigation

Founded on August 1, 1958, the Jiangxi Communist Labor University was adjusted and renamed Jiangxi Agricultural University on November 20, 1980. Thus, Jiangxi Communist Labor University, a university with a “special” status in the history of education in New China, ended its 22-year-long history of operation. In 22 years of operation, Jiangxi Communist Labor University has created the main campus and 100 more branch campuses in Jinggang Mountain, Zhanggong Mountain, Damao Mountain, Lushan Mountain, Huanggang Mountain, Yunshan Mountain, Xiangtang, Gaoan, etc. It has achieved a series of remarkable educational and teaching results, and has cultivated 220,000 excellent graduates for the Party and the country, most of whom are technical talents engaged in agricultural production and agricultural research talents. It has continuously delivered the stalwarts who have been engaged in long-term agricultural discipline research and rooted in the countryside and engaged in the front line of agricultural technology production for Jiangxi Province and even the whole country, promoted the development of regional agricultural research and agricultural economy, and gained the keen attention of the leading comrades of the Central Government such as Mao Zedong and Zhu De and local leading comrades such as Shao Shiping and Wang Dongxing. After all, as a new type of school founded under the guidance of the Marxist educational ideology of “combining education with productive labor”, Jiangxi Communist Labor University was able to achieve more remarkable achievements in school operation, which could not be separated from its actual education, management and production process to explore a system of “combining education with productive labor” and labor education. It has become a model for implementing the Party’s labor education policy and effectively implementing labor education. Although Jiangxi Communist Labor University no longer exists, the school spirit of Jiangxi Communist Labor University of “self-reliance and hard work”, the school policy of “half-working (farming) and half-studying, work-study, combining study with labor, and combining politics with business”^[1], its “what to learn and what to do”, the teaching principle of “What to study” and the understanding and practice of the thought of “combining education and production labor” have still left a strong mark in the evolution and evolution process of the implementation policy of labor education in New China with their particularity. Therefore, an in-depth investigation into the history of labor education in Jiangxi Communist Labor University has important historical significance and realistic value for the implementation and promotion of labor education in the new era.

1. Firmly establish a unified view of labor

With the labor concept of the Marxist classical writers, Mao Zedong and other leading comrades of the Central Committee and

the labor policy at that time as the main content, Jiangxi Communist Labor University often organizes young teachers and students to study the classic Marxist masterpieces such as 《Das Kapital》, and 《The Communist Manifesto》, conveying to the majority of teachers and students with the masterpieces that “labor creates human beings themselves”^[1] and “the decisive factor in the historical process is ultimately the production and reproduction of real life”^[2]. The university strictly follow the specific requirements of the “Instruction on Education Work” issued by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council in September 1958 that “the Party’s policy on education work is that education serves the politics of the proletariat and that education is combined with production and labor”^[3] to help the young teachers and students of Jiangxi Communist Labor University to re-correct their understanding of labor and establish the correct concept of labor.

2. Formulate labor education and teaching systems based on facts

In the course of 22 years of running the school, Jiangxi Communist Labor University has formed its unique characteristics of labor education and the results of labor education. The university always adheres to the principle of “adjusting to local conditions according to the time”. The main campus of Jiangxi Communist Labor University issued “Preliminary Opinions on Several Issues of Improving Teaching Work” and “Teaching work Regulations” and other documents clearly put forward this requirement. At the early period of its establishment, five subjects of agriculture, forestry, fishery, animal husbandry and industry were set up with practicality as the main principle, while in the later period of development, especially in the prosperous period from 1959 to 1965, in order to respond to the needs and calls of the Party and the country and to meet the needs of local development, the main campus of the Communist University added sericulture department, tea department, finance department, agricultural machinery department at different times.

3. Self-reliance to expand the labor teaching practice base

Under the guidance of the school-running spirit of “self-reliance and hard work”, Jiangxi Communist Labor university has always attached great importance to the development and construction of the teaching practice base, which has provided an important platform for the teaching, scientific research and production of the university. In the construction of a large production base, Jiangxi Communist Labor University not only consider the needs of production, but also consider the needs of teaching, and establish model fields (forests) and high-yield experimental fields (forests).^[4] According to the specialty setting and student scale, the school buildings, farms, forest farms, fishing farms, pastures and other workshops (factories) for agriculture are built in the deep mountains, wasteland beaches, hills and swamps and other uninhabited places.

4. Flexible and versatile expansion of the teaching staff

The university attaches great importance to the selection of teachers. The faculty selection method of Jiangxi Communist Labor University is multi-channel, and the selected teachers are divided into full-time and part-time. Full-time teachers are usually relatively fixed and are usually selected and transferred by schools. The main targets are teachers who have received systematic education, have reached a certain level of knowledge and culture, and are able to carry out education and teaching activities, supplemented by skilled workers or farmers with outstanding skills and abilities in some fields. They are mainly engaged in daily teaching, management and other education and teaching activities in schools^[5]. And the selection of part-time teachers is based on the arrangement of superiors, the recommendation of factories (rural) and the actual teaching needs to be carried out. The main objects are party and government leaders, professional and technical personnel in the field of agriculture, workers with rich experience in labor practice or farmers, etc., mainly to carry out the teaching in the form of theoretical propaganda, professional and technical lectures.^[6]

5. Multiple measures to create a strong labor atmosphere

Since its birth, Jiangxi Communist Labor University has been destined to have an indissoluble bond with labor. Because of this, the university creates a strong labor atmosphere all the time and everywhere. The first is to create a good atmosphere of ideological identification through organizational theory study. Through the study of classical Marxist writers on labor, such as Comrade Mao Zedong’s 《On the Correct Handling of the Internal Contradictions of the People》 and other works, students can understand the scientific meaning of Marxism and the Mao Zedong’s perspective on labor and labor education, so as to deepen their ideological identity. The second is to create an atmosphere for all teachers and students to participate in labor through labor exercise. Jiangxi Communist Labor University attaches great importance to labor exercise and requires all teachers and students to do labor exercise every day. Teachers and students build school buildings together, dig land together, and engage in production and labor together. The third is to carry out the example leading to create you catch me catch the labor atmosphere. Jiangxi Communist Labor University often leads by example to stimulate the enthusiasm of teachers and students to work.

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