Thought and Practice on the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education for College Students

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Abstract. To implement the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students is urgently needed as the requirement of national innovation-driven development strategy and promotion for economics’ quality, efficiency and upgrade. To deepen the reform of that education is also a significant measure to enhance the comprehensive reform of higher education and the quality of graduates’ entrepreneurship. We need to insightfully understand the connotation of that education, clarify the misconceptions during the reform, and adhere to the three principles: all-round promotion; integration of professional education with the innovation and entrepreneurship education; student-aimed service. Furthermore, we need to formulate a quality standard, integrate of educational resources and promote collaboration between colleges and enterprises in order to create a cultural environment in which innovation is encouraged and failures are tolerated, which are all efforts to boost the reform on the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students.

Introduction

In the official document, Opinion of deepening reform on the innovation and entrepreneurship education in colleges proposed by the General Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China in 2015, it was clarified, “To implement the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students is urgently needed as the requirement of national innovation-driven development strategy and promotion for economics’ quality, efficiency and upgrade.” Since then, the innovation and entrepreneurship education has been one of the national strategies. Colleges throughout the country also started to reform the education, undertaking efficient measures in various fields like education scheme, curriculum, faculties, relevant platform, system guarantee and financial support, which encouraged to undertake the innovation and entrepreneurship education. We need to insightfully understand the connotation of that education, clarify the misconceptions during the reform and moreover, it is college’s responsibility and obligation to actively promote the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students in accordance of reality.

The Connotation of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education for College Students

The innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students is a significant national deployment to cultivate innovative and entrepreneurial talents, an important measure to promote high quality of graduates’ entrepreneurship, as well as a quality-oriented education in new period, its connotation is to promote college student’s innovative spirt, career consciousness and innovative and entrepreneurial ability in order to enhance the overall quality of college students.

The innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students focuses on all students, emphasizing success of all of them. Chen Baosheng, the minister of education, also emphasized, “We should attach greater importance to teaching student in accordance of their aptitude, stress students as the main role in education, and give prominence to students’ healthy development. The educational method should also be improved to develop every students’ strengths and potentials.” All students are the objects of the innovation and entrepreneurship education. Consequently, it is necessary to let all...
college students to be aware of the requirement of social development as well as the anticipation from their country.

In the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students, individualized evaluation should be applied to encourage students to make good use of their talents. Individualized evaluation refers to formulate standard in terms of individuals and evaluate them in proper time as to respect difference among individual students so that learning effect is ensured. Those like flexible educational system, suspension of schooling to start business, autonomic learning and evaluation according to personal differences are all methods to boost students’ talents and potentials.

The innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students should emphasize the ability-oriented education, with its core to cultivate one’s innovative and entrepreneurial abilities. The ability-oriented education means college education can develop students’ ability to adapt to their life in future and in addition, they maintain specific core ability and have a clear requirement as well as the approach. As for the national requirement for the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students, it is: establishing new system which is cross-faculty and cross-discipline to foster innovative and entrepreneurial students. In such a system, students’ innovative spirit, career consciousness and innovative and entrepreneurial ability.

The Misconceptions during the Reform on the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education for College Students

In recent years, the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students has been strengthened and progress has been made. Thanks to that progress, the educational quality has been promoted; students has developed in an all-round way; graduates’ entrepreneurship and employment has boosted; China’s modernization has also been significantly supported. However, some prominent problems during the reform should not be ignored. Those problems are mainly the outdated conceptions or misconceptions of the innovation and entrepreneurship education.

Some people think that the innovation and entrepreneurship education is the last solution that may hopefully solve the difficulty of college students’ employment. However, the central government of China has already made it clarified: “People of ability is the basis and core subject of innovation. We should build up a team of talents in a large scale as soon as possible. Those talents are with innovative spirit and are always dare to undertake risks.” This shows that the innovation and entrepreneurship education is not simply a solution to the difficulty of college students’ employment [1], but rather, it is in accordance of the national strategy to construct a strong country rich in human resources and it is an inevitable choice to foster innovative talents.

Some people also think that the innovation and entrepreneurship education is simply to teach college students to start up business. Some holds misconception of “Innovation leads to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship promotes employment,” thinking that the destination of the innovation and entrepreneurship education is employment. But the core of the innovation and entrepreneurship education is to enhance the quality of talents and facilitate to establish a team of innovative talents. Hence, the innovation and entrepreneurship education is not simply teaching students to start up business but instead, it serves to provide intellectual support for constructing innovation-oriented country.

The author thinks that during the innovation and entrepreneurship education, we should adhere to the three principles. The first principle is “all-round promotion”, which means the innovation and entrepreneurship education is reformed for all students and should be promoted in comprehensive aspects so that every student can be aware of the requirement of social development as well as the anticipation from their country [2]. The second one is to integrate professional education with the innovation and entrepreneurship education. This requires us to bring forward concepts like innovative spirit, career consciousness and innovative and entrepreneurial ability during our teaching and educational practice. The third principle is student-aimed service. It is a college’s responsibility to support students’ autonomic learning and satisfy their personalized need. Moreover, this principle
should be always persisted during the reform. Colleges should always support the development of students and facilitate their ability and quality to support students.

**The Reform Practice on the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education for College Students**

During the process of the reform practice on the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students, Huazhong Agricultural University (HZAU) has adhered to the three principles mentioned above. Furthermore, we also “integrated that education with the college’s development, school’s talent-cultivation system and the entire process of students’ development” [3]. Additionally, the university has formulated a quality standard, integrated educational resources and promoted collaboration between the university and enterprises to create a cultural environment of encouraging innovation and tolerance for failures, which will contribute positively to the reform on the innovation and entrepreneurship education.

**Integrating the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education with Talent-Cultivation System**

It is significant that HZAU has integrated the innovation and entrepreneurship education with talent-cultivation system, as well as with professional education, which is a guarantee for the coverage, integration and persistence of the innovation and entrepreneurship education during the process of cultivating talents [4]. The university also implemented “Project 101”, which refers to ensure that 100 percent of the students accept innovative spirit, career consciousness and innovative and entrepreneurial ability and meanwhile, strive to lead 1 percent of them to start their business. This project is expected to foster talents with practical and innovative ability, social responsibility and international vision. Those talents are the ones who inherit Chinese traditional virtues and the pioneers of social development.

**Strengthening the Construction of the Curriculum of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education**

With the purpose of reinforcing college students’ knowledge about the ability involving in the innovation and entrepreneurship education, HZAU has adjusted the curriculum and besides designing basic course of the innovation and entrepreneurship education, other courses with great variety are designed. The first design is setting up hundreds of courses introducing cases of scientific research, which can inspire students’ innovative ideas. The second one is setting up hundreds of courses introducing cases of successful entrepreneurship to arouse students’ interest to establish business. Another design involves intensive courses about practical work, demonstrating latest payoffs of scientific research to update the teaching contents in the university. The fourth possible design is teaching programs about innovative experiment, which may lead students into laboratory to establish scientific research or maintain practical training on their entrepreneurship team. The fifth one are designing courses cooperated by enterprises, employing executives to deliver courses in the university so that students may get hold of the development of relevant industry.

**Establishing Three-Level System for Practice and Training of Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

HZAU has integrated every level of the original training programs and practical work, relying on program practice and competition to improve the three-level system for practice and training of innovation and entrepreneurship: “Core professional ability- Comprehensive practical ability-Innovative and entrepreneurial ability”. There are two suggestions to establish that system through the experience of the university. The first one is to encourage the training of innovation and entrepreneurship to develop in variety of types and levels, including programs of innovation and entrepreneurship, funds for science and technology, special projects of scientific and technological innovation, programs of supporting entrepreneurship, training camp for entrepreneurial elites, training plans for innovation and entrepreneurship and other programs covering the three levels. The other suggestion is to reinforce the practice on innovation and entrepreneurship and satisfy the need of
students to undertake a training of complete system, which can be achieved by methods like holding competitions of professional skill, relevant discipline and entrepreneurship covering the three levels.

Constructing an Advanced Platform to Train Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Two methods were used by HZAU to achieve this goal. The first method is setting up a platform to train innovation and entrepreneurship, providing and sharing approximately a hundred of bases for innovative practice like national, provincial and ministerial laboratories, as well as research and development centers, experimental teaching centers and project-training centers in the university, satisfying students’ experiment and practice, designing and producing relevant products, strongly supporting students to implement training on innovation and entrepreneurship. The second method is constructing a base of innovation and entrepreneurship for college students in the university, in which a platform of “Program’s connection-Funds’ support-Base’s establishment-Entrepreneurship” was built up, with centers for colleges students’ innovative and entrepreneurial practice, supporting facilities for entrepreneurship, bases offering internship for college students, which are measures to provide an eminent working environment in the university for innovative and entrepreneurial team for free.

Constructing a Platform for the Communication between Teachers and Students

In attempt to encourage communication and maintain better knowledge of students’ need, HZAU has made the upmost of four different approaches including in-class activities, extracurricular activities, practice and internet to promote the communication between teachers and students in the university, being devoted to construct a platform for that communication. HZAU has also established relevant facilities and websites to encourage communication between teachers and students, improving guidance and consultative services of the university, efficiently activating students’ inspiration and passion for innovation and entrepreneurship, leading students to distinguish and seize opportunity of entrepreneurship.

Creating Supportive Environment for the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education

With the purpose of knowing social need and getting feedback of the quality of the students from the university, HZAU has attached great importance to the cooperation between colleges and enterprises, creating supportive environment for the innovation and entrepreneurship education. Four points has been clarified to achieve this goal. The first point is formulating a quality standard, centering on the cultivation of talents. Additionally, HZAU has invited experts or entrepreneurs from relevant industry to join the discussion on cultivation of talents. The second one is inviting guests from enterprises to deliver classes in the company, bringing forward knowledges of the industry. Another point is cooperating with enterprises to set up experimental classes to cultivate innovative and entrepreneur talents. The last point is employing executives from enterprises as the principle of the class to guide students, involving in the innovation and entrepreneurship education.

Improving Administrative System of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education

HZAU has built up a leading team of the innovation and entrepreneurship education with efforts from various departments. For specific division of the works, the educational administrative department has included the innovation and entrepreneurship education into the cultivation system, applying construction of the classes of the innovation and entrepreneurship education, formulating incentive policies of evaluation. The scientific research department has published, shared their scientific payoffs and put them into good use through scientific platform, providing training of innovation and entrepreneurship education for students. The student administration department has served students with extracurricular teaching, providing guidance of the innovation and entrepreneurship education, and established relevant bases and meanwhile keep maintaining them. Other departments like The committee of the innovation and entrepreneurship education and The innovation and
entrepreneurship education research center have offered intellectual support for the reform and promoted the work of the innovation and entrepreneurship.

Creating a Cultural and Educational Environment in which Innovation is Encouraged and Failures are Tolerated

This goal was achieved by various means in the university. HZAU has been holding forum of the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students every year as well as relevant culture festivals to set examples of innovative and entrepreneurial students. Entrepreneurs forum is held every year in the university and “ten excellent pioneering entrepreneurs” are appraised to arouse students’ passion for innovation and entrepreneurship. Overseas study group is organized by the university to visit domestic or foreign colleges and enterprises in order to broaden college students’ international vision. A special column is designed on a wall in a teaching building in the university to exhibit excellent entrepreneurial students. HZAU has exerted the conception of the innovation and entrepreneurship education into school-running activities, teaching and students’ mind, contributing to create a cultural environment in which innovation is encouraged and action is taken in advance but meanwhile, risks are always dare to be undertaken and failures are tolerated as well [5].

Conclusion

HZAU has boosted the activities of the innovation and entrepreneurship education through practical reform to promote students’ innovative and entrepreneurial ability to a large degree, which also boosted the reform and practice of the innovation and entrepreneurship education of the university and efficiently improve the quality of the talents. The university has received a wide acclaim from official education administration departments and other universities. The university has also successively received official approval as one of the first national bases of cultivating innovative and entrepreneurial talents, one of the first provincial bases of the innovation and entrepreneurship education for college students and one of the first provincial “demonstrative universities of deepening educational reform on the innovation and entrepreneurship education”. Last but not least, the Ministry of Education has bulletined reporting the university’s contribution to the reform on the innovation and entrepreneurship education and the promotion of the quality of innovative and entrepreneurial talents.

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References


