

Research on the Cultivation Path of Practical Ability of College Talents from the Perspective of Research Travel

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Abstract: Research travel represents an innovative educational model that integrates academic study with travel experiences. Its application in higher education effectively cultivates students' comprehensive practical abilities and promotes their holistic development. In practice, students transcend traditional classroom boundaries by engaging in field observations and research activities to explore industry developments and resources within their professional domains. This approach enriches professional knowledge while allowing students to experience the unique charm of various landscapes. This paper examines the pathways for cultivating practical abilities in university students through research travel, analyzes its significant value in talent development, and proposes specific strategies for implementation. The objective is to enhance students' practical abilities through research travel activities and provide novel insights and methods for talent cultivation in higher education.

Keywords: Research travel; University talents; Practical ability; Training path

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1. Introduction

The rapid societal advancement and deepening educational reforms have presented new challenges and opportunities for talent cultivation in higher education. Practical ability, as one of the core competencies required of modern talents, holds immense significance for enhancing students' comprehensive quality and competitiveness.

Research travel, an educational approach that integrates study with travel, broadens students' horizons and cultivates their practical abilities and sense of social responsibility through fieldwork and experiential learning. Wei *et al.* emphasized that identifying appropriate themes and objectives is essential for the effective implementation of research travel activities, as these elements underpin its educational value^[1]. Similarly, Hou advocated for designing research travel courses with scientific objectives, differentiated content, and structured

activities to maximize educational outcomes ^[2].

Internationally, research travel encompasses broader connotations, functioning not only as a learning methodology but also as a means of cultural exchange and life experience. This approach fosters students' global perspectives and cross-cultural communication skills. For example, Abubakar *et al.*'s study in Northern Cyprus highlighted the multifaceted value of postgraduate research travel, including enhanced employment prospects, improved educational quality, and individual development ^[3]. Similarly, Tashlai's interviews with international research travel students in five Eastern European countries identified diverse values, such as future income expectations and career choices, which collectively influence students' long-term development ^[4].

Practical ability is a cornerstone of higher education talent cultivation, enabling students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world contexts, solve practical problems, and demonstrate innovative thinking and teamwork skills. However, challenges persist, including a disconnection between theoretical instruction and practical application and a lack of adequate teaching resources, which hinder the development of students' practical abilities.

Addressing these challenges requires a reimagined approach to cultivating practical abilities that align with the demands of the modern era. Research travel offers a promising pathway, necessitating an in-depth exploration of its educational potential and innovative implementation models. Furthermore, it calls for practical solutions to existing challenges based on the core competencies required for talent cultivation in higher education. This exploration aims to advance educational reforms, enhance the quality of talent development, and promote the overall progress of higher education.

2. The important value of practical ability training of college talents from the perspective of research travel

2.1. Contribution to the all-round development of students

College education should aim to cultivate well-rounded talents, guiding students toward self-awareness while strengthening their practical abilities. By encouraging students to step out of the classroom and immerse themselves in nature, society, and historical and cultural contexts, research travel effectively broadens their knowledge horizons and promotes holistic development, including both physical and mental well-being. Team cooperation and interaction during research travel activities help to develop students' social communication skills and teamwork spirit, enabling them to apply knowledge to real-world problems and enhance their critical thinking and practical skills. When facing unfamiliar environments and challenges, students gain opportunities to think independently, manage themselves, and foster self-motivation, ultimately improving their overall quality. Initiatives such as the "Sound in Mind" project can reinforce students' ideological beliefs and values, enhance their aesthetic qualities and creativity, and inspire their intrinsic motivation to achieve comprehensive development, facilitating balanced and coordinated growth through proactive efforts ^[5].

2.2. Facilitation of talent cultivation for the new era

The demand for talent in the modern era places greater emphasis on practical ability, innovation, and comprehensive quality. Research travel, by offering diverse practical opportunities and scenarios, enables students to discover, analyze, and solve problems, thereby nurturing their innovation awareness and practical skills. Given the highly practical nature of many academic disciplines, traditional classroom teaching often fails to meet students' developmental needs. Research travel supplements this gap by providing access to varied

off-campus resources, such as practice bases and natural landscapes, encouraging students to engage directly with production and service sectors. By experiencing the outcomes of modern-era advancements, such as rural revitalization projects, students cultivate a sense of social responsibility and align their personal development with societal needs. Research travel also emphasizes fostering a sense of civic awareness, global vision, and patriotism, aiming to produce talents who embody innovation, international perspective, and a commitment to national development.

2.3. Promotion of university teaching reform

As an innovative educational approach, research travel transcends the limitations of traditional classroom teaching. Colleges and universities can adopt more flexible curriculum systems and teaching content, emphasizing the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical application and uniting knowledge dissemination with value guidance. For modern college students, traditional teaching methods no longer satisfy their needs; they show a preference for approaches such as extracurricular practice and scenario simulation. Research travel supports the adoption of updated teaching methodologies, such as project-based learning, making instruction more engaging, dynamic, and effective. This enhances students' interest and participation in learning, contributing to improved teaching quality and fostering innovation in talent cultivation models.

3. Research on the cultivation path of college talents' practical ability from the perspective of research travel

3.1. Effective integration into the talent training system and development of unique research travel courses

Colleges and universities play a crucial role in cultivating talent, and the design of curriculum systems and content directly impacts students' comprehensive literacy and adaptability. In teaching practice, it is essential to integrate research travel into the talent training system as an integral part of practical education. Higher education institutions should prioritize and support research travel within their strategic framework and develop specialized courses tailored to their professional strengths and regional characteristics. These efforts aim to extend traditional classroom teaching and enhance students' practical abilities.

From the perspective of research travel, colleges and universities should consider the specific needs and characteristics of various disciplines to customize relevant travel plans. For instance, students majoring in environmental science could benefit from visiting ecological protection areas such as nature reserves, ecological parks, and sewage treatment facilities. These activities provide opportunities for field observation, data collection, and hands-on experience, allowing students to understand ecosystem composition, structure, and functions, as well as the causes, impacts, and mitigation strategies for environmental pollution. Participation in ecological protection projects equips students with practical skills in applying ecological protection measures and technical solutions.

After completing the research travel activities, students can be required to submit ecological research reports or participate in the planning of ecological protection projects to demonstrate their learning outcomes and practical skills. These immersive experiences not only spark students' interest and motivation but also help them refine their practical abilities, laying a solid foundation for their future career development.

3.2. Emphasis on production experience development and research to promote the integration of production and teaching

To enhance the practical outcomes of research travel, colleges and universities should focus on the development of production experience and research initiatives. Promoting the integration of production and teaching within research travel fosters the seamless connection between theoretical knowledge and practical application, ultimately enhancing students' practical and innovative abilities.

First, it is essential to design experience-oriented and research-driven travel products. In research travel, college students often prioritize experiential learning and investigative activities. Institutions should balance students' needs with the professional characteristics of their disciplines to develop tailored travel products. For example, tourism students could engage in projects that explore tourism resources and ecological conservation efforts in historically significant regions. Activities might include investigating unique flora and fauna or studying social issues in rural development areas. Such programs can provide students with both patriotism education and insights into agricultural appreciation, while also encouraging field investigations, problem-solving, and solution proposals.

Second, schools should actively promote the integration of production and teaching through strategic collaborations. Partnerships with research activity centers, travel service agencies, and other enterprises can facilitate the joint development of research travel plans. These collaborations enable students to engage in simplified production environments or participate directly in product research, development, and design during research courses. Such initiatives cultivate practical and innovative skills while fostering resource-sharing and complementary advantages across institutions and industries.

3.3. Increasing investment and support for research travel to create a comprehensive and multidimensional research experience

To fully realize the application value of the research travel model, universities should increase investments and support, optimize resource allocation, foster cooperation and exchanges, and create a comprehensive and multi-dimensional research experience.

Firstly, the allocation of research travel resources should be optimized. Universities must allocate adequate capital, human resources, and materials to ensure that students can engage in research activities under favorable conditions. For instance, establishing dedicated funds for research travel can support expenses related to travel, research materials, and organizational needs. Strengthening the professional quality and teaching capacity of research travel instructors is also essential to ensure high-quality guidance during these activities.

Secondly, universities should establish research resource-sharing platforms both internally and externally. By collaborating with government agencies, enterprises, and social organizations, universities can build platforms to facilitate resource sharing and complementarity. This approach promotes effective resource integration, enriches the content and formats of research travel, and enhances students' experiences.

Finally, cooperation and exchange between institutions should be reinforced. Universities should leverage the resource advantages of various stakeholders, fostering deeper integration with society to improve students' research experiences. Examples include partnerships with tourism administrations and environmental protection bureaus for additional research resources, collaboration with enterprises and research institutions to provide internships and practical opportunities, and engagement with non-profit organizations to organize diverse research and social practice activities ^[5].

3.4. Establishing an evaluation system for research travel and formulating detailed evaluation standards

A comprehensive evaluation system is crucial for ensuring the effectiveness and relevance of practical ability training for college students. Universities should develop a scientific and thorough evaluation system for research travel, with well-defined objectives and detailed standards. This system should comprehensively assess student performance, support teaching improvements, and promote student growth.

To enhance professionalism and objectivity, universities may invite experts, scholars, or industry practitioners to act as evaluation consultants. These consultants can conduct in-depth assessments of students' practical abilities and innovative thinking, providing targeted guidance and feedback.

For example, in the evaluation of agricultural research travel, universities should refine specific evaluation criteria. These include:

- (1) Knowledge acquisition: Assessing whether students have grasped fundamental agricultural concepts, such as crop growth cycles, pest control methods, and soil management, through field visits and practical activities.
- (2) Practical operation ability: Evaluating students' proficiency in tasks like using agricultural tools, planting crops, and controlling pests and diseases, as well as their ability to apply theoretical knowledge to solve real-world problems.
- (3) Innovative thinking abilities: Examining whether students can identify problems during practice, analyze these issues, and propose creative solutions, such as new agricultural techniques or improvements to existing methods.
- (4) Logical and written expression: Reviewing students' practice reports, team discussion records, and other outputs to assess their capacity to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical experience, conduct critical analysis, and articulate their findings clearly and coherently.

Additionally, the evaluation process should emphasize summarizing teaching outcomes. Teachers should focus on assessing students' ability to analyze and synthesize information, draw meaningful conclusions, and present their insights effectively. This ensures that research travel not only enhances students' practical and innovative skills but also contributes to their overall academic and professional development.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, with the rapid advancement of the knowledge economy and the acceleration of globalization, colleges and universities, as pivotal institutions for talent cultivation, face unprecedented challenges and opportunities. Research travel, as an innovative educational model that integrates school-based learning with off-campus comprehensive practice, provides a new pathway for cultivating the practical abilities of college students.

The research travel teaching model, which emphasizes hands-on activities and personal experiences, encourages students to actively explore and learn in real-world environments, thereby enhancing their practical skills. In its implementation, schools should focus on effectively incorporating research travel into the talent training system, prioritizing product experience development and research, increasing investment and support, and establishing robust evaluation systems. These measures are critical for leveraging the unique advantages of research travel in enhancing students' practical abilities and fostering their holistic development.

During the process of educational reform, universities should devote greater attention and resources to

research travel, continuously innovating and improving its content and methodologies. This commitment will contribute to the cultivation of a new generation of talents equipped with practical abilities and innovative mindsets, aligning with the demands of the modern era.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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