

Strategies for Addressing the Current Situation and Existing Problems of National Defense Education in Vocational Colleges

Yingxi Liu*, Xinyu Li

Karamay Vocational and Technical College, Karamay 833699, Xinjiang, China

**Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

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Abstract: In recent years, China has been in a special period of social transformation. To effectively maintain social stability, the support of national defense is indispensable. As a major base for cultivating high-quality, skilled talents, vocational colleges play a crucial role in national defense education. The state of national defense education in vocational colleges is directly related to the long-term development of national security and the future of the nation. However, in the face of the current complex and volatile international situation and security challenges, although national defense education in vocational colleges has achieved certain results, it also faces a series of urgent problems. Therefore, vocational colleges should actively consider what strategies to adopt to address these issues and how to further improve the quality and level of national defense education, to contribute more talent to the country's security and development. In this regard, this article first elaborates on the current situation and existing problems of national defense education in vocational colleges, and then proposes effective countermeasures, hoping to provide some reference for relevant researchers.

Keywords: Vocational colleges; National defense education; Existing problems; Countermeasures

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1. Current situation and problems of national defense education in vocational colleges

1.1. Insufficient emphasis on national defense education

Influenced by traditional educational concepts, national defense education in some vocational colleges in certain regions remains at the stage of periodic theoretical and practical learning and has not been integrated into the regular vocational education system. For example, some vocational colleges conduct periodic national defense education during military training. After the training, no further national defense education activities are carried out, preventing students from truly understanding the essence of national defense education. Additionally, many vocational colleges attach national defense education to ideological and political theory courses and have

not established an independent disciplinary system^[1]. As a result, national defense education is regarded as a secondary subject, with most students showing little interest and vocational colleges lacking sufficient attention. This leads to students failing to effectively accumulate knowledge during the teaching process and being unable to apply it in real life. However, national defense education represents the mainstream values in China, embodying the highest socialist ideals and serving as the vanguard ideology for cultivating people with moral integrity. Therefore, vocational colleges should attach great importance to national defense education and carry it out regularly.

1.2. Relatively monotonous and outdated national defense education methods

Currently, the forms of national defense education in vocational colleges are relatively monotonous and lagging, failing to meet the needs of national defense education development in the new era. The specific manifestations are as follows: Firstly, national defense education in vocational colleges mainly focuses on military training and the imparting of theoretical knowledge. In military training, the teaching content mainly includes military postures, goose-stepping, and queue training, which is monotonous and lacks appeal. Military theory teaching mainly takes the form of lectures, with few teacher-student interactions^[2]. It fails to combine national defense education with real-life situations, resulting in students' low enthusiasm for learning national defense knowledge. Secondly, national defense education lacks integration with social practice. Students cannot experience and understand the importance of national defense in real life, which affects their sense of identity and participation in national defense education. Thus, innovating national defense education methods and enhancing their practicality and interest are important directions for the reform of national defense education in vocational colleges.

1.3. The need to strengthen the teaching staff for national defense education

At present, the teaching staff for national defense education in vocational colleges is relatively weak. Most of the teachers are part-time ideological and political teachers, and some are even counselors. This leads to a lack of professional teaching staff, and the teaching abilities of these teachers vary widely. The academic qualifications of in-service teachers are generally low, and most of them are part-time, making it difficult to guarantee their teaching attitudes and professionalism^[3]. Moreover, the number of military course teachers with high educational backgrounds in national defense education is small, and the teaching quality of scientific researchers is not high. The military literacy of scientific researchers makes it difficult for students to focus on learning according to the course content, causing this subject to gradually lose its effectiveness. The shortage of the scientific research team forces many teachers in this field to hold multiple positions, exceeding their normal teaching workload and making it difficult to ensure teaching quality^[4].

2. Analysis of countermeasures for national defense education in vocational colleges

2.1. Utilize modern educational means to innovate national defense education forms

In the current educational context, national defense education in vocational colleges mainly focuses on military skills training and military theory teaching, targeting mainly first-year students. Little or no such education is provided for second-year students, resulting in their lack of interest. In response, teachers should take the initiative to innovate national defense education forms and broaden their channels to fully stimulate students' learning interest and encourage their active participation, thus laying a solid foundation for improving the quality of national defense education^[5]. Firstly, teachers should make rational use of platforms such as DingTalk,

Weibo, and WeChat to create a “micro” interaction platform for students. This enables teachers and students to discuss current military hotspots online, helping them master and understand national defense knowledge and enhance their national defense awareness through communication. Secondly, give full play to the advantages of student organizations at all levels, such as Party branches and Youth League branches, and integrate national defense education into regular organizational life. Combine offline education with online promotion organically. For example, vocational colleges can invite military experts to give a national defense popular science lecture offline and broadcast it live online to expand the coverage of national defense education. In addition, taking special time nodes such as National Day, Army Day, and National Defense Education Day as opportunities, organize various offline educational activities. The school should regularly arrange for students to visit patriotic education bases, revolutionary red bases, and military education bases for national defense education, stimulating students’ patriotic feelings and inheriting the red gene. At the same time, teachers should organize military skills competitions, such as military skills contests and field combat simulation drills. Furthermore, teachers should give full play to the advantages of new media and establish an online national defense knowledge sharing platform^[6]. This ensures that students can learn and discuss anytime and anywhere via mobile phones. A national defense education module can be created on this platform to upload conscription propaganda, military information, and the latest military developments, guiding students to analyze the international situation and further enhancing their national defense awareness^[7].

2.2. Implement the student-centered concept to effectively give play to students’ subjective initiative

Under the fundamental concept of cultivating people with moral integrity, when conducting national defense education, teachers need to base on students’ actual learning situations. By stimulating students’ thinking abilities, teachers can guide them to understand and absorb new knowledge elements and design personalized national defense education plans according to different students’ learning abilities and foundations. In practice, teachers should adhere to the student-centered concept, consider what teaching strategies to adopt to motivate students, and explore their inner values and emotions to change their perceptions of national defense education. In national defense education activities, teachers can guide students to actively explore relevant knowledge by setting up discussion questions, such as “Is national defense far away from us?” By designing such questions, students can be divided into different study groups. Each group member can collect relevant information based on their views and conduct an in-depth analysis. Through independent thinking and group discussions, students can analyze and understand national defense security issues with the support of their internal motivation, enabling them to better express their views and understandings of national defense security^[8]. After understanding students’ emotional attitudes, teachers can better understand their thoughts and attitudes based on their opinions and then implement targeted national defense education. Only when teachers \ recognize the student-centered educational concept and adjust their teaching plans and ideas according to students’ actual learning situations on time can the concept of cultivating people with moral integrity be effectively implemented in national defense education, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of national defense education in vocational colleges.

2.3. Create a good educational atmosphere to enhance the effect of national defense education

To create a favorable national defense education environment, vocational colleges should make full use of the existing teaching resources^[9]. Through various forms of publicity media, such as news media, they should

strengthen the cultivation of students' national defense awareness, improve the effectiveness of patriotic education, and create a campus atmosphere conducive to national defense education. A good campus atmosphere can make students' daily lives more orderly and cultivate their hard-working spirit, which is of great significance for enhancing the effect of national defense education. In the new media environment, vocational colleges should give full play to the role of new media and establish and improve national defense education systems^[10]. Moreover, new media offer rich and personalized teaching resources, which can enhance the intuitiveness, profundity, and vividness of national defense education, thus improving the effectiveness of national defense education in vocational colleges. On this basis, by closely linking the cultivation of national security awareness with the career development of college students and integrating national defense education into the curriculum education of vocational colleges, students can not only deepen their understanding of the relationship between their majors and national security education but also strengthen their awareness of national security education. In higher-level professional teaching, teachers should apply more professional knowledge, skills, and scientific research results to national defense scientific research. When conditions permit, they should offer a variety of elective courses to ensure that students can understand the importance of national defense education in their professional studies, achieving mutual penetration between the two. Teachers should also pay attention to combining military training with scientific research. For example, by holding "National Defense Education Festivals" and "Military Science and Technology Festivals", college students' scientific research work can be combined with military technology, guiding them to create "new weapons". This can stimulate students' interest in daily learning and encourage their active participation in national defense education^[11].

2.4. Innovate the practical teaching model and carry out rich national defense education

Firstly, carry out regular national defense practice activities. Vocational colleges should ensure that national defense education is more targeted, planned, and effective. They should appropriately increase the class hours of national defense education and arrange scientific military internships for freshmen to ensure they have sufficient practical time^[12]. Establish and improve national defense education and physical exercise venues on campus, creating practical military training conditions and providing complete military training equipment for students. For example, teachers can reasonably use virtual reality technology and artificial intelligence technology to create virtual practical scenarios and integrate them into practical teaching, allowing students to experience real-life military scenarios, enhancing their participation, and thus deepening their understanding and recognition of national defense education.

Secondly, carry out national defense education publicity activities. Vocational colleges should conduct typical, distinctive, and targeted national defense education regularly according to the characteristics of students. For example, establish "Model Dormitories for Retired Soldiers" on campus and regularly organize students to visit and learn from them to help students develop good behavior habits. At the same time, teachers can use various means such as bulletin boards and official accounts to carry out theme education activities such as "National Security Education" and "National Security Policy Publicity Week." They can also carry out a series of activities, such as "Telling the Stories of Veterans and Inheriting the Red Gene," to create a good atmosphere of patriotism and love for the military on campus^[13]. Finally, carry out national defense-characteristic education activities. Vocational colleges can conduct joint internship education with the military and military-industrial enterprises. They can also organize military summer camps, national defense education exhibitions, and campus visits to military camps, allowing students to experience military life and military skills, understand military discipline and style, and thus better play their roles.

2.5. Actively strengthen the teaching staff to ensure the orderly development of national defense education

Vocational colleges should regard the construction of the teaching staff for national defense education as an important task and attach great importance to it. They should actively take measures to introduce and cultivate professional national defense education talents. Firstly, vocational colleges can seek cooperation opportunities with military academies, the military, and other relevant institutions and establish in-depth cooperation relationships. Invite experts and instructors with rich practical experience and profound military theoretical knowledge to teach or hold special lectures on campus, which can significantly improve the professional level and teaching quality of the teaching staff. Secondly, vocational colleges need to increase the training intensity for in-service teachers^[14]. Regularly arrange for teachers to participate in national defense education-related training courses and seminars to improve their professional qualities and teaching abilities. At the same time, vocational colleges should encourage teachers to actively participate in national defense scientific research projects and transform their research results into teaching resources, which can not only enrich the teaching content but also improve the teaching effect. Finally, vocational colleges can establish an incentive mechanism to stimulate teachers' enthusiasm and initiative in national defense education^[15]. For example, set up excellent teaching awards and scientific research achievement awards for national defense education to commend and reward teachers who perform outstandingly in national defense education work. This can not only enhance teachers' sense of honor and belonging, but also attract more excellent teachers to engage in national defense education. At the same time, vocational colleges should strengthen the management and assessment of the teaching staff for national defense education to ensure that their teaching quality and teaching effects meet the expected goals. Through the implementation of these measures, vocational colleges can gradually build a high-quality and professional teaching staff for national defense education, providing strong support for the orderly development of national defense education.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, students are the future and hope of the nation, the successors of socialism, and a high-quality and high-level group in the current population structure. As an important base for supplying high-skilled and high-quality talents to society, vocational colleges should attach greater importance to national defense education. In this regard, vocational colleges should deeply analyze the current situation and problems of national defense education and, combined with the actual situation, adopt countermeasures such as using modern educational means to innovate national defense education forms, implementing the student-centered concept to give full play to students' subjective initiative, creating a good educational atmosphere to enhance the effect of national defense education, innovating the practical teaching model to carry out rich national defense education, and actively strengthening the teaching staff to ensure the orderly development of national defense education. In this way, students' national defense awareness can be continuously strengthened. While improving the level of national defense education, a solid foundation can also be laid for students' future development.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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