

Research on the Effectiveness of Vocational Education in Special Education School

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Abstract: The importance of vocational education curriculum setting in special education schools cannot be ignored. On the basis of following the teaching purpose, schools need to plan school-based courses conducive to the lifelong development of students according to their own development needs. The curriculum arrangement should take students as the main body, pay attention to their long-term development needs, and provide students with more opportunities for active participation and hands-on practice, so as to cultivate their social practical skills and good habits. The overall teaching arrangement should reflect a scientific, reasonable, holistic, and practical teaching structure. In view of this, this article will analyze the effectiveness of vocational education in special education schools and put forward some strategies for reference.

Keywords: Special education school; Vocational education; Effectiveness; Inquiry

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1. Introduction

Under the background of continuous optimization and progress of education in our country, special education schools have received more and more attention and their status has become increasingly prominent. Such schools are mainly devoted to providing special education for disabled students and implementing vocational and technical education according to the actual situation of the schools and the development of special education in our country^[1]. However, only a small number of disabled students can enter higher education institutions for further study, while most choose to join the labor market directly. Therefore, special education schools should deal with this reality and promote vocational and technical education based on practice in an all-round way.

2. Present situation of vocational education in special education schools

2.1. Lack of teachers and low professional ability

At present, in China's special education schools, the phenomenon of shortage of full-time teaching staff

is relatively common, most of the existing teachers are only special education or culture teachers, their professional knowledge and ability are relatively weak, and the teaching method is lagging ^[2]. The teaching and management tasks of special education schools mainly include psychological rehabilitation teaching, cultural education, and vocational skills teaching, and a certain number of full-time teachers must be assigned to the vocational education part. However, since the normal colleges for training special education teachers have not set up specialized courses for vocational education, the trained teachers generally lack the knowledge and skills of vocational education. Restricted by a variety of objective factors, the teaching practice of special education teachers is difficult to deepen, and the educational strength and professional technical level are therefore limited, and remain at a low level for a long time.

2.2. Single vocational education projects and deviation of guiding ideology

At present, the vocational education projects in China's special education schools are too single, resulting in schools being unable to implement differentiated education according to the individual characteristics of students, and unable to meet the diversified needs of the future market economy ^[3-10]. In this context, there are some common problems in vocational education in special education schools. For example, some schools only offer sewing courses, while some students are keen on fields such as barber, repair, or cooking, and the schools fail to provide corresponding courses. In addition, some students have talents in art and dance, but their skills are not fully developed. Such a single vocational education curriculum limits students' individuality and lays potential dangers for disabled students' future employment.

2.3. Teachers' great occupational pressure

Under the current background, the work pressure of special education teachers is mainly reflected in the contradiction between career expectations and reality. As the field of special education enters a new period, teachers' work fatigue is manifested as a special and extreme psychological reaction produced in the long-term high-tension special education environment. There are two representative views on the work stress of special education teachers:

- (1) The first view is the emotional exhaustion theory, represented by Pines ^[11]. According to this theory, teachers' job exhaustion stems from a lack of sense of accomplishment. The tired individual gradually loses affection for the specific object of service, and even takes extreme and inhuman educational measures.
- (2) The second view is the emotion regulation theory. This view holds that inappropriate changes in both the individual teacher and the school's social environment can lead to job burnout. Teacher burnout stems from the disproportionate amount of personal input versus reward. Most scholars believe that personality factors play a significant role in the process of work fatigue, and students with low self-esteem in special education schools are more likely to suffer from fatigue.

2.4. Insufficient investment in vocational education

Adequate funding is an important basis for special education colleges to carry out vocational education. However, compared with general vocational education, the funding source of special education in our country is relatively limited, mainly relying on the special education fund, and the government and relevant departments do not pay enough attention to its development, resulting in a certain gap in capital investment. Although some special education colleges can obtain external funding support from NGOs, enterprises, and other projects, such sources of funding are unstable and relatively insufficient. At present, the teachers of special education colleges and universities in China are weak, which makes it difficult to meet the needs of vocational education

development.

2.5. Lack of effective exchange and cooperation platforms

The development of vocational education in special education schools is also affected by the lack of effective exchange and cooperation platforms. At present, the communication and cooperation between special education schools in China is relatively small, and the mechanism of resource sharing and information transfer is not perfect. This makes it difficult for schools to form complementary advantages in the field of vocational education and make full use of high-quality resources at home and abroad. In addition, the links between special education schools and enterprises and industry associations are not close enough, resulting in limited opportunities for students to practice, and the quality of vocational skill development is affected.

3. Strategies to improve the effectiveness of vocational education in special education schools

3.1. Fully mobilizing social resources and giving full play to the role of vocational colleges

According to the Regulations on Education for Persons with Disabilities, the education system for persons with disabilities should be composed of general vocational colleges and specialized colleges for persons with disabilities, with secondary vocational colleges as the main body. In an interview, school officials stressed: “We need to make full use of all kinds of resources, rely on the vocational education resources of ordinary middle schools, and use relevant policies and regulations to promote vocational colleges and special education schools to achieve mutual benefit and win-win results.” Relying on a single force to develop special education schools, in view of the small scale of schools, weak teachers, and the lack of long-term and accurate planning, it is necessary to implement school-school cooperation according to local actual conditions, promote the development of vocational education, and build a “vocational and special” vocational and technical education system. By giving full play to the advantages of vocational education such as teachers, practice bases, and professional teaching equipment, and gaining strong support from the State and the Disabled Persons’ Federation, we can realize all-round, multi-angle, and deep-level cooperation between vocational high schools and special education schools, and promote the integration and harmonious development of vocational education.

3.2. Building a team of professional teachers in various ways

At present, the shortage of teacher resources in the field of special education has gradually become an important factor restricting the development of special education in China. In order to solve this problem, domestic practice mainly relies on foreign experts to guide teachers on the job. This kind of method has the characteristics of short cycles, small investments, and rapid results. In addition, on-the-job training is carried out through the “dual teacher” mode, that is, in-service teachers are arranged to learn some simple professional knowledge and skills in some enterprises and units according to the actual local conditions, so as to further improve the teaching ability of teachers and lay a solid foundation for the development of students. On this basis, diversified pre-job training and on-the-job training can be implemented. Relying on the teachers of ordinary colleges and universities, we introduce highly skilled talents to give lectures and training and build a long-term and stable internship counseling system ^[12]. Special teachers are responsible for guidance, and sign language interpretation is undertaken by professionals. In order to develop students’ professional skills and adapt to the needs of society, we adopt a “dual teacher” teaching model.

3.3. Forming a collaborative mechanism for professional construction planning based on vocational ability assessment

In view of physical constraints, the vocational ability and career development direction of the disabled group have their own unique standards. An efficient vocational ability assessment for students with disabilities can provide key support for professional development. Through the assessment, we can grasp the vocational ability level of students with disabilities, understand their career development potential, and provide a strong basis for the setting of professional direction and evaluation planning. At present, China has not established a vocational evaluation system for disabled students in line with the national conditions, and the construction of this system needs to rely on a professional team with relevant skills. Therefore, the Ministry of Education, the Disabled Persons' Federation, and other relevant state administrative agencies should organize and solve these problems as soon as possible. Only when these problems are substantively solved, can we promote the effective connection between secondary and higher education for persons with disabilities and lay a foundation for the integration and systematic construction of vocational education in special education schools.

3.4. Combining forces from various parties to build regional industries

Special education schools should establish close ties and cooperative relations with intangible cultural heritage inheritance bases, traditional handicraft enterprises, cultural and creative enterprises, etc., and jointly carry out special vocational education of intangible cultural heritage crafts, covering all aspects from the source to sales. The intangible cultural heritage inheritance base has a wealth of intangible cultural heritage handicraft materials and documents and highly skilled handicraft inheritors. Special schools should reasonably select handicrafts suitable for inclusion in the handicraft curriculum resource base in communication and contact, and invite handicraft inheritors to provide technical guidance, so as to improve the professional level of vocational courses. At the same time, traditional handicraft enterprises and cultural innovation enterprises can provide production channels and innovative product forms for intangible cultural heritage handicrafts, realize the combination of tradition and innovation, expand hand-woven products, and meet diversified market needs. In addition, product sales can use cultural exhibitions, charity fairs, and other platforms to expand the coverage of the consumer market, and combined with the special school's western point course, the handmade products are used to decorate the theme store, provide western point sales and services, and create an integrated entrepreneurial environment.

3.5. Rationally setting up majors and developing school-based courses

The setting of majors should not blindly follow the trend, but should be carefully considered and closely combined with local characteristics and strive to highlight individuality. Relying on the local intangible cultural heritage—oil-paper umbrella, our university has set up a series of majors that not only meet the needs of students but also conform to the market trend. These majors are designed to adapt to different types of obstacles, especially for deaf students. Since deaf students have some difficulties in communication, the need for language communication should be minimized when selecting suitable jobs for them. At the same time, we also need to give full play to the advantages of deaf students, such as patience and meticulousness, especially those having excellent handicrafts performance. In addition, at present, there is still a lack of suitable materials for disabled students, so our school pays attention to the combination of students' interests, experience, and physiological characteristics in the selection of materials, such as manual materials, pastry materials, oil-paper umbrella materials, etc., in order to better meet their learning needs.

3.6. Diversification of education to promote students' employment

In order to promote the sustainable development of special education schools, we must make full use of all kinds of social resources, dig deep into their social functions, and adopt various ways to jointly run schools to make up for the shortcomings of special education schools^[13]. Specifically, inter-school cooperation should be strengthened to enhance the professional skills of special education schools. At the same time, with the help of enterprise resources, professional staff from enterprises should be hired as full-time teachers, and excellent teachers should be selected by schools as counselors to help solve students' problems in classroom sign language communication. In addition, we should also pay attention to the cultivation of students' practical skills and strengthen the contact with employers, so that students can better integrate into society. In terms of incentive mechanism, we can use the income from charity sales of students' hand-made products to reward mechanism through the way of "combining work with study," so as to effectively stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning.

3.7. Construction of curriculum evaluation

At present, the curriculum development of special education schools is mainly based on spontaneous form. In view of the fact that the development of special vocational courses not only involves the utilization of internal resources of the school but also needs to be closely combined with the actual needs of the labor market, therefore, we need to build a set of efficient evaluation systems for the goals, contents, and teaching process of vocational courses^[14]. In past research, from the vocational ability standard evaluation of students with disabilities to the evaluation of course content, the achievement of goals, and other issues, there has not been a set of standardized systems for practical use. Therefore, the effective way to explore the evaluation system of special vocational courses is to learn from the evaluation theory of the existing curriculum theory, combine the evaluation theory of the curriculum in vocational education, and fully consider the actual situation of disabled students.

4. Conclusion

According to the above content, the goal of special vocational education is to set up a new educational concept, that is, "the disabled have the capability and ability," aiming at training the disabled to become self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance, and self-improvement members of society with vocational skills. In order to achieve this goal, special education schools need to actively adjust and improve the teaching methods and means of teachers, so as to increase the employment rate of students and lay a solid foundation for the sustainable and healthy development of vocational education in special education schools^[15]. In the process of vocational education teaching for special students in special education schools, teachers need to make full preparation for teaching, closely combine with the actual situation of students, and use scientific and reasonable teaching methods to stimulate students' interest in learning.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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