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A Collaborative Model for Integrating Labor Education into Community Service within Ideological and Political Education: Evidence from a Vocational College in Guangzhou, China

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ABSTRACT

The integration of labor education into community service has emerged as a promising approach to strengthening ideological and political education in vocational colleges. However, coordination among curriculum content, community service needs, practical design, and evaluation mechanisms remains underdeveloped, particularly in Guangzhou's vocational education context in China. This study aimed to examine how students perceive a proposed collaborative model that integrates labor education into community service within ideological and political education through a curriculum-practice-evaluation framework. A quantitative descriptive survey was conducted using a 30-item questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale, administered to 43 students from a single vocational college in Guangzhou via a convenience sample. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and reliability testing. The findings showed strong overall support for the proposed model, with a mean score of 4.358 and excellent internal consistency for the overall instrument (Cronbach's alpha = 0.936). Among the six dimensions, Practice Design received the highest support, followed by Community Needs and Evaluation Mechanism. The strongest item-level support concerned community participation in evaluation, clear categorization of service programs, and close alignment between ideological and political courses and community-based projects. Overall, the results indicate that the model is theoretically relevant and receives strong preliminary support at the level of student perceptions rather than at the level of demonstrated institutional effectiveness. Because the evidence is drawn from a single institution, the study should be interpreted as a preliminary model-building inquiry. Practically, the findings suggest that vocational colleges may strengthen labor education by aligning structured community practice, curriculum integration, and diversified evaluation within a collaborative institutional framework.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary reform of vocational education increasingly calls for educational models that do more than transmit technical competence. In the Chinese context, vocational colleges are expected not only to prepare students for employment but also to cultivate social responsibility, professional ethics, and value-based civic participation. Within this broader expectation, the integration of labor education into ideological and political education has emerged as an important pedagogical direction, particularly when learning is connected to concrete forms of community engagement [1], [2], [11], [12]. Labor education is no longer understood merely as skill training in a narrow operational sense; it is increasingly framed as a formative process through which students internalize values, develop responsibility, and understand the social meaning of work [2], [8], [12], [13], [21].

At the same time, community service offers a practical arena in which these educational aims can be put into practice rather than merely discussed. Existing scholarship has shown that service-oriented learning can contribute to civic development, reflective learning, and socially grounded educational outcomes, especially when participation is meaningfully structured rather than symbolically attached to academic programs [3], [4], [14], [15], [22]. Community engagement in higher education has also been increasingly recognized as a strategic domain through which institutions connect educational missions with local social needs, mutual benefit, and broader public responsibility [5], [15], [16], [23]. In this respect, community service may serve not only as an extracurricular supplement but as a pedagogical site in which labor values and ideological-political formation can be integrated more organically [25].

Despite these developments, the literature remains less explicit about how to systematically integrate labor education, community service, and ideological-political education into a coherent, implementable collaborative model in vocational colleges. Existing studies have discussed labor education, service-oriented learning, vocational reform, and collaborative education separately or in partial combinations [2], [3], [6], [8], [11], [14]. However, the operational relationship among curriculum coordination, practice design, community demand, collaborative support, and diversified evaluation remains insufficiently elaborated, especially in institution-specific vocational settings [24]. This gap is particularly important because many educational reforms remain conceptually attractive but operationally weak when they are not translated into implementable institutional arrangements.

A second gap concerns evaluation. Existing approaches often rely too heavily on examinations while giving insufficient attention to practical competence, service attitude, reflective participation, and value internalization. If ideological and political education is expected to move beyond rhetorical instruction, its assessment cannot be confined to conventional cognitive measurement alone. Once labor education is embedded in community service, educational processes unfold not only in classrooms but also in real social settings shaped by community needs, institutional coordination, and student participation. This requires a broader evaluative logic capable of capturing process, practice, and value formation in more integrated ways.

These issues are especially relevant to vocational colleges, where the tension between theory and practice remains highly visible. In Guangzhou, this tension is further shaped by the local interaction among vocational training, community governance, and industry-education integration. For that reason, Guangzhou is not treated in this study merely as a geographical background, but as a meaningful institutional setting in which the need for a collaborative labor education model becomes especially visible. A model that ignores such contextual conditions risks becoming normatively appealing but practically underdeveloped.

In response to these issues, this study investigates a collaborative model for integrating labor education into community service within ideological and political education in vocational colleges in Guangzhou, China. The study does not aim to test final institutional effectiveness. Instead, it seeks to provide a structured empirical basis for model development by examining how students perceive the key dimensions of the proposed framework. More specifically, the study focuses on six analytical dimensions derived from the conceptual framework: Current Status, Community Needs, Practice Design, Curriculum Coordination, Evaluation Mechanism, and Collaborative Support.



Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The objective of the study is to examine whether the core architecture of the proposed collaborative model receives preliminary support at the level of student perception and to identify which dimensions of the model are perceived as stronger or weaker within a vocational college context. The study is guided by the following question: How do students perceive the feasibility and relevance of a collaborative model that integrates labor education into community service within ideological and political education? At a more specific level, the study asks which model dimensions receive the strongest support and which components appear to signal practical implementation challenges.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework guiding the study. The framework links the article's theoretical assumptions to its six empirical dimensions and helps translate the broader proposal into a model that can be examined through descriptive survey evidence. Conceptually, the study contributes by clarifying how a curriculum-practice-evaluation logic can be extended through community needs and collaborative support into a more operational model of labor-oriented ideological and political education. Empirically, the study

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contributes a preliminary student-based reading of whether this model appears relevant, coherent, and educationally plausible within one vocational college setting. In this sense, the article should be read as a model-building and diagnostic inquiry rather than as a final validation study.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey design with a model-building orientation. The design was selected because the article does not attempt to test causal effects or provide a full multi-site validation of institutional outcomes. Rather, it examines how student respondents perceive the key components of a proposed collaborative model within the context of vocational education in Guangzhou.

More specifically, the article translates a broader conceptual proposal into a survey-based empirical study that supports the preliminary development of the collaborative model. The original proposal combined literature analysis, case studies, interviews, and questionnaire research. In the present article, however, only the survey dataset that is actually available is used as the empirical basis. Accordingly, the study is positioned as a descriptive-analytic inquiry into student perceptions of the structure, relevance, and feasibility of the proposed collaborative model rather than as a completed effectiveness trial.

2.2 Conceptual and Analytical Framework

The study was guided by a conceptual framework derived from the proposal's theoretical and structural logic. At the theoretical level, the proposal draws on the Marxist view of labor, collaborative education theory, and constructivist learning theory. Together, these foundations suggest that labor should be understood not merely as a technical activity, but as a formative process tied to value shaping; that educational institutions and communities can function as complementary partners in resource integration and goal alignment; and that value internalization is more likely to occur when students learn in realistic social contexts rather than through abstract instruction alone.

At the structural level, the proposal defines the collaborative model through a tripartite mechanism of curriculum alignment, practical design, and innovative evaluation, supported by broader concerns about community demand and resource coordination. It identifies major domains, including the current status of labor education in vocational colleges, community service needs, the disconnect between course content and community practice, weaknesses in evaluation systems, and challenges in institutional-community communication. Based on this structure, the survey instrument in the present study was organized into six analytical dimensions: Current Status, Community Needs, Practice Design, Curriculum Coordination, Evaluation Mechanism, and Collaborative Support. These dimensions were treated as the primary domains for examining respondents' perceptions of the proposed model.

2.3 Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in the context of vocational education in Guangzhou, China, in line with the original proposal's regional focus. Guangzhou was selected as a meaningful

setting because vocational colleges in this context face simultaneous demands related to industry-education integration, community governance, and value-based educational reform.

The respondents consisted of 43 students from one vocational college, as represented in the available tabulated dataset. The sample was institutionally concentrated and perception-based. The participants were treated as a convenience sample of students drawn from the dataset for this study. Students were treated as the principal respondents because the collaborative model is ultimately designed to shape student learning, value formation, practical participation, and social responsibility.

It should be noted that the study does not claim to represent all vocational colleges in Guangzhou, nor does it capture the full perspectives of teachers, administrators, residents, or community workers. Although such multi-actor engagement is part of the broader logic of the proposal, the present article is deliberately limited to the student survey data currently available. For that reason, the unit of analysis in this article is perceived support for the proposed collaborative model rather than institutional performance in an objective or fully validated sense.

2.4 Instrument Development and Measures

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising 30 items, rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The instrument was developed as a study-specific descriptive-exploratory questionnaire to reflect the proposal's central argument that the integration of labor education into community service within ideological and political education should be analyzed through the interrelationship among educational conditions, community demands, practice arrangements, curriculum coordination, evaluation design, and institutional support.

The 30 items were grouped into six dimensions: Current Status, Community Needs, Practice Design, Curriculum Coordination, Evaluation Mechanism, and Collaborative Support. These dimensions mirror the proposal's diagnostic and model-building architecture, especially its concern with curriculum design, service need assessment, activity design, diversified evaluation, and sustainable cooperation between institutions and communities. In that sense, the instrument was constructed to organize perception data in a structured manner rather than to serve as a previously standardized measurement scale.

Because the present article relies on the available survey dataset, the questionnaire should be interpreted as a model-oriented descriptive instrument rather than as a fully validated psychometric scale. The available materials support the conceptual basis of the six dimensions, but they do not provide a full independent validation sequence of the kind normally associated with large-scale development. Accordingly, the findings are interpreted descriptively and cautiously, especially at the dimension level.

A particular methodological note concerns the Community Needs dimension. This dimension consists of only two items and produced a relatively low Cronbach's alpha. For that reason, it is retained in this article as an analytically relevant but methodologically limited dimension. Its findings are interpreted cautiously, and future studies should strengthen this domain through item refinement and expansion.

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2.5 Data Collection Procedure

The present article used the tabulated numeric dataset that had already been compiled for the study. The questionnaire responses were recorded in standardized form, with each respondent indicating the extent of agreement with each statement using the same five-point response scale. This standardization enabled consistent comparisons across items and dimensions and supported the study's descriptive purpose.

Although the broader proposal envisioned a wider field strategy that included interviews and case-based materials, the present article is intentionally restricted to the quantitative survey component. This was a necessary methodological decision to keep the article strictly aligned with the available evidence. In that sense, the article should be read as a focused empirical extraction from a larger research agenda rather than as a full report of every method initially anticipated in the proposal.

Participation in the survey was voluntary. Respondents were informed that their responses would be used for academic purposes only and that the data would be treated confidentially. No personally identifying information was included in the analytical reporting of the study.

2.6 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and reliability testing. Mean scores and standard deviations were used to examine the relative prominence of each item and each analytical dimension. This procedure is appropriate for a descriptive study whose purpose is to identify patterns of perceived support rather than to test causal hypotheses or final institutional effectiveness.

The analysis proceeded at three levels. First, the respondent profile was described to clarify the sample's basic composition. Second, descriptive statistics were calculated at the dimensional level to identify which components of the proposed collaborative model received stronger or weaker support within the sample. Third, item-level analysis was used to identify the highest- and lowest-scoring statements, allowing the discussion to move beyond broad averages and toward a more specific interpretation of student priorities and reservations. Reliability analysis was then used to assess the internal consistency of the overall instrument and each dimension, with results interpreted cautiously when reliability was weaker.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Respondent Profile

A total of 43 respondents participated in this study, all drawn from one vocational college in Guangzhou. The dataset shows a nearly balanced gender composition, consisting of 22 male students (51.2%) and 21 female students (48.8%). In terms of age, the respondents were predominantly concentrated in the late-adolescent range, with a mean age of 18.53 years and a median age of 17 years. Most respondents were aged 16-19, indicating that the findings primarily reflect the perceptions of students in the typical age range of vocational education entrants. Institutionally, the sample was concentrated at Guangdong Huali

Technician College, indicating that the present findings should be interpreted as single-institution evidence rather than as a representation of all vocational colleges in Guangzhou.

The profile of the respondents is analytically important for two reasons. First, because the participants are primarily young vocational students, the study captures how the proposed collaborative model is perceived by those who would become its principal implementers. Second, because the sample is institutionally concentrated, the findings are better understood as preliminary empirical support for model construction rather than as conclusive cross-institutional validation.



Figure 2. Respondent collective data

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	22	51.2
	Female	21	48.8
Institution	Guangdong Huali Technician College	43	100.0
Age	16	16	37.2
	17	9	20.9
	18	6	14.0
	19	4	9.3
	20	3	7.0
	21	1	2.3
	27	1	2.3
	30	1	2.3
	31	1	2.3
	35	1	2.3

3.2 Descriptive Results by Dimension

The instrument's overall mean score was 4.358, with an overall standard deviation of 0.685, indicating strong agreement with the general premises of the proposed collaborative model within this sample. At the descriptive level, this pattern suggests that respondents

tended to view the integration of labor education, community service, and ideological-political education positively.

At the dimensional level, the highest mean score was found in Practice Design ($M = 4.407$, $SD = 0.739$), followed by Community Needs ($M = 4.395$, $SD = 0.656$) and Evaluation Mechanism ($M = 4.368$, $SD = 0.711$). Collaborative Support ($M = 4.357$, $SD = 0.741$) and Curriculum Coordination ($M = 4.333$, $SD = 0.609$) also received high support, while Current Status recorded the lowest mean ($M = 4.331$, $SD = 0.646$), though it remained within the high-agreement range.

These dimension-level differences are informative, but they should be interpreted cautiously and not taken as evidence of a generalized hierarchy across vocational colleges. In particular, dimensions with weaker internal consistency are retained here for exploratory descriptive purposes rather than treated as fully stable constructs.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics by Dimension

Rank	Dimension	Number of Items	Mean	SD
1	Practice Design	4	4.407	0.739
2	Community Needs	2	4.395	0.656
3	Evaluation Mechanism	6	4.368	0.711
4	Collaborative Support	6	4.357	0.741
5	Curriculum Coordination	6	4.333	0.609
6	Current Status	6	4.331	0.646

3.3 Item-Level and Reliability Results

At the item level, the highest mean score was recorded for Q26 ($M = 4.651$, $SD = 0.573$), which states that communities should actively open their resources and participate directly in the student evaluation process. This was followed by Q09 ($M = 4.581$, $SD = 0.626$), which concerns the clear categorization of community service programs, and by Q10 and Q13 (both $M = 4.488$), which concern the value of 'Labor Spirit Visits' and the close alignment between ideological-political course content and community enterprise projects.

At the lower end, the lowest mean score was recorded for Q29 ($M = 4.163$, $SD = 0.652$), which concerns the establishment of a shared fund pool to resolve resource and interest conflicts between institutions and communities. This was followed by Q12 ($M = 4.186$, $SD = 0.764$), relating to the direct enhancement of students' responsibility and practical skills through community service, and Q14 ($M = 4.209$, $SD = 0.675$), which concerns embedding labor values seamlessly into practical activities.

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Table 3. Selected Highest- and Lowest-Scoring Items

Category	Item	Mean	SD	Brief Content
Highest	Q26	4.651	0.573	Communities should make resources available and participate directly in student evaluations.
Highest	Q09	4.581	0.626	Community service programs should be clearly categorized.
Highest	Q10	4.488	0.631	'Labor Spirit Visits' effectively cultivates a work ethos.
Highest	Q13	4.488	0.668	Ideological-political courses should align closely with community enterprise projects.
Highest	Q28	4.465	0.797	Vocational colleges and communities should sign long-term cooperation memoranda.
Lowest	Q29	4.163	0.652	A shared fund pool can resolve conflicts between institutional and community resources.
Lowest	Q12	4.186	0.764	Community service directly enhances students' responsibility and practical skills.
Lowest	Q14	4.209	0.675	Labor values should be seamlessly embedded into practical activities.
Lowest	Q27	4.233	0.812	The government should formulate special policies and provide financial support.
Lowest	Q04/Q25	4.256	0.693 / 0.759	Lack of communication mechanisms/community service credit system

Table 4. Reliability of the Instrument

Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Overall instrument	30	0.936	Excellent
Current Status	6	0.794	Good
Community Needs	2	0.398	Low
Practice Design	4	0.613	Moderate
Curriculum Coordination	6	0.808	Good
Evaluation Mechanism	6	0.789	Good
Collaborative Support	6	0.631	Moderate

In terms of reliability, the instrument demonstrated excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.936). At the dimensional level, the strongest alpha values were found for Curriculum Coordination (0.808), Current Status (0.794), and Evaluation Mechanism (0.789). Collaborative Support (0.631) and Practice Design (0.613) remained adequate for descriptive interpretation, while Community Needs recorded the lowest alpha (0.398). Because this dimension contained only two items, its reliability should be interpreted

cautiously, and its descriptive prominence should not be treated as firm evidence of a stable subscale. Future studies should strengthen this dimension by further developing and refining the items.

3.4 Discussion

The findings provide preliminary support for the proposed collaborative model at the student-perception level. Across the six analytical dimensions, respondents generally viewed the integration of labor education, community service, and ideological-political education as a coherent and educationally plausible framework rather than as an artificial combination of separate agendas. This is an important starting point because it suggests that the model has normative and pedagogical legitimacy in the eyes of its primary student audience. At the same time, this support should not be conflated with demonstrated educational effectiveness. The present study is based on student agreement within a single institutional context and therefore cannot establish whether the model has already produced measurable learning, civic, or institutional outcomes.

Among the six dimensions, Practice Design received the highest mean score. This suggests that respondents place particular value on practical arrangements that are visible, structured, and educationally guided. The strong support for clearly categorized service programs, staged participation, and labor-spirit activities indicates that students are not simply calling for more community engagement in a generic sense. Rather, they appear to value practice that is intentionally designed and pedagogically meaningful. This finding is consistent with prior scholarship showing that service-oriented and labor-related learning tends to be more educationally effective when embedded in deliberate pedagogical structures rather than treated as incidental or symbolic experience [2], [3], [4], [14].

The pattern for the Evaluation Mechanism also carries important theoretical significance. Respondents strongly supported a diversified evaluation that included service records, resident feedback, and self-evaluation reports. This suggests that students themselves do not reduce educational value to examination outcomes alone. In this respect, the findings reinforce earlier literature arguing that vocational and service-oriented education requires assessment models that capture process, practice, responsibility, and reflection alongside cognitive attainment [3], [14], [15]. The present study, therefore, extends this literature by showing that this broader evaluative logic is not only conceptually defensible but also positively perceived by students in the surveyed context.

The dimensions of Community Needs and Collaborative Support further indicate that respondents recognize community service as anchored in genuine social demand rather than in institutional display alone. Items related to community resource openness, long-term cooperation, and community participation in evaluation received particularly strong support. This is consistent with research emphasizing that community engagement in higher education is relational rather than unilateral, and that effective educational partnerships depend on mutual benefit, shared responsibility, and meaningful collaboration [5], [15], [16], [23], [25]. Even so, the Community Needs dimension should be interpreted cautiously because it consists of only two items and produced a relatively low reliability coefficient. Its

descriptive prominence is therefore suggestive rather than conclusive and points to the need for stronger measurement development in future work.

One of the most meaningful insights of the study emerges from the lower-ranked items. Statements related to shared funding mechanisms, policy dependence, and seamless embedding of labor values into practice scored lower than the more organisationally visible components of the model. These lower scores should not be dismissed as merely weaker findings. On the contrary, they point to a deeper issue: the distinction between normative acceptance and institutional feasibility. In this sample, students seem broadly supportive of the model's educational logic, yet somewhat more reserved when the model enters the terrain of financing, inter-organizational coordination, policy support, and deeper transformation claims. This suggests that the principal challenge of the model may lie less in its educational desirability and more in its operationalization by institutions.

This notion of institutional feasibility deserves emphasis because it helps clarify how the present study extends existing scholarship. Much of the prior literature has established the value of labor education, civic participation, service learning, collaborative educational arrangements, and work-integrated partnerships in principle [2], [3], [11], [14], [15], [21], [22], [24]. The current study broadly confirms these directions, but it also adds a more implementation-oriented insight: student support appears strongest where the model offers visible structures, practical arrangements, and diversified assessment, while greater caution emerges when the model relies on durable coordination mechanisms and resource commitments. In that sense, the article does not merely repeat that integration is desirable; it suggests where the model's likely implementation pressures may emerge.

These findings should still be interpreted within clear analytical limits. Student agreement does not demonstrate that the collaborative model has already achieved verified educational effectiveness across institutions. Nor does it capture the full perspectives of teachers, community actors, or administrators who would also shape implementation. What the study does show is that the core architecture of the proposed model is perceived positively and appears conceptually coherent enough to justify further refinement, broader institutional testing, and stronger multi-actor validation. The article, therefore, contributes not by claiming closure but by clarifying the model's most promising components and its most plausible points of practical tension.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study examined student perceptions of a collaborative model for integrating labor education into community service within ideological and political education in a vocational college context in Guangzhou, China. The central finding is that the model receives strong preliminary support at the level of student perceptions, particularly regarding practice design, diversified evaluation, and the alignment between community engagement and curriculum-based learning.

The study's main contribution is to show that the proposed curriculum-practice-evaluation framework is not only conceptually relevant but also perceived by students as educationally plausible in a vocational setting. At the same time, the findings suggest that the model's key challenge may lie less in normative acceptance than in institutional

feasibility, especially in financing, coordination, policy support, and the deeper embedding of values in practice.

These findings should be interpreted cautiously. Because the data are drawn from a single institution and rely only on student perceptions, the article should be understood as a preliminary model-building and diagnostic study rather than a final validation of educational effectiveness. Future research should therefore involve multiple institutions, more diverse respondent groups, and stronger measurement development, particularly for dimensions requiring additional item refinement.

Even with these limitations, the study provides a useful empirical basis for refining collaborative labor education models in vocational colleges and for guiding more context-sensitive institutional experimentation.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, vocational colleges should strengthen the practical architecture of labor education by designing community service programs that are more clearly structured, educationally integrated, and pedagogically supervised. The strong support for practice-related items suggests that students respond positively when service activities are not treated as informal volunteerism but as meaningful, structured learning experiences connected to course content, professional ethics, and social responsibility. Institutions should therefore prioritize mechanisms such as structured task allocation, guided reflection, and stronger alignment between ideological-political course themes and community-based projects.

Vocational colleges should also reform their evaluation systems by moving beyond narrow examination-based assessment. The respondents expressed strong support for diversified evaluation, including service documentation, resident feedback, and student self-evaluation. These findings imply that the educational value of labor education in community service is better captured when assessment includes process, participation, and value internalization alongside formal academic outcomes. Accordingly, institutions should develop evaluation mechanisms capable of recording not only cognitive understanding, but also skill mastery, service attitude, and reflective engagement.

At the collaborative level, community participation should be more explicitly institutionalized. The strong endorsement of community resource openness and long-term cooperation mechanisms indicates that respondents recognize the importance of communities as active educational partners rather than passive recipients of services. Colleges should therefore establish more stable channels of cooperation with communities, including formal partnership arrangements, co-designed service programs, and more direct community involvement in evaluation processes.

Finally, future research should broaden the empirical base of this topic by involving multiple vocational colleges, more diverse respondent groups, and, where possible, complementary forms of evidence beyond student perceptions. The original proposal envisioned interviews with teachers, students, and community workers, along with resident satisfaction data and case-based validation. These components remain important for future stages of the research because they would enable comparisons across actors, assess the

practicality of the model under different institutional conditions, and examine more directly how collaborative mechanisms function in practice.

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