
NEWSLETTER

Labor Participation of Primary and Secondary School Students and Influencing Factors: An Empirical Study of 164 Schools

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DRAWING on the self-determination theory and social learning theory, this study aims to examine the current state of labor participation in primary and secondary school students and influencing factors, with a sample of 34644 students from 164 schools in central China. Descriptive statistics, the heterogeneity test, and the hierarchical linear regression are adopted in the analysis.

Research Findings:

- Descriptive statistics indicate: the students spent less-than-expected time on labor activities both in homes and schools; there was a smaller variety of labor activities in the school than in the home; the majority of the schools surveyed paid inadequate attention to labor education; there existed significant differences in labor motivation, with the intrinsic motivation predominating, social motivation related to peer influence being less impactful, and extrinsic motivation like encouragement and rewards from the teacher and parents being insufficient.
- The results of the hierarchical linear regression based on correlation analysis reveal: (i) After demographic variables being controlled for, intrinsic motivation and encouragement and rewards from the teacher and parents as extrinsic motivation could positively and stably predict the content and time of the student's labor participation at home, with intrinsic motivation having the strongest predictive power. Teacher dictation as a form of extrinsic motivation posed significantly negative effects on student home labor participation. Parental dictation as another form of extrinsic motivation could positively predict the varieties of labor activities of the child. Social motivation could positively predict the duration of home labor participation of the student. (ii) After demographic variables being controlled for, the school's attention on labor education could significantly positively predict the

varieties of labor activities and duration of labor participation of the student.

- The results of the heterogeneity tests and hierarchical linear regression reveal that there were demographic differences in labor participation among the primary and secondary school students. Female students experienced more varieties of labor activities than their male counterparts. The eighth graders conducted more varieties of home and school labor activities and spent more time on school labor activities than the fourth graders. The students with siblings engaged in more varieties of home and school labor activities and spent more time on school labor activities than those without siblings.

The study concludes that a more comprehensive labor education program should be developed to promote student all-round growth by establishing coordination mechanisms between the school, home and community, heightening students' labor motivation and school attention on labor education, and by diversifying labor activities while fully considering individual differences among students.

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