

Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act and American Vocational Education

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Abstract

The vocational education has a long history and has developed into a relatively complete legal protection system. In particular, since 1984, the United States has adopted the vocational education act as the basis, after a series of reforms in vocational education, the Perkins Act is typical in the history of American vocational education, and it is the epitome of the development of vocational education. This paper begins with the Carl D Perkins Act of 1984, analyzes the background of the act, probes into the many forces and organizations promoting the Act, and analyzes the main contents and purposes of the act, further discussion on the impact of the Perkins Act on American vocational education will provide some reference for better understanding the vocational education.

Keywords: American vocational education, Perkins, Perkins series act

1. Introduction

With the development of China's economy and the intensification of international competition, China's vocational education is also facing major reforms. In 2014, the construction plan of modern vocational education system (2014-2020) proposed to "establish a modern vocational education system that can meet the needs, deeply integrate industry and education, connect secondary and higher vocational education, communicate between vocational education and general education, and reflect the concept of lifelong education". At present, China's vocational education has made a series of significant achievements, but it is not perfect at the level of vocational education policy legislation, which needs further exploration and research. Since the 20th century, American vocational education has undergone a major turn and gradually developed to career and technical education. In this process, the American government has promulgated a series of laws and regulations, especially the Carl D. Perkins series of education bills. Since the promulgation of Carl D. Perkins vocational act in 1984, the federal vocational education legislation emphasizes the social welfare and social assistance function of vocational education. Vocational education has become a means to realize equal educational opportunities and ultimately social equity.

2. Social Background of Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act

2.1 *The Voice of Society for Equality Is Rising*

At the beginning of the 20th century, discrimination against African Americans was widespread in American society, which was not conducive to their participation in social affairs. African Americans called for equal political rights more and more. In order to resist apartheid in court, African Americans are increasingly taking direct protests, such as strikes, sit ins and so on. In 1964, the United States passed the Civil Rights Act, which declared that racial discrimination, religious discrimination, nationality discrimination, and performance discrimination in public places, workplaces and federally funded projects are illegal. The bill also gives the U.S. attorney general the power to deal with discrimination cases, expands the power of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, and establishes the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to verify employment discrimination complaints. The bill clearly states that it is illegal for employers to refuse to hire or dismiss employees for reasons of race, color, religion, gender or nationality, or to discriminate against employees' remuneration, position, working environment, rights and other treatment. Part VII of the act recommends the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to assist in the implementation of the act.

2.2 *Social Requirements for Vocational Education Have Increased*

In 1968, the Vocational Education Act was revised. It is particularly noteworthy that the amendment adds special

funds for vulnerable groups, people with disabilities and post-secondary groups. In addition, consumer education, home economics education, cooperative vocational education and curriculum development have also been included in the funding list of vocational education teaching plan. In terms of the specific use of funds, the amendment points out that the federal allocation for vocational education can be used for the following aspects: high school and middle school students; Students who have completed or dropped out of high school; Workers who need retraining in the labor market; Those who have difficulties in academic study and social economy; Other disabled groups such as people with intellectual disabilities and deaf mutes; Construction of regional vocational schools and facilities; Vocational guidance; Training and other auxiliary work, such as project evaluation and teacher education. At the same time, the 1968 amendment abolished the specific occupational categories in Vocational projects, and made a preliminary definition of vocational guidance, including a series of activities organized by vocational students.

In 1976, the Congress amended the bill again, mainly committed to promoting the following aspects: first, maintain the necessary vocational education projects, expand vocational education projects and improve the quality of vocational education projects; Second, develop new vocational education projects; Third, provide part-time jobs for young people who need to earn money to maintain full-time training. The 1976 amendment has begun to pay attention to gender issues and is committed to reducing gender discrimination and gender stereotypes in vocational education projects. The act requires each state to set up an independent professional gender equality coordination body, there must be women on the National Advisory Committee, and the States must pay \$50000 of the federal government funds to staff engaged in gender equality.

In 1983, the National Commission for excellence in Education issued a report entitled "the country is in danger: education reform is imperative". The report seriously pointed out various problems of current education in the United States and believed that the United States urgently needs to rebuild the world-class education system to cultivate world-class graduates. The report calls for the establishment of educational standards and student assessment systems, the strengthening of educational accountability, and the international comparison of students' academic performance. The publication of the report "the country is in danger" laid the foundation for the promulgation of the Perkins act in 1984.

3. The Impetus of Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act

3.1 The Efforts of Carl D. Perkins

In 1948, Perkins was first elected as a congressional representative for Kentucky's seventh constituency. During his term of office, the seventh constituency consists of 22 small counties, which is one of the 23rd in Southeast Kentucky. During Perkins's tenure from 1948 to 1984, Kentucky's seventh constituency was widely regarded as the most depressed area in the United States. The main industry in this area is coal mining, so the economic fate of this area fluctuates with the rise and fall of the coal industry. In addition, industries such as tobacco production, oil refinery and raw metal industry are also carried out in this area. During Perkins's tenure, the average income of residents in the district was far lower than the national average income. For example, in 1968, the average income of residents in Kentucky's seventh constituency was \$1322, the average income of residents in Kentucky in the same year was \$2614, and the average national income of the whole United States was \$3159. Due to poverty, community resources here, such as nursing homes, orphanages and nursing homes, are also very scarce. Under the influence of the new deal reform and the miners' Union, the residents of Kentucky's seventh district are mostly traditional democratic parties. In 1972, according to the local voter register, 65% of the voters were democratic parties and 34% were Republican parties.

Having received manual training as a child, Perkins realized the significance of vocational training and supported vocational education very much. Since 1949, Perkins began to solicit federal government funding for public education, and made significant contributions to the introduction of the vocational education act of 1963, the secondary education act of 1965 and the higher education act. Thanks to Perkins' efforts, Kentucky has received more federal resources than other states. For example, the state ranks fifth in higher education funding, seventh in teacher funding, ninth in secondary education funding and 13th in vocational education funding.

In 1967, Perkins was elected chairman of the U.S. education and labor Commission. During his tenure, Perkins has been respected by his peers with his efforts and hard work, and began to play a greater role in education legislation. Although the 1983 national crisis led President Reagan to consider reducing education funding, it was Perkins' persistence that enabled the 1984 vocational education act to maintain or even expand federal funding for vulnerable groups.

3.2 Efforts by Other Organizations

The introduction of Perkins vocational education act in 1984 also integrated a variety of forces, which came from American official and non-governmental organizations and played an important role in the drafting, revision and promulgation of the act. In the drafting of the bill, several organizations participated in the drafting of the proposal, such as the American Professional Association, the American Association of community and junior colleges and the American State Vocational Education Leadership Association. Compared with the previous vocational education bill, the new proposal has some new characteristics, such as broader scope of vocational education, more flexibility, more precise and specific allocation of funds for vulnerable groups, emphasis on post-secondary and adult vocational education projects, etc.

In terms of the amendment of the bill, representatives from all aspects put forward suggestions at the hearing. At the hearing in 1980, the representative of the American Association of school administrators suggested that local school districts play a greater role in the management of vocational education, and put forward specific suggestions on further clarifying the direction of vocational education funding and establishing unified vocational education evaluation standards. At the hearing in 1981, the National Advisory Committee of women's education project called for paying attention to women's rights and interests in vocational education and promoting gender equality. Paner from American community and junior colleges pointed out at the hearing in 1983 that due to the lack of necessary teachers, funds and other resources, many community and junior colleges are difficult to carry out new courses and projects. Therefore, he suggested that federal funding for vocational education should focus on post-secondary education institutions. In addition, among the suggestions from all walks of life, there are also the voices of the United States Federation of labor and the Federation of industry and commerce, which suggest strengthening the cooperation between vocational education and enterprises and strengthening the leadership role of the federal government.

In promoting the passage of the bill, the American Association for vocational education gave full play to its organizational ability, mobilized local people from all walks of life to hold hearings, and submitted suggestions to Congress in time. At the same time, the Vocational Education Association urged the adoption of the proposal through various lobbying and pressure means, such as using the news media to strengthen publicity and writing letters to Congress. Driven by various forces, the United States officially launched the Carl D. Perkins vocational education act in 1984, which makes preliminary provisions on the federal government's funding for vocational education and the management of Vocational Education in various states and places.

4. Contents of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act was introduced in 1984. It is one of the means to solve the problems of economic decline and talent shortage in American society in the 1980s. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act defines vocational education as serving the two goals of continuing learning and employment. It not only adheres to the principle of protecting vulnerable groups in the Vocational Education Law of 1963, but also has a new spirit of the times.

In order to improve the level of the country's labor force, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act strives for high quality on the basis of fairness in distribution. In order to improve the level of labor force, the bill focuses on high quality on the basis of equity. In terms of equity, the bill requires the elimination of gender, age, race and other prejudices in vocational education, the provision of high-quality education and training opportunities for persons with disabilities, vulnerable groups, women, single parent families, individuals with limited English proficiency and prisoners, and the protection of their rights to study, life and employment. In particular, the bill emphasizes the gender equality plan, which requires meeting women's educational and employment needs and improving women's entry rate in non-traditional industries. More importantly, the act requires that the fairness and high quality of vocational education be promoted simultaneously. Most of the nine requirements set by the act are related to high-quality vocational education. In order to ensure the quality of education, the bill promotes the cooperation between the government, social institutions and high-level universities to establish a national vocational education research center by means of funding. The research center shall report annually to the Minister of education on the effectiveness of the project for adjustment. Through the design and implementation of projects, the use of new technologies to develop courses, teaching materials and provide effective teaching methods to ensure the quality of vocational education and apply the results to all States.

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act focuses on project funding between the government and enterprises to improve the academic foundation of vocational education. Vocational education research centers located in many famous universities in the United States receive grants to specialize in the research of vocational education theory and practice, and cooperate with university courses to cultivate vocational education talents.

The latest technology is integrated into the teaching curriculum to comprehensively ensure the teaching quality of vocational education. The bill devotes 57% of federal funded state funds to helping disadvantaged students and 43% to improving courses. The federal government invests in Vocational Education from top to bottom, for a long time and at a high level, and integrates the latest science and technology into the curriculum of higher education, which not only ensures the curriculum quality of secondary and post-secondary education, but also promotes the modernization of Vocational Education in teaching. It is in line with the original intention of the federal government to promote the improvement of social science, technology and economy through the development of vocational education. At the same time, the bill initially reflects the requirements of the financial investment system in the performance accountability part. The act recommends that States develop measures to assess the effectiveness of vocational education programs in meeting the needs of the national labour market and providing workplace capabilities expected by employers.

5. Conclusion

Vocational education is an important part of the modern national education system. It plays a special and important role in the implementation of the strategy of rejuvenating the country through science and education and the strategy of strengthening the country with talents. Especially in recent years, China has actively promoted the development of vocational education and supported the characteristics and level of all kinds of vocational education at all levels. Various regions and many enterprises have actively explored and accumulated a lot of experience. However, on the whole, the development of vocational education is still a weak link and does not meet the needs of economic and social development. Vigorously developing vocational education is both an urgent task and a long-term plan. Since the 20th century, American vocational education has undergone a major turn and gradually developed into career and technical education. In this process, the American government has promulgated a series of laws and regulations, especially the Carl D. Perkins series of education acts and their amendments. The changes in the content of Carl D. Perkins series of education acts can be regarded as the epitome of the development of American vocational education since the 20th century.

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