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# Exploring the Development and Implementation of Labor Education Curriculum in Kindergartens in the New Era

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**Abstract:**

*Labor education holds unique educational value and constitutes an indispensable component of educational development in the New Era. Labor education curricula serve as concrete pathways to implement labor education. By interpreting the connotations of kindergarten labor education curriculum in the New Era, analyzing its objectives and content, this study explores diversified implementation approaches through four dimensions: daily life activities, thematic curricula, specialized programs, and parent-child initiatives. The aim is to provide systematic frameworks and references for the development and implementation of kindergarten labor education curricula.*

**Keywords:**

*Kindergartens, Labor Education, Labor Education Curriculum*

## 1.Introduction

Since the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the state has promulgated successive policy documents on labor education, aiming to comprehensively strengthen labor education practices across universities, secondary schools, primary schools, and kindergartens . [1,2] As the foundational stage of basic education, early childhood education must prioritize kindergarten labor education curricula. However, scholars have identified critical challenges: diminished pedagogical value of labor, insufficient national policy guidance, ambiguous curriculum objectives, and fragmented content delivery.[3] Addressing these developmental bottlenecks requires re-examining the connotations of kindergarten labor education, exploring innovative pathways for curriculum development and implementation, and maximizing its Pedagogical value to lay a talent - cultivation foundation for the New Era.

## 2.Connotation Analysis of Kindergarten Labor Education Curriculum in the New Era

The design of kindergarten labor education curriculum must closely align with the social development

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needs of young children, fully respect the laws of their physical and mental development, and focus on their daily lives and interests. Through concrete labor practices, it aims to achieve meaningful growth for children. The Guidelines for Kindergarten Education (Trial) explicitly state that kindergartens should collaborate with families and communities to guide children in recognizing labor around them, fostering respect for workers, and helping children develop awareness of valuing labor outcomes. The Guidelines for Learning and Development of Children Aged 3-6 also emphasize encouraging children to participate in household chores, master self-care skills, understand labor values, and respect the efforts of workers.Based on these two policy documents and the cognitive characteristics of 3-6-year-olds, labor education at the kindergarten stage should not be equated with physical labor alone. Instead, it should focus on labor enlightenment, enabling children to achieve physical and spiritual growth through engaging in simple, enjoyable activities that integrate physical and mental labor. [4] Therefore, the kindergarten labor education curriculum systematically guides children to establish correct labor concepts, acquire basic labor knowledge and skills, cultivate positive work attitudes, and ultimately develop lifelong habits of loving labor, cherishing labor outcomes, and respecting workers-laying a solid foundation for their future development.

## 3.Development and Design of Kindergarten Labor Education Curriculum in the New Era

### *3.1. Course Goals*

Curriculum objectives serve as the core of constructing a kindergarten labor education system, playing a critical guiding role. Their formulation requires comprehensive consideration of multiple factors. First, when designing kindergarten labor education objectives, it is essential to adhere to correct ideological guidance and reference national policies and regulations such as the Guidelines for Learning and Development of Children Aged 3-6, Guidelines for Kindergarten Education, Quality Assessment Guidelines for Kindergarten Care and Education, and Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China-laying a solid foundation for subsequent labor education practices. Second, age characteristics, existing developmental levels, personal interests, and practical development needs of young children should be fully considered. By integrating kindergarten culture and teachers' professional understandings of labor education, the curriculum aims to cultivate children's core labor competencies and ensure the effectiveness of labor education.

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*Table 1. Kindergarten Labor Education Curriculum Objectives.[5]*

| Curriculum Objectives | Core Competencies | Specific Requirements for Children |
|---|---|---|
| Labor Cognition | Understanding Labor | 1. Identify common and simple labor tools such as scissors, shovels, wrenches, and brooms<br>2. Acquire basic knowledge of plant and animal care practices, including watering, fertilizing, and feeding<br>3. Understand how new technologies like mobile payment and smart home appliances transform daily life through real - life examples. |
| Labor Skills | Competent Labor Practice | 1. Develop basic self - care skills including independent toileting, self - feeding, and clothing organization<br>2. Demonstrate proficiency in using simple labor tools (scissors, shovels, rags) to complete tasks like paper cutting, soil digging, and cleaning<br>3. Proactively assist peers according to individual capabilities (e.g., arranging furniture, organizing toys, distributing materials)<br>4. Actively participate in classroom duty activities and engage in introductory community service initiatives. |
| Labor Sentiment | Passion for Labor | 1. Understand that labor constitutes a universal responsibility, recognize the hard - won nature of labor outcomes, and learn to respect others' work achievements;<br>2. Engage in hands - on labor activities to experience the value of work and workers' contributions, derive joy and accomplishment from labor, and foster passion for labor;<br>3. Cultivate self - reliance in completing personal tasks while developing enthusiasm for serving others and the collective. |

## *3.2. Course Content*

Curriculum content should align with and serve the defined objectives, distinguishing kindergarten labor education from primary/secondary school programs by deeply rooting in children's daily lives. Based on literature synthesis, the curriculum is divided into four domains-Self-Service Labor, Collective Service, Handicraft Production, and Gardening & Animal Husbandry-to provide diverse learning opportunities and enrich labor experiences. [6]

(1)Self-Service Labor

Self-Service Labor is designed to meet children's daily living and learning needs while fostering independence and self-care capabilities.The program progresses through age-specific developmental focuses. Toddler Class (3-4 years old) establishes foundational skills such as self-feeding, post-meal rinsing/wiping, proper handwashing, independent toileting, and self-served snack retrieval. Preschool Class (4-5 years old) builds on these basics by expanding responsibilities to include independent toothbrushing, dressing/undressing, cleaning water cups/dishes, towel organization, self-served meal pickup, and post-meal table clearing. Kindergarten Class (5-6 years old) advances to self-management and service awareness through weather-appropriate clothing adjustments, chopstick proficiency, classroom duties (meal distribution, toy organization, order

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maintenance, cleaning), and independent school bag preparation.This sequential approach ensures children gradually develop life skills aligned with their cognitive and physical growth. [7]

(2) Collective Service Labor

Collective Service Labor not only enhances children's life skills and fosters enjoyment in cooperation/assistance but also cultivates collective consciousness and responsibility taking. Through tasks like distributing utensils, organizing books, cleaning activity areas, retrieving equipment, making beds, and watering plants, children fulfill classroom duties - a signature form of labor education implementation in kindergartens. [8]

*Table 2. Kindergarten Duty Officer System.*

| Duty Officer Category | **Specific Responsibilities** |
|---|---|
| Meal Duty | Announce dish names, distribute utensils, assist with meal serving, clear tables post - meal, remind peers to drink water and properly store cups. |
| Handwashing Duty | Monitor pre/post - meal handwashing and towel usage, ensure proper towel placement, and maintain organizational order. |
| Organizing Duty | After naps: remind peers to organize clothing/blankets; before/after activities: arrange furniture, distribute/collect materials; before dismissal: organize books/toys and remind peers to prepare school bags. |
| Weather Duty | Report date, weather conditions and update calendars. |
| Nature Corner Duty | Water plants, observe/measure/growth record plant development. |

(3) Handicraft Production Labor

Handicraft production serves as a critical pathway for implementing labor education in kindergartens. Guided by teachers, children sequentially select materials, conceptualize designs, and create artworks.This structured process not only enhances children's manual dexterity and integrative mind-hand coordination, systematically introducing foundational concepts such as length, height, and color (mathematical and artistic dimensions), but also vigorously stimulates imaginative thinking and creative expression while cultivating enjoyment of discovery and creation.The content framework for handicraft labor education incorporates two complementary dimensions. On one hand, festival-themed activities contextualize learning within cultural practices, including Winter Solstice dumpling making, Mid-Autumn Festival mooncake crafting, Dragon Boat Festival sachet creation, and New Year paper cutting. On the other hand, traditional craftsmanship integration introduces heritage techniques such as cloth spinning, stencil-based paper collage, ancient papermaking, paper cutting, tie-dyeing, bamboo weaving, straw plaiting, and clay modeling-all designed to enable children to produce simple traditional handicrafts, fostering creative accomplishment and cultural heritage

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awareness. Additionally, natural material-based projects utilizing twigs, leaves, pebbles, egg cartons, buttons, and beans provide dual benefits: developing practical skills while nurturing aesthetic appreciation and originality through hands-on creation. [9]

(4) Gardening & Animal Husbandry Labor

Planting and animal husbandry activities represent an optimal approach for implementing life education in kindergarten settings, simultaneously enriching children's natural science knowledge and fostering respect for living organisms. Through structured practices, children acquire foundational knowledge of plant/animal care, learn to use simple labor tools (e.g., gardening implements, feeding utensils), and develop cognitive engagement with the natural world. This process not only cultivates curiosity about ecosystems and societal interdependencies but also nurtures positive attitudes toward nature and life through hands-on experiences. By integrating scientific observation with ethical responsibility, these activities provide a holistic framework for early environmental stewardship. [10]

*Table 3. Specific Content of Kindergarten Gardening & Animal Husbandry Labor.*

| Goal Dimension | Core Competencies | Specific Content |
|---|---|---|
| Cognitive Domain | Plant & Animal Cognition | 1. Gain basic knowledge of plant names, structures, growth cycles, habitats, and essential elements.<br>2. Understand animal names, physical characteristics, living habits, feeding methods, and growth processes. |
| | Ecological Cognition | Recognize interdependencies between humans - plants - animals and ecological systems. |
| | Operational Cognition | Identify tools/materials for gardening/animal husbandry and their purposes. |
| Skill Domain | Sensory Exploration | Use visual/tactile senses to observe, measure, and investigate plants/animals and their environments. |
| | Practical Application | Actively engage in plant care/animal feeding using diverse materials to experience life cycles. |
| | Documentation & Communication | Record observations through drawing, dictation, or charts; exchange findings with peers/teachers. |
| Affective Domain | Labor Values | Develop responsibility, environmental awareness, and enthusiasm for labor. |
| | Pro-nature Affectivity | Recognize, respect, cherish, and revere life and nature. |

# 4.Implementation Pathways for Kindergarten Labor Education Curriculum in the New Era

## *4.1. Integrating into Daily Life Activities with Hands - on Experiences*

The entire daily routine in kindergartens constitutes a living curriculum, where labor education can be em-

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bedded across all activity segments. Developmentally appropriate labor projects should be designed to permeate daily life, enabling children to gain multifaceted outcomes through authentic labor experiences.First, teachers can guide children to perform daily self-care labor tasks embedded within routine activities: during hygiene periods, independently fetching water, handwashing, and face-cleaning; during meals, arranging chairs, queuing for food, self-feeding, and debris removal; during naptime, dressing/undressing, bed-making, and blanket folding; and during arrival/dismissal, organizing personal belongings, grooming, and toy/book storage. These practices not only enhance labor skills and cultivate healthy habits but also foster rule awareness through structured repetition. Second, classroom management provides additional labor practice opportunities via rotating duty officer roles (meal servers, handwashing supervisors, cleaners, environmental protectors, junior gardeners) and child-led initiatives such as peer monitoring and classroom upkeep. Collectively, this engagement strengthens responsibility, collective identity, and labor competence while promoting classroom self-governance, thereby creating a holistic framework for skill development and social-emotional growth.

### *4.2. Creating Thematic Curricula to Integrate Developmental Domains*

Thematic curricula serve as the core of kindergarten education, acting as critical vehicles to achieve educational objectives. These curricula integrate multi-domain resources around specific themes, generating rich activity sequences that promote proactive exploration and holistic child development. Thematic curricula play a pivotal role in enabling children to deeply understand theme-based values, systematically internalizing activity-derived experiences into their cognitive frameworks to enhance comprehensive competence. Kindergarten educators can design theme-integrated labor education activities that blend cross-domain developmental elements, fostering rich experiential learning and autonomous growth. For instance, a “Culinary Exploration” curriculum leverages real vegetables, fruits, and ingredients to cultivate children’s cognitive abilities through food familiarity. Hands-on food preparation-requiring fine motor skills like cutting,pinching,rolling, kneading,pating,pounding and stirring-simultaneously develops cooking techniques (e.g., ingredient selection, seasoning application) while building self-confidence. Similarly, the “Cucumber Trellis Journey” curriculum introduces themes via the picture book The Sleepy Pickle, followed by a cucumber origin survey to explore agricultural knowledge. Sequential activities-including sowing seedlings, mulching, transplanting, trellis construction, vine training, and watering-enable children to observe plant growth cycles, culminating in a harvest-tasting experience that reinforces accomplishment and environmental stewardship.

### *4.3. Establishing Specialized Programs to Ignite Labor Motivation*

Kindergartens should center on children, fully utilize internal resources, and design engaging characteristic specialized programs. These programs aim to arouse children's labor motivation, expand their learning perspectives, and cultivate their interest in labor. First,First, the Planting and Animal Husbandry Curriculum leverages kindergarten animal husbandry corners and planting zones to engage children in plant/vegetable care and animal feeding, enabling comprehensive understanding of growth cycles while fostering nature appreciation and life education. Second, the Craftsmanship Curriculum integrates thematic learning with labor practices. For example, in the New Year theme, children can make tanghulu prints with paper and New Year lollipops with plasticine. Specialized labor experience workshops can also be set up, like bamboo weaving workshops, straw weaving workshops, woodworking workshops, clay modeling workshops, and cloth

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art workshops. These enable children to experience the art of labor and learn to live artistically. Third, the Agricultural Cycle Curriculum follows seasonal rhythms, organizing spring plowing, summer crop maintenance, autumn harvest, and winter storage activities. This immersive approach connects children with rural life across four seasons, fostering authentic growth through real-world experiences. Finally, the Gastronomy Curriculum invites professional chefs into classrooms to conduct culinary courses. Children can learn about various food cultures and nutrition knowledge, and at the same time, try to make various delicacies themselves.They can experience the sense of accomplishment from hands-on operations and develop an interest in nutritious diets.

### *4.4. Connecting Parent - Child Activities to Merge Educational Resources*

The promotion of labor education isn't solely the responsibility of kindergartens. As the first environment for a child's growth, the family, with parents serving as the child's first teachers, has a crucial impact on the formation of a child's labor consciousness through their educational concepts and guiding methods. Therefore, kindergartens should actively set up platforms for home-school communication and cooperation to promote the implementation of labor education through parent - child activities. First, the "Little Family Expert"activity can be carried out. In this activity, children are encouraged to take the initiative in doing household chores within their capabilities at home, such as sweeping the floor, tidying up toys, putting on and taking off clothes, and washing socks, to enhance their self-care abilities. Second, parents can guide children to understand the labor content and methods of different occupations, like vendors, doctors, nurses, and couriers, through parent-child activities such as grocery shopping, visiting the doctor, and picking up express deliveries. Third, it's extremely important to stimulate children's interest in labor. Parents should promptly recognize children's labor behaviors. For example, they can praise children by saying, "You did a really careful job washing the dishes today!" or "I'm very happy that you took the initiative to sweep the floor. With your help, Mom feels much more relaxed!"and so on, to strengthen children's self-confidence and sense of achievement. Finally, parents should lead by example, actively participate in labor, and create a family atmosphere that values labor, so that children can establish correct labor concepts imperceptibly.

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