

Research on the Normalization of College Students' Voluntary Service

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Abstract—College students' voluntary service has been continuously developing in recent years in our country, but there is still a certain gap between the college students' voluntary service in China and those in the United States and countries in West Europe. The major research orientation for institutions of higher learning is to normalize college students' voluntary service and how to overcome the obstacles in the development of voluntary service in our country. This paper aims at existing problems in college students' voluntary service in our country to propose several suggestions on the normalization of voluntary service in terms of legal safeguard, organization and management and college students' initiative in order to enhance college students' social responsibility and construct harmonious and friendly social environment.

Keywords—college students, voluntary service, normalization

In recent years, with institutions of higher learning attaching great importance to the participation of college students in voluntary service, voluntary service has become an important channel for college students to enrich their college lives, obtain social experience and build social responsibility. The voluntary service has been expanding from traditional poverty relief, environmental protection and community service to large-scale national activities in which college students are the main force in recent years. Based on serving and contributing to society, college students' voluntary service has an increasing influence on society and has played a positive role in building harmonious society. At present, although substantial progress has been made in voluntary service in institutions of higher learning, compared with those in countries like the United States, there still exists some problems, for example, college students are not so active to participate in these voluntary services and the voluntary service lacks sustainable development. Therefore, this paper discusses the pattern of transformation from phased development to permanent development through analyzing current problems and shortcoming in college students' voluntary service.

I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NORMALIZATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS' VOLUNTARY SERVICE

A. *It is helpful to train and improve college students' ability to normalize voluntary service.*

The knowledge and environment that college students are exposed to on campus is quite different from that of voluntary activities. On campus, college students treat themselves as

students who need to study hard, respect teachers, unite other students and perform their own duty. While in voluntary service activities, higher requirements are imposed on them than that on campus. Through voluntary service, college students learn to take their own responsibility for the society and other people, which requires them to master knowledge that cannot be learned on campus, for example, when they help primary school students study in villages, they need to transfer their own knowledge into the ability to impart knowledge to other people. They need to communicate with different kinds of people in different voluntary activities, which can improve their abilities in expression, communication, accommodation, comprehension and problem-solving.

B. *It is helpful to strengthen college students' social responsibility to normalize voluntary service.*

College students are the future pillars of the society and they need to shoulder the future of the country and nation. Therefore, their attitude toward the society and other people decide the social atmosphere and cultural environment of a country in the future. Institutions of higher learning, as the main institutions for college students' ideological work, have the responsibility to guide them to clearly understand what kind of sense of social responsibility they should have, their social position and the responsibilities they should shoulder. Since college student have not officially entered into the society, they can make full preparation before graduation from colleges through participation in voluntary service. By taking part in public welfare and poverty relief at grass-root level, they can be aware that there are lots of vulnerable groups and marginal groups in society and have their own experience and understanding on the development of our country and the environment in which people live, thus stimulating their sympathy and sense of responsibility and triggering them to think actively. Moreover, they can devote themselves to the society and ask for nothing in return, enhancing their sense of responsibility and mission to contribute to the development of the country and the nation [1].

C. *It is helpful for college students to make a bigger contribution to the society to normalize voluntary service.*

By the end of 2017, there are more than 6.72 million real name registered volunteers in our country. National young volunteers network has basically formed, which is composed of Chinese Young Volunteers Association, 35 associations at provincial level, over 5,000 associations at municipal and

district level, over 2,000 voluntary organizations in institutions of higher learning and 0.41 million voluntary service stations. Among young voluntary services, college students' voluntary service in institutions of higher learning is a kind of relatively special form, which is mainly carried out by young college students and plays an important role in voluntary activities. [2] College students' voluntary service has involved in more and more fields and played an active role in disaster rescue, large-scale public events, poverty relief, community service, etc. With the development of voluntary service, more and more college students are encouraged to devote to social service. In the process of voluntary service, it can promote affective interaction, strengthen mutual trust and care and reduce indifference and alienation toward social vulnerable groups. It is a real force to drive sound development of the society and has played an irreplaceable role in building equal, friendly and harmonious social environment.

II. THE OBSTACLES TO NORMALIZE COLLEGE STUDENTS' VOLUNTARY SERVICE

A. Lack of legal safeguard in the normalization of college students' voluntary service.

Voluntary service started very late and it is an emerging thing in our country. Therefore, laws and regulations related with volunteers are still imperfect. People's Congress has not issued any national laws and regulations on voluntary service. And there is no clear legal definition of voluntary service. However, with the growth of voluntary service activities, college student volunteers encounter more and more complicated problems in the process of voluntary service, which requires laws to support and safeguard. Especially when volunteers suffer from physical injury or property loss, there is no law about who should be responsible for it and about the rights and obligations of organizers, volunteers, beneficiaries of voluntary service. Such situation causes the unclear legal status for college students to take part in voluntary service. And there is no system to safeguard their rights and interests, which makes them have some concerns on participating in voluntary services and has negative influence on their enthusiasm in taking part in voluntary service, thus impacting the normal development of college students' voluntary service. Therefore, it is urgent to build sound laws and system on college students' voluntary service and safeguard their rights and interests.

B. Lack of thinking model to normalize college students' voluntary service for institutions of higher learning

Institutions of higher learning are the organizers and guiders for college students' voluntary service. Therefore, their emphasis and practical organizing ability on voluntary service decide the level and scale of college students' voluntary service. The lack of voluntary service system in institutions of higher learning is embodied in the following aspects: there are no special administrative departments for voluntary service in institutions of higher learning. Youth league committee is the organizer of students' voluntary service. However, the priority of work of youth league committee is not social voluntary service activities. Therefore, most of the time, they usually organize voluntary service in the workday of youth league

committee or large-scale activities in colleges. Such activities have unplanned and temporary characteristics [3]. Compared with the voluntary service organized by special administrative department, those organized by youth league committee in institutions of higher learning are not necessarily suitable for college students. Due to heavy workload of youth league committee, it is hard for them to manage those voluntary service activities on daily basis and assess them specifically. Thus, they cannot aim at students' majors to choose appropriate voluntary service activities and offer professional training and guidance. Therefore, the voluntary services organized by colleges have limited effect on society. At present, institutions of higher learning need to further improve standardability in management and endeavor to normalize college students' voluntary service.

C. Lack of enough incentive factor for college students to participate in voluntary service

College students usually take part in the voluntary service organized by colleges. Therefore, their participation in voluntary service shows their obedience to colleges. It requires taking their value orientation and behavioral motive into consideration. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, he divides needs into five categories: physiological, safety, belonging and love (or social need), esteem and self-actualization, which rank from the lower level to higher level. At present, college students take time and energy in voluntary service in terms of spiritual level, but they do not get enough care. Those excellent students who participate in voluntary service are awarded certificate of honor related with voluntary service by colleges and other students are praised verbally. Not all students taking part in voluntary service are awarded certificate of honor. Compared with various material rewards such as scholarship and students subsidies and more important moral rewards such as outstanding Party member, outstanding league member and excellent students, the honorary certificate of voluntary service is of little value to college students. Therefore, at present, the behavioral motive for college students to take part in voluntary service is too weak to support the normalization of college students' voluntary service.

III. MEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NORMALIZATION OF COLLEGE STUDENTS' VOLUNTARY SERVICE

A. It should strengthen legal safeguard mechanism to promote the normalization of college students' voluntary service.

It requires the affirmation and support from laws to normalize college students' voluntary service. Therefore, it requires legislative institution to aim at the characteristics and development of college students' voluntary service in our country to clearly legalize voluntary service, thus fundamentally protecting college students in voluntary service from legal aspect. The legislative contents on college students' voluntary service should cover the following aspects: it should clarify legal position and nature of voluntary service, standardize legal nature of legal subjects such as voluntary service organizations, volunteers, service objects and other parties, clarify the legal relation among them and set up dispute

settlement mechanism. Through legislative means, college students' voluntary service can be safeguarded. As for college student volunteers, their legitimate rights and interests can be safeguarded and thus they are more enthusiastic in taking part in voluntary service. With regard to the whole society, it can help the public improve their understanding on voluntary service, which is helpful to get support from the society and solve major problems in voluntary service. Therefore, it is an inevitable trend to legalize college students' voluntary service and it also fundamentally guarantees the normalization of college students' voluntary service. [4]

B. Institutions of higher learning should improve their organizations and management mechanism of students' voluntary service.

As for institutions of higher learning, it should define themselves as a qualified organizer and administrator in college students' voluntary service in terms of role definition. In order to promote college students to devote themselves to society, it is necessary to normalize voluntary service. In order to promote college students to persist in participating in voluntary service, it is necessary to build system related to voluntary service. At present, although college students' voluntary service is gradually developing and transforming from previous simplification into diversification, institutions of higher learning, as organizers and administrators of college students' voluntary service, should further promote the influence of voluntary service on society for the purpose of building harmonious society.

As the organizers of college students' voluntary service, institutions of higher learning should first of all contact with institutions related with voluntary service such as social welfare institutions, urban communities and non-profit organization to build effective communication platform and develop permanent and stable voluntary service programs, thus avoiding temporary and unplanned voluntary programs. Generally speaking, permanent and stable voluntary service program is more helpful to the society and other people. In addition, institutions of higher learning can work with relevant institutions to guide college students to actively conduct voluntary service concerning prevention of problems. On the one hand, it can make full use of students' professional knowledge and help them apply knowledge into practice; on the other hand, it can promote common sense related with voluntary service to the public, thus voluntary service can have sound influence on society and the public.

As the administrators of college students' voluntary service, institutions of higher learning should first of all build special administrative department of voluntary service, which should formulate related system and regulations for college students' voluntary service according to their motive and pursuit. System and regulations should at least include five aspects: recruitment mechanism, registration mechanism, training mechanism, supervisory mechanism and reward mechanism. Specifically speaking, recruitment mechanism should aim at service contents to recruit qualified volunteers. Registration mechanism should record detailed information of volunteers, preparatory work of voluntary activities and contents in a standardized manner. Training mechanism should provide

professional training and safety training for volunteers. Supervisory mechanism should monitor service progress and conduct on-site instruction by staff from colleges in every voluntary service activities. Reward mechanism should give credit for those outstanding volunteers. Each college can award volunteers in accordance with their own condition, including spiritual reward (such as credits reward, certificate of honor, Party member development, selection of cadres, etc.) and material reward (such as scholarship and students' subsidies).

C. It should strengthen college students' enthusiasm and initiative in taking part in voluntary service.

As a major part of voluntary service, college students play a vital role in deciding whether voluntary service organized by institutions of higher learning can be transformed from present phased and temporary activity into permanent activity and they play an exemplary role in young group. Therefore, how to further motivate them to actively participate in voluntary service is an important factor to normalize voluntary service. What does voluntary service observe is "dedication, friendliness, mutual assistance and progressiveness" [5], which guides college students to combine the realization of self-value with dedication to and service for the society. From the perspective of sociology, as for an individual, the more matched an activity is with his behavioral motivation, the more enthusiastic he is. Similarly, the more matched the behavioral motivation of college students is with the connotation of voluntary activities, the more motivated and persistent college students are to participate in voluntary service.

Therefore, college students should first of all develop a sense of citizenship inherently and integrate sense of responsibility, sense of mission and the concept of right and obligation. As public citizens, college students' subjectivity has decided the value to participate in social management and service. The cultivation and promotion of civic awareness not only stimulate college students' patriotism, national spirit and sense of responsibility and promote their inner initiative in voluntary service, but also are the biggest momentum to keep voluntary service forward [6]. In addition, college students should be aware that participation in voluntary service is a good opportunity for them to connect with society before graduation from colleges. In various activities of voluntary service, college students can communicate with people and deal with things different from those on campus. With regard to self-development, it can cultivate their interpersonal skills and flexibility. In voluntary service, they can obtain much more knowledge than that they learn in textbooks. Therefore, it should normalize college students' voluntary service which is a very essential opportunity for social practice and an important platform for them to enter into society.

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper makes clear of the spirit of college students' voluntary service. It should expand and innovate the fields of college students' voluntary service, improve legal safeguard mechanism and organizational management mechanism in institutions of higher learning and enhance college students' enthusiasm and initiative. What's more, it should design the mechanism of normalization of college students' voluntary

service from several aspects and maintain sustainability and stability of voluntary service activities.

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