

Empowering Ideological and Moral Education of College Students in the New Era with Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture: Core Purposes of Interest, Realistic Dilemmas, and Practical Approaches

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Abstract

The rich nourishment and an inexhaustible driving force for the ideological and moral education of college students in the new era can be offered by the excellent traditional Chinese culture as the spiritual lifeline and value foundation of the Chinese nation, with its profound ethical wisdom and moral resources. By deeply grasping the core purpose of interest for its empowering education, clearly recognizing the deep-seated dilemmas in current practice, and systematically exploring the practical approaches, the great strategic significance is embodied for the cultivation of a new generation capable of shouldering the responsibility of national rejuvenation. In this paper, the purpose lies in condensing the core value orientation of traditional culture in empowering education, analyzing the practical challenges that are faced in dimensions such as cognition, transformation, integration, practice, and evaluation, and then proposing a systematic practice strategy with the core of creative transformation and innovative development, so that a deep integration of traditional culture and the spiritual growth of young people can be achieved.

Keywords

Excellent traditional Chinese culture; ideological and moral education of college students; value identification; practical path; creative transformation.

1. Introduction

With the ideological and moral education of college students being placed within the complex context of globalization in the new era, it is intertwined with diverse values and inundated by a flood of information, leading to the face of fundamental questions regarding what kind of people are to be cultivated, how they are to be cultivated, and for whom they are being cultivated. In addition to serving as a collection of cold relics displayed in museums, the excellent traditional Chinese culture, having been accumulated over thousands of years, is also recognized as a living spiritual source that flows through the nation's bloodline. The unique intellectual resources are offered by its profound sense of history, enduring emotional bonds, and rich models of personality for addressing the potential "cognition-emotion-intention-action" fracture dilemma that may exist in current education. For the enhancement of the effectiveness of ideological and moral education in the new era, it is imperative that its contemporary value should be deeply explored and its integration path should be systematically constructed, enabling it to become a genuine source of nourishment for cultivating the spiritual world of the new generation. Besides, it is also an inevitable requirement for the continuation of the Chinese cultural lineage and the consolidation of the foundation of cultural confidence.

2. Core Purposes of Interest: The Value Coordinates and Spiritual Core of Empowering Education with Traditional Culture

For the deep interest, the awakening of dormant cultural genes and the stimulation of profound emotional resonance are valued by the empowerment of ideological and moral education for college students in the new era through traditional culture. The cultivation of modern gentlemanly personalities that blend reason and emotion, unify knowledge and action, and cherish the nation and the family constitutes the ultimate aim, so a solid spiritual foundation can be laid for national rejuvenation.

2.1. Awakening of Cultural Genes and Stimulation of Emotional Resonance

The "interest" of traditional culture is recognized to lie in the powerful emotional appeal contained in its vivid imagery and profound philosophy. The "pure thoughts" of *The Book of Poetry* and the "carefree wandering" of *Zhuangzi*, with their unique aesthetic realms and insights into life, are seen to touch the deepest part of the youth's hearts, awakening the natural connection between individuals and the nation's history and cultural lineage. Instead of being externally imposed, this "interest" is the natural revival of cultural genes in the consciousness of individuals, allowing college students to recognize the cultural belonging of "I share the same heart with the ancients, I share the same principle with the mountains and rivers" "in their daily lives without conscious effort", laying an emotional foundation for deep value identification.

2.2. Forging of the Soul and Shaping of Virtue, Establishment of Value Foundations and Personal Dignity

"Cultivating virtue and forging the soul" and "nurturing personality" constitute the "core purpose" of traditional culture. The Confucian ideals of "everyone takes charge of the rise and fall of the country", the ethical core of "benevolence and love for others", "all people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions", and the spiritual qualities of "unceasing self-improvement" and "great virtue carries all things", collectively construct the unique spiritual identity and value coordinates of the Chinese nation. Guiding college students to deeply understand the national spiritual lineage, consolidate the ideological foundation of loving the Party, the nation, and socialism, and shape a profound and stable cultural confidence and identity are valued by the integration of these into education. In the meantime, the rich resources for cultivating moral sentiments and tempering a sound personality, guiding young people to discern right from wrong, adhere to conscience, and pursue the sublime are offered by the ethical principles of "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness", the cultivation path of "cultivating oneself, managing the family, governing the country, and bringing peace to the world", and the ways of life such as "a gentleman is cautious in solitude" and "honesty and keeping promises", achieving the unity of personal morality and social ethics.

2.3. Enlightenment of Wisdom and Guidance of Action, Cultivation of Humanistic Quality and Behavioral Consciousness

The valuable mines for enhancing humanistic quality and forging critical thinking skills are offered by the philosophical wisdom, profound historical insights, and brilliant literary and artistic achievements contained in traditional culture. By studying classics, comprehending wisdom, and appreciating art, college students are capable of broadening their cultural horizons, cultivating a sense of historical depth and holistic thinking, and improving their aesthetic taste and critical thinking abilities. The important behavioral references and codes of conduct for college students to deal with complex interpersonal relationships and adapt to modern social life are provided by the social order regulated by "ritual", the harmonious concept advocated by "harmony and cooperation", and the principle of interaction of "do not

impose on others what you do not wish for yourself", guiding them to internalize traditional virtues into conscious habits of daily life.

3. Realistic Dilemmas: Deep Obstacles to Integrating Traditional Culture into Moral Education in Universities

Despite the profound significance of interest and noble aims, multiple obstacles in practice are still faced by the empowerment of college students' ideological and moral education through excellent traditional Chinese culture, which restrict the full realization of its educational effectiveness.

3.1. Cognitive Barriers and Value Alienation

Some college students are found to lack a systematic understanding and in-depth comprehension of traditional culture, leading to ambiguity or even misunderstanding of its core values and contemporary significance. The tensions between certain traditional values (such as valuing righteousness over profit, and collectivism over individualism) and the individualistic and utilitarian tendencies of some students are created by modern lifestyle changes and the influence of Western ideologies, resulting in a weakened sense of cultural identity and diminished value resonance, forming psychological distance and emotional alienation [1].

3.2. Fragmentation of Content and Dilution of Meaning

In current educational practices, the phenomenon of traditional culture being often reduced to mechanical citations of classic phrases, symbolic displays of traditional festivals, or quick sound bites on short video platforms is shown, which frequently appears as isolated elective modules and is seen to fail in deeply integrating into the main channels of ideological and political education and professional course systems in terms of curriculum design. The features of textbook interpretations are shown to remain at the level of textual exegesis and lack creative interpretations that consider modern moral dilemmas. Under this fragmented and superficial treatment, the ideological threads and spiritual core are severed, reducing traditional culture to decorative labels or "cultural fast food", making it difficult to construct a holistic cognitive framework of Chinese civilization in students' minds and weakening its effectiveness as a value guide [2].

3.3. Transformation Difficulties and Lack of Innovation

Effectively transforming the essence of traditional thought into educational resources that align with the cognitive characteristics, psychological needs, and contemporary context of modern college students constitutes the core challenge. With regard to methodology, some educators still follow the "teacher-centered" one-way indoctrination model, overly relying on classroom lectures and textual interpretations while neglecting student participation and emotional experience, who are often seen to remain at the level of formal display though activities like Hanfu and calligraphy are introduced. Tending to float at the level of technical demonstration, the application of digital communication and new technologies like VR/AR fails to deeply integrate and construct an immersive educational environment that integrates "cognition-emotion-behavior"[3]. In terms of discourse, a coexistence of stiff archaic language and overly entertaining interpretations is shown, lacking an effective mechanism for modern transformation, making it difficult for the profound connotations and moral appeal of traditional culture to be fully released.

3.4. Disconnection between Knowledge and Action and Absence of Subjectivity

The educational process is shown to have a common disconnection between "knowledge" and "action". Students may understand the concepts of traditional virtues, but finding it difficult to consciously practice them in their actual studies, lives, online interactions, and social practices.

The lack of respect for and stimulation of students' subjectivity is shown by some educational activities, which degenerates into "heteronomous" discipline, leading to the dilemma of "being able to speak it but not able to act it". Due to the absence of subjective participation, it is difficult for traditional culture to complete the true transformation from external "textual" knowledge to internal "personality" quality.

3.5. Utilitarian Evaluation and Lack of Mechanism

With regard to the study of traditional culture, it's simplified into a tool for acquiring "second classroom credits" or "moral education evaluation points", with learning motivation alienated into the pursuit of "grade points", emptying its intrinsic value and turning it into a "stepping stone". Meanwhile, a scientific and effective evaluation system is not established yet, lacking operable indicators and a long-term mechanism to make the measurement of students' substantive improvements in cultural identity, value internalization, character shaping, and behavior cultivation, being not conducive to the continuous optimization of educational practices.

4. Practical Approaches: Systematic Strategies to Deepen the Empowerment Effect

To overcome the aforementioned dilemmas, constructing a systematic practice approach with creative transformation and innovative development at its core is the focus, with the aim of deeply integrating excellent traditional Chinese culture into the entire process of college students' ideological and moral education, as well as achieving "living inheritance" and profound empowerment.

4.1. Deep Cultivation of Content System, Promoting Meaning Reconstruction and Value Condensation

Systematic Integration and In-depth Interpretation: The development of guiding outlines lies in clarifying the transformation paths for core ideological concepts, traditional Chinese virtues, and humanistic spirit. The essence of traditional culture is systematically and deeply integrated into the teaching syllabus and core content of ideological and political courses in universities, enhancing its status and proportion. The construction of high-quality general education core course clusters on traditional culture covers philosophy, history, literature, and art. Professional courses are encouraged for the exploration and integration of traditional wisdom correlated with their disciplines. The organization of intensive reading of classic original texts, strength of teachers' ability to deeply excavate and interpret the modern value of classics, and use of historical materialism to guide students in dialectical thinking about the essence and dross are focused on, achieving "mutual interpretation of the ancient and the modern" [4].

Focusing on Core Values and Contemporary Transformation: For the implementation of value screening, core value categories with eternal charm and universal applicability are highlighted, endowing them with new connotations in line with the requirements of the times. Integrated readers are compiled by the use of the "original text + interpretation + case" model, constructing a value interpretation chain that connects the ancient and the modern. Profound connections are established between traditional wisdom and contemporary issues of concern to young people, transforming from "textual footnotes" to "problem-driven" "meaning reconstruction."

4.2. Innovative Methods and Approaches, Building an Immersive Ecology and Life Infiltration

Multi-dimensional Driven Classroom Teaching: Abandon one-way indoctrination and propel "four-dimensional drive": By using narrative teaching methods to reenact stories from ancient

texts, the abstract is transformed into vivid value narratives; issue-based inquiry methods are adopted, and argumentative topics are set up to guide in-depth discussions; case integration methods are implemented, and the deeds of contemporary role models are linked with traditional virtues for value association; digital experience methods are promoted, in which VR/AR technologies are employed to restore historical scenes, achieving cultural immersive experiences. "Dialogue-based" teaching is advocated, transforming teachers' "monologue" into multiple dialogues between teachers and students, students and students, and the ancient and the modern, stimulating text regeneration and student interpretation [5].

Hierarchical Advancement of Practical Experiences: Construct a "three-tiered advancement" experience system: Based on life, the basic level carries out solar term and folk custom practices; the deepening level attaches importance to skills, organizing workshops for studying intangible cultural heritage; the sublimation level combines fields, promoting "walking ideological and political courses", facilitating value recognition and practice.

Environmental Creation for Time and Space Infiltration: The transformation of the educational field from "classroom display" to comprehensive "life infiltration" is promoted. Spatially, traditional aesthetic elements are embedded into campus landscapes, dormitory corridors, libraries, etc., creating a cultural field where "walking, living, sitting, and lying" can all dialogue with nature, history, and the self. Temporally, the design of "slow experience" activities is conducted by relying on the twenty-four solar terms and traditional festivals, allowing the ritual sense of time to nourish the rhythm of the mind. In relation, teachers and students are advocated to "assist benevolence with friendship", building learning communities, reading clubs, and volunteer teams, achieving "educating people with culture" in "learning together with others".

4.3. Stimulating Subjective Consciousness, Promoting Self-discipline and Mutual Verification of Knowledge and Action

Strengthening Behavioral Guidance and Situational Influence: This focuses on deeply excavating and publicizing exemplary deeds of practicing Chinese virtues from ancient to modern times (including outstanding teachers and alumni). Specific situations that reflect values such as "ritual," "trust," and "harmony" are created in daily management and student activities (such as honest examination rooms, civilized dormitories, and harmonious classes), providing platforms for practice. Besides, in addition to actively building a healthy campus network culture, new media is used to disseminate excellent content, civilized rationality is advocated, and adverse ideological trends are resisted.

Focusing on Self-cultivation and Reflective Recognition: By paying attention to the wisdom of traditional "self-cultivation", students are guided to focus on introspection and vigilance in solitude. The writing of reflective diaries is encouraged, recording the alignment and deviation of daily behaviors with classical teachings, cultivating the habit of "examining oneself three times a day", making moral cognition precipitate into moral intuition in the process of "doing", achieving "mutual verification of knowledge and action".

Building a Community Mutual Verification Mechanism: A multi-dimensional "other perspective" mirror is formed through peer review, mentor feedback, and social observation, which propels individuals to enhance moral self-discipline and responsibility in the process of "being seen", achieving the sublimation from "heteronomous norms" to "internal legislation".

4.4. Improving Coordination Mechanisms, Ensuring Long-term Deepening and Effectiveness Enhancement

Deepening Main Channel Integration and Resource Coordination: By seamlessly integrating traditional culture elements into education on ideals and beliefs, patriotism, morality, and the rule of law in ideological and political courses, this can serve as theoretical support and vivid

cases, avoiding "two skins". The consciousness of cultural inheritance is strengthened in humanities and social science courses. Through the creation of a "school-local cultural community", the practice bases are co-constructed with museums, communities, etc., and activities such as "Traditional Culture Service Day" are jointly carried out [6].

Enhancing Teacher Quality and Collaborative Education: Through the implementation of the "Double Cultivation Project", institutions such as the National Studies Institute are relied on to set up teacher training bases, carrying out special training such as intensive reading of classics and Confucian classics seminars; a "pairing teaching and research" system is established between ideological and political teachers and intangible cultural heritage inheritors, promoting the deep integration of educational philosophy and skill inheritance.

Multi-dimensional evaluation system that considers cognition (depth of understanding), emotion (identification and resonance), and behavior (daily practice, participation in practice), process evaluation and development evaluation are focused on, students' attitudes, participation, and progress trajectory are paid attention to, and a "Cultural Literacy Growth File" is established. By incorporating teachers' cultural transformation ability into the evaluation and employment assessment, the "Traditional Culture Innovative Teaching Plan Award" is established, and tracking evaluation is implemented for students. What's more, a closed loop of education that promotes construction through evaluation is formed using multiple subjects and methods such as teacher evaluation, peer evaluation, self-evaluation, and practice unit evaluation

5. Conclusion

Being the "root" and "soul" of the Chinese nation, the excellent traditional Chinese culture contains rich moral nourishment and profound life wisdom, providing an irreplaceable source of value and spiritual support for the ideological and moral education of college students in the new era. A prerequisite for enhancing the timeliness and effectiveness of education lies in a deep understanding of the core purpose of its empowering education—awakening cultural genes, consolidating value foundations, nurturing well-rounded personalities, and guiding behavioral consciousness. Meanwhile, the real obstacles, such as cognitive alienation, fragmented content, inadequate transformation, disconnection between knowledge and action, and inaccurate evaluation, are confronted, which should be clearly recognized.

The core for overcoming these dilemmas and deepening empowerment lies in strengthening cultural confidence, reinforcing the consciousness of education, and following a systematic practice approach: In terms of content, based on the current era, a deep delving into the classics is required to achieve a creative transformation from fragmented footnotes to meaning reconstruction, and from knowledge transmission to value condensation. As for the methodology, the boundaries of the classroom should be broken, multi-dimensional approaches should be innovated, immersive experiences should be built, and a shift from formal displays to deep immersion in life and time should be promoted. With regard to subjectivity, the inherent motivation should be respected, situational guidance should be strengthened, reflective recognition should be focused on, and the conscious generation from external norms to internal self-discipline should be promoted. When it comes to mechanisms, barriers should be broken down, the integration of the main channels of the curriculum should be deepened, resources from schools and local areas should be gathered, the quality of teachers should be improved, a scientific evaluation system should be established, and a long-term pattern of collaborative education should be formed.

To truly integrate the excellent traditional Chinese culture into the blood and spiritual world of college students in the new era like spring rain, the overall innovation of concepts, content, methods, and mechanisms should be focused on, so profound nourishment can be offered for

them to "understand great virtues, adhere to public morality, and strictly abide by personal ethics". Based on this, pillars of society who possess profound cultural heritage, noble moral character, and a strong sense of responsibility for the times can be cultivated, so a powerful and determined youth force can be gathered for the realization of the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. In addition to being a systematic project concerning the future of the nation, this is also a glorious mission entrusted to higher education by the times.

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