

The Realistic Dilemma and Path Choice of Deepening National Unity and Progress Education in Universities

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Abstract: Strengthening the education of national unity and progress is an important measure for colleges and universities to forge the consciousness of the Chinese national community, which is of great significance for improving the comprehensive quality of college students, implementing the fundamental task of moral education and cultivating people in colleges and universities, and promoting the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. At present, China's universities carry out ethnic unity and progressive education work. There are issues with limited content and forms, an imperfect system mechanism, and insufficient professional quality among teachers. In this regard, colleges and universities can strengthen the top-level design, improve the educational effect by deepening the educational reform, and create a campus atmosphere of national unity and progress in colleges and universities to promote the development of national unity and progress in education.

Keywords: Colleges and universities; National unity; Value analysis; Realistic dilemma; Path choice

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1. Introduction

The education of national unity and progress in colleges and universities is of great significance for fostering moral character, nurturing talents, and advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Colleges and universities should regard the education of ethnic unity and progress as a key task. In this process, they should adhere to the central goal of building a strong sense of community among the Chinese people, fully implement the Communist Party of China (CPC) ethnic theories and policies, and effectively promote education on ethnic unity and progress. Furthermore, they should cultivate a campus culture characterized by ethnic unity and mutual assistance, thereby strengthening the sense of a shared Chinese identity among college students from all ethnic groups.

2. Deepening the value implication of national unity and progress education in colleges and universities

2.1. Individual level: building a community of learning and growth for college students of all ethnic groups

College students are in a critical period of personal growth, transition to adulthood, and pursuit of success. During this phase, it is highly significant to help them internalize the concept of building a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation through education and guidance. This process fosters their awareness of national unity, strengthens their sense of belonging to the Chinese nation, and enhances their overall competency and comprehensive development ^[1]. Ethnic unity and progress education in colleges and universities play a vital role in cultivating a strong sense of ethnic cohesion among students from all ethnic groups. It helps students understand the importance of ethnic unity as a lifeline, builds bridges for communication and integration, and fosters closer emotional connections among them. In an environment characterized by ethnic equality, unity, and mutual respect, students from all ethnic backgrounds support, help, and rely on one another. Together, they contribute to the cause of socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics.

2.2. At the university level: creating a campus atmosphere of ethnic unity in Chinese universities

Young college students represent the future of the nation. Promoting ethnic unity and progress education in colleges and universities is a vital approach to uniting students of all ethnic groups in contributing to national development. University campuses provide students with a shared space for study and daily life, fostering extensive interactions, comprehensive exchanges, and deep integration among students from diverse ethnic backgrounds. At the same time, colleges and universities carry the important responsibility of cultivating socialist builders and successors with well-rounded development in morality, intellect, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor ^[2]. To fulfill their educational mission and advance moral cultivation, universities must create an environment characterized by harmonious coexistence, solidarity, mutual support, and collaboration among students of all ethnic groups.

2.3. Ethnic level: Realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation

Achieving the vision of the Chinese Dream requires the collective efforts of all ethnic groups, particularly the younger generation of college students. Ethnic unity and progress education play a crucial role in fostering the cohesion and centripetal force of the Chinese nation. It nurtures deep bonds of friendship among students of all ethnic groups, encouraging mutual support and collaboration in building the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation ^[3]. Through ethnic unity and progress education, universities guide young students to reflect on history, envision the future, and take proactive steps toward promoting national unity and progress, positioning them at the forefront of this historical journey.

3. Deepen the practical foundation of national unity and progress education in colleges and universities

3.1. The content and form of national unity and progress education are relatively unitary

In the education of national unity and progress, the reliance on a single teaching approach and monotonous

content often leaves students passively engaged. This lack of dynamic interaction between teachers and students prevents the establishment of a positive, two-way exchange. As a result, the educational content based on the CPC's ethnic theories and policies may come across as abstract, empty, and unengaging. Moreover, this one-sided educational approach tends to overemphasize theoretical explanations, leading to the "marginalization" of national unity and progress education. It often overlooks the complementary role of the "second classroom"—practical and extracurricular activities—in enhancing education and teaching. The separation of theoretical education from practical application limits the ability of ethnic theories and policies to be validated through real-world experiences, thereby hindering the overall effectiveness of national unity and progress education.

3.2. The training mechanism and top-level design of national unity and progress education are not perfect

The educational work of colleges and universities functions as a diverse yet unified system, encompassing various disciplines and professional fields. National unity and progress education requires collaboration and coordination across multiple disciplines and departments. However, in practice, the importance placed on this education varies significantly among university departments. For instance, schools like the School of Marxism and the School of History and Culture often prioritize national unity and progress education, benefiting from a strong theoretical foundation and a pool of qualified teachers. In contrast, many engineering colleges and technical departments place less emphasis on this education. This lack of attention leads to a shortage of relevant teachers and insufficient focus on promoting national unity and progress within these fields.

3.3. Strengthening the teaching workforce and specialization in national unity and progress education

There are significant shortcomings in the development of the teaching workforce for national unity and progress education. In many colleges and universities, there is a noticeable shortage of teaching elites, academic leaders, and high-quality professionals dedicated to this field. Most teachers involved in national unity and progress education often hold multiple roles, such as teaching Marxist theory courses or serving as counselors. These educators typically lack professional and systematic training in ethnic theories and policies, resulting in a weak theoretical foundation and limited experience in teaching ethnic unity and progress. Furthermore, heavy teaching loads and intense research pressures lead many teachers to deprioritize national unity and progress education. This has created a persistent challenge of inadequate teacher allocation, hindering the overall effectiveness of such educational efforts.

4. Deepening the methods and approaches of national unity and progress education in colleges and universities

4.1. Adhering to CPC leadership and enhancing the top-level design for ethnic unity and progress in colleges and universities

National unity and progress education in colleges and universities is a systematic endeavor that requires a scientific, long-term, sustainable, and effective educational mechanism. This mechanism must enable institutions to fully grasp the contemporary significance of national unity and progress education while

addressing real-world challenges.

Firstly, colleges and universities must adhere to the CPC's leadership in national unity and progress education by establishing a working mechanism under the unified leadership of the university CPC committee, with coordination across various departments. The CPC committee should oversee national unity and progress education based on the CPC's ethnic theories and policies, ensuring that all functional departments and teaching units fulfill their responsibilities. This creates an integrated educational system where different departments collaborate, and the CPC, government, and student organizations work together in a cohesive manner.

Secondly, colleges and universities should develop a robust supervision and management mechanism to ensure effective implementation. A professional supervision and inspection group should be established to oversee and guide the work of national unity and progress education across departments. This group would employ methods such as inspections, investigations, visits, inquiries, and reviews to monitor and evaluate progress, resolve potential uncertainties, and ensure the education system operates smoothly^[4].

Finally, institutions should create a comprehensive evaluation and feedback system to enhance the quality of education. This system would encourage democratic feedback from students and teachers, allowing them to provide opinions and suggestions on national unity and progress education. The insights gathered would support ongoing revisions and improvements, making the education more targeted, effective, and relevant^[5].

4.2. Improving the national unity and progress education system in colleges and universities

Colleges and universities should enhance the educational methods and content system for ethnic unity and progress. It is essential to keep pace with the times, implement reforms, and innovate how ethnic unity and progress education are delivered, ensuring that it is acceptable and engaging for students.

Firstly, the curriculum for national unity and progress education should be improved, and its coverage should be expanded. In addition to incorporating national unity and progress education in courses such as "Ethnic Theory and Ethnic Policy," universities should also integrate modules on ethnic unity and progress in courses related to traditional culture and national history. Furthermore, universities must consider the diverse characteristics and commonalities of students from different ethnic groups. It is crucial to fully respect the traditional customs and cultures of all ethnic groups, allowing students to learn about and understand the CPC's ethnic theories and policies through their professional courses^[6]. Colleges and universities should closely align their national unity and progress education with the regional characteristics of the institution. They should actively explore local features, organize educational resources with ethnic characteristics, and integrate them in a structured and thoughtful manner across all aspects of education.

Secondly, it is essential to innovate the educational approach to national unity and progress. The use of online teaching methods should be effectively applied, with a focus on student-centered education. This approach should prioritize students' enthusiasm for learning and aim to foster meaningful interaction between teachers and students. The goal is to create an education system that encourages student leadership while maintaining a collaborative teacher-student relationship. The internet plays an essential role in the daily life of contemporary college students. Online public opinion and trending topics significantly influence their views and understanding of national unity^[7].

Therefore, colleges and universities should make effective use of the online environment and work to create a network space where people of all ethnic groups are closely united. To achieve this, colleges and universities should leverage new media platforms such as Weibo, Douyin, Yiban, and Learning to Strengthen the Country, promote the core national values, publicize the CPC's policies on national unity, and build a network community of young people who support national unity and actively oppose forces that seek to undermine it. In addition, colleges and universities must strengthen the supervision and governance of cyberspace, rigorously countering any ideological intrusions that threaten ethnic relations and national unity. They should guide online discourse with mainstream ideologies and firmly maintain control over online public opinion ^[8].

Thirdly, colleges and universities should strengthen the development of the teaching staff for ethnic unity and progress education, creating a team with a solid understanding of ethnic policies and theories, extensive experience in ethnic unity and progress education, and a high level of expertise with a firm political stance. To achieve this, colleges and universities should enhance the training of national unity and progress educators, organize seminars and study meetings on ethnic theory, and cultivate leaders and key teachers in this field to drive the continuous development of the entire teaching team for national unity and progress education ^[9]. Simultaneously, colleges and universities can adopt talent recruitment policies to identify leading figures and elite teams in the field of ethnic studies. These experts could be invited to deliver special lectures and seminars on campus, providing valuable insights and experience to inform the university's national unity and progress education initiatives.

4.3. Creating a campus atmosphere of ethnic unity and progress in universities

The education of ethnic unity and progress in colleges and universities requires a supportive educational atmosphere. Therefore, colleges and universities should actively work to create a campus environment that fosters ethnic unity and progress. One way to achieve this is by organizing diverse cultural activities that highlight ethnic traditions, festivals, customs, sports, and arts. These activities can be presented as engaging campus events, allowing students from various ethnic groups to deepen their connections through cultural exchange and interaction ^[10]. For example, ethnic cultural performances, festivals, and exhibitions of traditional customs, folk art, ethnic sports, and intangible cultural heritage can be held on campus. Through these activities, vibrant ethnic cultures are showcased, and an atmosphere of cultural integration is woven into every corner of the campus. Ethnic culture thus serves as a foundation for promoting ethnic unity and progress education. In this environment of mutual communication, prosperity, and progress among all ethnic groups, students deepen their understanding of ethnic unity, strengthen their sense of the Chinese national community, and cultivate strong bonds with all ethnic groups ^[11].

Campus culture should be integrated into both classroom and dormitory culture so that each part of the campus environment imprints the culture of national unity and progress more deeply in students' minds. Students from all classes study and communicate together, while students from different ethnic groups live and learn together, deepening their mutual understanding through interaction. As a result, class culture has a stronger influence than broader campus culture, further enhancing students' awareness of ethnic unity. It helps them form a deeper impression of the Chinese nation as a diverse, unified, and interdependent community with a shared future. This awareness encourages more positive actions in their daily studies and behaviors, guiding their lives with a stronger sense of belonging to the Chinese national community.

Additionally, it fosters respect for the culture of minority students, turning the class into a collective where students feel a sense of belonging and identity^[12]. Colleges and universities can actively integrate social practice activities to deepen students' understanding of national unity. Social practice provides students with an opportunity to engage with society and gain a real understanding of national unity. Colleges and universities can collaborate with governments and businesses in ethnic minority areas to jointly organize ethnic unity and progress education activities, and establish "ethnic unity and progress education bases." These initiatives will help students' awareness of ethnic unity and the Chinese national community take root^[13,14].

5. Conclusion

Ethnic unity is a source of strength for the Chinese nation and an essential foundation for realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. Colleges and universities serve as the cradle for the development of young students and play a significant role in shaping their sense of belonging to the Chinese national community. Therefore, colleges and universities should prioritize the education of ethnic unity and progress, fostering a campus culture that promotes these values. They should instill the idea of ethnic unity in students' hearts and encourage their active participation in the collective effort of all ethnic groups to build socialism and realize the Chinese Dream^[15]. Colleges and universities should explore the principles of national unity and progress education, enhance the curriculum system, innovate educational models, create a supportive campus cultural atmosphere, and develop a team of educators with strong theoretical foundations and rich practical experience in this field. By addressing current challenges, advancing national unity and progress education, and empowering young students, they can contribute to the creation of a harmonious and unified society dedicated to building socialism.

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