

# Integrating Intangible Cultural Heritage into Ideological and Political Courses in Colleges and Universities

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**Abstract:** China's intangible cultural heritage as an important part and the soul of the traditional Chinese culture is the cultural treasure of China and even the world. As the concept of cultural protection is deeply rooted in the minds of people, the state attaches increasing importance to intangible cultural heritage. The unique forms of cultural expressions and the special places of these expressions are deeply rooted in the Chinese culture and they should also be an important content in China's efficient ideological and political education. This article mainly explores the significance of intangible cultural heritage in ideological and political teaching as well as the strategies to effectively integrate intangible cultural heritage into ideological and political teaching in order to achieve the educational purposes of condensing the consensus of traditional Chinese culture, enhancing the cultural consciousness among teachers and students in colleges and universities, and enhancing the patriotic enthusiasm and cultural confidence.

**Keywords:** Intangible cultural heritage; Education courses; Cultural value; Education teaching

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## 1. Significance of intangible cultural heritage in ideological and political teaching

At present, with the continuous development and upgrading of science and information technology, the world culture has entered the so-called fast food era. Leisure, relaxation, and popularity have become the cultural themes of young people especially in colleges and universities. This culture which pursues excitement and allows information to be attainable in a short period of time embodies the whole campus. In their spare time, students do not read classics or study history instead, they watch American or Korean television programs in addition to short videos. Instead of thinking deeply about the society and life, they are addicted to a wide variety of information every day where they are easily misled by some paranoid or extremely mistaken ideas. Therefore, the introduction of intangible cultural heritage which represents the essence of traditional Chinese culture can have far-reaching educational significance in the ideological and political teaching.

### 1.1. Enhance the cognition of traditional Chinese culture

Intangible cultural heritage is an important carrier of the traditional Chinese culture. Its rich content is the most essential part in the development of human history and culture. It does not only record the unique history and culture of different nationalities and regions, but also shows the changes in people's way of thinking and the social strata during different historical periods. It is of rich historical and cultural value.

Ideological and political education which focuses on improving students' comprehensive quality and ability is an important channel to enhance their ideological and moral character. The so-called ideological

education is a subject that must be deeply rooted in the Chinese culture. Therefore, integrating the content of intangible cultural heritage into this education such as poetry, drama, and folk with Chinese cultural characteristics can improve students' cognition of traditional Chinese culture. The understanding and study of intangible cultural heritage can deepen the identity of students toward their motherland. Political moral education must be based on the understanding of China's political, historical, and cultural development in order to clarify how China has developed into a powerful country throughout various historical periods in saving the nation from extinction for survival. All kinds of ideological and political changes are reflected in literature, opera, and even special festivals. For example, the Dragon Boat Festival which lasted for thousands of years is so influential that it has even penetrated into Asian countries such as South Korea. The customs of eating *zongzi*, tying colorful ropes, and drinking realgar wine are also well known. The origin of its festival is from the people of moral character such as Qu Yuan, Wu Zixu, and Gou Jian where people's admiration and commemoration of thanksgiving for these great people who have made outstanding contributions to the country and the nation.

### **1.2. Enrich the contents of ideological and political courses**

The teaching of ideological and political courses is diversified in form and rich in content while the cultural content of intangible cultural heritage is richer in connotation which would expand the content of ideological and political courses. Especially as a required course in colleges and universities, ideological and political courses are relatively fixed in content which have not changed much in the past few years. Intangible cultural heritages such as literature, opera, music, calligraphy, and fine arts have diversified forms and profound contents which would add more interest and information to these courses. As an opportunity to enhance learning autonomy, students would be more interested in the intangible cultural heritage contents and at the same time, teachers also do not have to be constrained by textbook knowledge in the curriculum. The contents would be more extensive and the cultural atmosphere of these courses would be enhanced. In this way, students would be influenced by the broad and profound Chinese culture during the course teaching. There is a need to incorporate local characteristics of intangible cultural heritage content and constantly improve the enthusiasm of learning. For example, local colleges and universities in Chengdu can integrate Sichuan opera, Shu brocade, and other intangible cultural heritage contents into their ideological and political courses so that local students can better understand the rich culture of the place they grew up at. They can even carry out some social practices such as guiding students in revisiting the production process of Shu brocade and watching selected passages of Sichuan opera masters. These would enrich the contents of ideological and political courses and make them more interesting with added cultural value.

### **1.3. Improve moral quality**

An important part of intangible cultural heritage is the inheritance of the Chinese's excellent spirit including diligence, hard work, patriotism, unremitting self-improvement, vigorousness and promising, seeking common ground while reserving differences, and so on. Integrating it into ideological and political teaching can help improve students' moral quality and even play a role as examples. Such as the "Five sub-ka" story that has been told for a long time, students have heard of it and it is a story that they are already familiar with. However, if the drama, "Five Sons of Hai Nan Zhai" is incorporated into the teaching of ideological and political courses, students' interest in learning would be immediately aroused. As a traditional local drama in Hainan Province, Hainan Zhai Opera is one of the national intangible cultural heritages. It is closely related to Taoism which is a religion in China. It distinguishes itself from other operas for its absurd and bizarre contents. If students are able to understand the Hainan Zhai Opera which is an important

intangible cultural heritage, they are more likely to accept the educational principles in its drama which is conducive to learn the contents of ideological and political courses in addition to improving their own moral quality.

## **2. Methods and approaches of integrating intangible cultural heritage into ideological and political courses**

Since intangible cultural heritage has such an important significance to ideological and political teaching, it is necessary to explore effective methods and approaches to integrate it into the ideological and political teaching in order to maximize the educational value of intangible cultural heritage.

### **2.1. Organic combination of ideological and political education as the basis with intangible cultural heritage as the supplement**

First of all, there is a need to clarify that ideological and political courses should still emphasize on ideological and political content as their main focus while being enriched and supplemented with intangible cultural heritage. No matter what the form of the education is, the main content and purpose of teaching must be clear. Ideological and political courses as public teaching courses in colleges and universities need to emphasize on ideological and political education as their main purpose while the curriculum arrangement at each stage should conform to the teaching progress. The content of intangible cultural heritage only serves as auxiliary and supplement which enriches the course contents, diversifies the teaching forms, and stimulates the interest as well as the attraction of education. One should not put the cart before the horse in turning the teaching of ideological and political courses into an accessory for the promotion of intangible cultural heritage. The curriculum should be carefully designed where the teaching content of ideological and political courses should be combined with those of the intangible cultural heritage in order to promote one another. In this way, students would be able to understand the contents of the national intangible cultural heritage while improving their ideological and political training; hence, enhancing their cognition of traditional culture.

### **2.2. Harmoniously advancing course teaching as the main task and social practice as the supplement**

Although the integration of intangible cultural heritage provides more diversified teaching forms for ideological and political teaching, the curriculum is still the main foundation of education. Basic and necessary knowledge introduction should remain as the most important part of course teaching especially the knowledge points in teaching plans. The contents of intangible cultural heritage are very rich and many of them could augment the intuitive feelings of the students through practical teaching such as looking at calligraphy and painting exhibitions, watching dramas, visiting intangible cultural heritage bases, and so on. Some special courses can even be arranged so that students may understand the application process of intangible cultural heritage, understand their local representative content, as well as the sacrifice and contribution made by contemporary intangible cultural heritage-related staffs in the protection of the excellent traditional Chinese culture. Social practice should be used as an important standard to assess the learning contents of the courses. Only in this way, students would be able to develop their sense of cultural identity and patriotism, understand the traditional Chinese culture, and improve their own cultural quality while adapting to the rapid development of the information age.

## **3. Value of integrating intangible cultural heritage into ideological and political education**

First, it would establish a regional culture teaching model in ideological and political courses. Intangible

cultural heritages are diversified in form and rich in content with strong regional characteristics. Many intangible cultural heritages include the names of their regions such as the above-mentioned Sichuan Opera, Shu Embroidery, and Hainan Zhai Opera. Therefore, the deep integration of intangible cultural heritage contents into ideological and political education can establish a teaching model with regional culture characteristics. Ideological and political courses in universities are no longer rigid and uniform. There seems to be no differences between these courses at different places which also make students feel the importance of ideological and political courses. The establishment of regional culture teaching model can enhance students' sense of belonging to the region, help promote the inheritance and local cultural values, as well as to realize the full use of local cultural resources so as to achieve the goals and requirements of ideological and political education.

Second, it would be helpful to enhance cultural and national confidence. Nowadays, the fast food culture is gradually occupy the market among young people. It is eye-catching and its exaggerated information are bombarding people's vision. However, behind the rapid access to information, there is a lack of in-depth cultural thinking. Students are the cornerstone of the Chinese youth and the powerful force for China's development. Integrating intangible cultural heritage contents into ideological and political classes is conducive to inherit the Chinese spirit, enhancing students' patriotism, and cultivating their pride in the Chinese culture which would enhance their cultural and national confidence. Teachers also found it as a powerful tool to cultivate the correct national outlook, world outlook, values and cultural outlook among students. Most contents of the intangible cultural heritages are already nearly lost inheritance treasure of the traditional culture. The young people need to gradually identify and understand these intangible cultural heritages as well as actively mobilize their interest in learning to understand the history and story behind conveys, responsibility and honor, sadness, and sacrifice so that they can take the initiative to inherit these precious cultural heritages which is of profound significance to the promotion and dissemination of the Chinese culture.

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