

Discussion on the Reform Path of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education from the Perspective of Cultural Integration

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Abstract: As society continues to evolve, multiculturalism has emerged as a significant global trend, exerting an increasingly pervasive influence across all aspects of our lives. Each culture possesses unique characteristics, and the coexistence of diverse cultures can readily give rise to various challenges. This trend will significantly impact contemporary college students, thus posing more formidable challenges for university ideological and political education. In light of this, pertinent analysis and research on the reform of ideological and political teaching in colleges and universities was conducted from the perspective of promoting a pluralistic and integrated cultural environment.

Keywords: Pluralistic integrated culture; Colleges and universities; Ideological and political education; Reform path

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1. Introduction

With the continuous advancement of the “Belt and Road” initiative, our society has witnessed the emergence of cultural pluralism and integration ^[1]. The rapid development of modern information technology has brought various lifestyles, behavioral norms, and ideas into our lives through the Internet. As a result of multicultural integration, China’s traditional culture is being influenced by diverse cultural, ideological, and political influences. Colleges and universities serve as crucial platforms for the dissemination and development of China’s ideology and culture. In the context of multicultural integration, it is essential to guide college students in making informed judgments and choices amidst such cultural diversity. Therefore, from the perspective of a pluralistic integrated culture, this paper first analyzes the opportunities and challenges of the reform of ideological and political education in colleges and universities, and then elaborates on the path of its reform and implementation, with the hope of providing valuable insights for other scholars.

2. Benefits of ideological and political teaching reform in colleges and universities

from the perspective of pluralistic integrated culture

2.1. Conducive to broadening the space and connotation of ideological and political teaching

With the smooth progress of the “Belt and Road Initiative,” various cultures have organically integrated different regional, national, and social systems, which is conducive to eliminating cultural barriers and cultural integration ^[2]. This will not only promote the prosperity and development of world cultures but also enhance the vitality of national cultures. In a sense, the ideological and political teaching reform in colleges and universities based on the diversified and integrated cultural perspective is bound to further enrich the content of ideological and political teaching in Chinese colleges and universities, which can allow students to be exposed to other cultures, broaden their horizons, and increase their depth of cognition of external ideological and moral phenomena.

2.2. Beneficial to promoting “Teaching” and “Learning”

As far as “learning” is concerned, multiculturalism not only broadens the horizons of contemporary college students but also provides them with an opportunity to understand different regional, national, and social systems from the perspective of Chinese culture, which is conducive to enhancing their cognition and understanding in the field of ideology and morality. On the other hand, in a multicultural environment, university students have a clear direction in understanding values, and they can better understand and integrate thoughts based on diversified learning.

Regarding “teaching,” in the ideological and political education in Chinese universities, actively promoting a diverse and integrated culture helps students absorb other excellent cultural achievements, enriching the content of ideological and political education and also reflecting inclusiveness. With the continuous development of diverse and integrated culture, more and more ideological and political teachers in Chinese universities are integrating and applying advanced educational concepts and teaching methods, which greatly promotes the development process of ideological and political education reform in Chinese universities ^[3].

3. Challenges in ideological and political teaching reform in colleges and universities from the perspective of pluralistic integrated culture

3.1. The necessity to enhance the awareness of diverse and integrated cultural concepts in ideological and political education

The promotion of foreign ideas and value systems often diverges from the socialist system upheld in traditional Chinese culture. This tendency is likely to lead college students toward emphasizing pragmatism and utilitarianism, which not only hinders the development of students’ global perspectives but is also detrimental to the implementation and reform of current ideological and political education in colleges and universities. Such influences are not conducive to fostering a robust and diverse integrated cultural landscape.

3.2. The impact of commercial cultural values on ideological and political education

As one of the important forms in the multi-cultural pattern, commercial culture is gradually formed along with the development process of China’s economic marketization. On one hand, the market economy fosters the swift advancement of our economy and enhances the material abundance of our nation ^[4]. On the flip side, it has also introduced novel values to our society, such as innovation, pragmatism, rationality, and more, and the level of acceptance of these new ideas among people is increasingly high nowadays. However, in this process, the profit-oriented nature of the market economy itself has continuously challenged people’s values and moral

standards^[5]. This is mainly reflected in hedonism, materialism, egoism, and other ideas. Some people prioritize wealth and are even willing to break the law for financial gains. This commercial culture is a challenge to ideological and political education in universities^[6].

3.3. The interplay between foreign cultures and traditional Chinese culture

Foreign cultures, as a highly representative form of multiculturalism, have had a significant impact on our traditional culture^[7]. Western cultures place greater emphasis on individualism and the pursuit of material wealth. However, more and more people are embracing these ideological and cultural values, which are gradually replacing our traditional emphasis on valuing the well-being of the community and promoting a spirit of contribution. As time goes on, this shift inevitably leads to a stronger focus on self-interest. Compared to other social groups, college students are much more receptive to foreign cultures, and their social behaviors, lifestyles, values, communication modes, interpersonal relationships, ethics, and other aspects will easily be influenced by these cultures. If university students uncritically adopt these ideological values^[8], they may inadvertently disregard their pursuit of social responsibility and the intrinsic value of life, resulting in moral degradation and a profound sense of spiritual emptiness^[9]. Neglecting to address this issue could ultimately lead to the gradual erosion of our nation's cultural and ethnic identity, exerting a detrimental impact on the sustainable development of our cherished traditional culture.

4. The path of ideological and political teaching reform in colleges and universities from the perspective of pluralistic integrated culture

4.1. Unveiling the significance of traditional Chinese culture

China's traditional culture is a product of our ancestors' hard work and wisdom, and it reflects the outstanding qualities and virtues of ancient Chinese people in many ways. It has an essential role in promoting the future development of college students^[10]. Therefore, to promote ideological and political teaching effectively, we must clarify the value of traditional Chinese culture from a cultural diversity perspective. In this way, we can make improvements and promote the reform and development of ideological and political teaching in schools.

First of all, traditional Chinese culture should be integrated into the classroom. The classroom serves as the frontline for teachers to share their knowledge and educate students. It is also an important place for students to receive education and acquire knowledge. Thus, it is essential to tap into the full educational potential of the classroom and integrate traditional Chinese culture into classroom teaching. To achieve this, schools must first organize excellent teachers to develop quality teaching materials that incorporate traditional culture into the classroom. Through appropriate methods, teachers can then carry out ideological and political education to disseminate knowledge about Chinese traditional culture to students. Additionally, offering courses on moral education and inviting relevant scholars and experts can create an atmosphere for learning traditional culture, thus, deepening students' cognition and understanding. Furthermore, in the process of conducting ideological and political education, teachers should consciously incorporate traditional culture, enrich the content of ideological and political education, and use traditional culture to liven up the classroom atmosphere to stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning.

Secondly, traditional Chinese culture should be integrated into social practice. Social practice plays a significant role in ideological and political education as it can enhance students' comprehensive qualities. By merging traditional Chinese culture with social practice, university students can further bolster their cultural confidence. Students will then be motivated to explore the influences of traditional culture in society during breaks like summer and winter vacations^[11]. Through practical experiences, they can deepen their grasp of

traditional culture, thus boosting their cultural confidence. Moreover, schools can arrange traditional cultural events on important ethnic holidays and other special occasions. For example, during Qingming Festival, students can visit the cemeteries of martyrs to pay their respects. Similarly, during the Double Ninth Festival, students can be encouraged to visit and support their elderly relatives, gaining an understanding of the festival's significance. On Labor Day, students can take part in tree-planting activities or field investigations, allowing them to experience the essence of traditional culture.

Thirdly, integrating traditional culture into the school's themed activities. While classrooms are important platforms for theoretical instruction in ideological and political education in colleges and universities, thematic events serve as effective extensions. First of all, teachers can organize a series of campus activities centered around the theme of "ideological and political education." These may include gratitude education, poetry recitations, and Chinese studies course teachings, allowing students to learn about, inherit, and carry forward the traditions of Chinese culture. What is more, schools can invite traditional culture research experts and scholars to serve as instructors for courses on literature studies like *Analects of Confucius* and *Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance* ^[12]. In this way, students can freely choose elective courses based on their preferences and needs. By providing more flexible choices, students can engage more actively in learning about traditional culture. Besides, teachers can also organize on-campus traditional culture practice activities, such as Chinese painting competitions, recitations of literary classics, calligraphy contests, and martial arts performances. By doing so, students can truly integrate traditional culture into their campus lives.

Fourthly, traditional Chinese culture should be integrated into the ideological and political media. In today's society, college students are increasingly relying on new media and emerging technologies, such as smartphones, to gain information and knowledge ^[13]. Therefore, universities must keep up with the times by utilizing the Internet as a channel to disseminate ideological and political knowledge to their students. On one hand, professors can make use of popular platforms like WeChat groups, microblogs, and school public accounts to regularly deliver content or articles related to traditional culture to their students. On the other hand, professors should incorporate modules on traditional culture within relevant online teaching platforms, using visuals, videos, and other multimedia formats to disseminate traditional cultural knowledge to their students. By doing so, students can gain a deeper understanding of traditional culture through their mobile devices like smartphones, laptops, tablets, and so on. This approach not only overcomes the limitations of time and space in ideological and political education but also makes learning traditional cultural knowledge more convenient.

4.2. Embracing the essence of multiculturalism

In a diverse and integrated cultural environment, college ideological and political instructors should uphold the core values of China's mainstream ideology. They should recognize the role of diverse and integrated cultures in enhancing college students' development ^[14]. When designing ideological and political courses, it is crucial to first focus on protecting, respecting, and guiding the historical significance within non-mainstream cultures and extracting their essential content. Additionally, it is important to draw from the essence of diverse cultures, and learn from and emulate other cultural achievements, to enrich the content of ideological and political education. Only by doing so can students gain a deeper understanding of various cultural aspects. Finally, further reform of ideological and political education should be placed in universities, and teachers should embrace an open attitude towards diverse cultures and guide students to manage their relationship with traditional cultures. Besides, they should refine their understanding of traditional and foreign cultures, extracting the essence while eliminating irrelevant elements, to better accomplish the goal of cultural education.

4.3. Commitment to reforming ideological and political education in colleges and universities

In the context of multicultural integration, it is essential for ideological and political education in colleges and universities to adhere to reform and innovation. This involves constantly optimizing educational programs to ensure the healthy growth and all-round development of students ^[15]. In previous teaching practices, educators often used the cramming method. Besides, the teaching content and supplementary materials used often do not align with the current requirements of college students for ideological and political education. Therefore, educational institutions must renew their teaching content and supplementary materials. This involves creating institution-specific teaching materials that better reflect core contemporary concepts and cater to the needs and characteristics of students, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of ideological and political education.

4.4. Prioritizing innovative approaches to student management

With the continuous development of the Internet, new media has emerged as a powerful platform for implementing student management and ideological and political teaching in schools. This platform transcends the limitations of time and space, facilitating seamless communication and interaction between teachers and students. College students now have the freedom to express their ideas in this digital environment. In view of this, it is crucial to fully leverage new media and innovate teaching and management methods, with a strong emphasis on promoting student participation in learning activities. One effective approach is to establish discussion groups and forums through new media channels. By selecting compelling Chinese cultural stories as discussion topics, teachers can encourage students to actively engage and share their insights within these groups. This not only fosters a better understanding of their thoughts but also allows teachers to stay informed of their perspectives. Ideological and political educators should also make use of popular social media such as Weibo and WeChat to provide students with a glimpse of their personal lives. By doing so, stronger teacher-student relationships can be cultivated. Additionally, by considering and analyzing issues from the students' perspectives, we can effectively integrate humanistic education with class construction, student management, and ideological and political guidance. This holistic approach ensures a more meaningful and interconnected educational experience for students.

5. Conclusion

In the context of a diverse and integrated culture, it has become inevitable to intensify the reform of ideological and political education in universities. However, how to make every step of ideological and political education work well is a question that deserves consideration from every teacher. In this regard, we can achieve the reform of ideological and political education in universities from the following aspects: clarifying the value of traditional Chinese culture, embracing the essence of foreign cultures, persisting in the reform of ideological and political education in universities, and emphasizing innovative methods of student management. These steps will contribute to the realization of the reform of ideological and political education in universities from the perspective of a diverse and integrated cultural approach.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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