

# **Analysis on the Harm and Countermeasures of Western Utilitarianism to Ideological and Political Education in Colleges in the New Era**

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**Abstract:** *With the marketization of higher education, the values of college students are widely influenced by utilitarianism. This paper analyzes the basic characteristics of college students' utilitarian values and their influence on the ideological and political education in colleges and universities, and proposes some countermeasures.*

**Keywords:** *utilitarianism, college students, ideological and political education*

## **1. The connotation of utilitarianism**

Utilitarianism, also known as utilitarianism, is an ethical theory about moral standards that has a huge impact on human thought and human practice. As John Bordley Rawls puts it, "In many theories of modern moral philosophy, some form of utilitarianism has always prevailed". [1] It is generally believed that utilitarianism has roughly gone through three stages -- "Early Utilitarianism Period -- Classical Utilitarianism Period -- The Age of Modern Utilitarianism". "A creed that regards 'utility' or the 'principle of greatest happiness' as the basis of morality, asserting that the right and wrong of actions are proportional to their propensity to enhance happiness or to cause misfortune." [2] The so-called happiness refers to happiness and the absence of pain; the so-called unhappiness refers to pain and loss of happiness. The only ultimate purpose or "good" in life is to seek pleasure and avoid suffering. On different occasions, utilitarianism has formed its own theoretical framework in the fields of politics, economy and other fields through different elaborations of the concept of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people" that it advocates, and is even called in some modern ethical theories. It is "the only one that can lay the ethical foundation of all social sciences". Since the argument of utilitarianism is based on empirical epistemology, its ethical viewpoint is extremely simple, and its appearance seems to be very consistent with the rationality of ordinary people, making it easier for people to accept. However, it requires that each individual should treat their own and others' happiness fairly and equally, which is difficult to achieve in reality. In fact, the so-called interests of the most people only emphasize the interests of some people who are related to the beneficiaries. Its real purpose is still to adjust the contradictions within the bourgeoisie, rather than considering the interests of all the people. Marx's evaluation of utilitarianism illustrates this point even more. He said that "all movements of utilitarianism in the past were movements for the minority or for the benefit of the minority."

## **2. The characteristics of college students' utilitarian values**

### **2.1. Individualism comes first**

In the eyes of utilitarians, the realization of personal interests comes first, followed by the interests of others. Due to their own growth, the values of college students are not yet mature, and they are also influenced by the western utilitarian trend of thought. Their collectivism is weak, individualism prevails, and everything is self-centered. They only focus on personal development, believe in "everyone is for me", but ignore "I am for everyone", lack the spirit of responsibility and dedication, and seriously violate the requirements of the new era for young people.

### **2.2. Hedonism prevails**

Utilitarianism believes that it is human nature to seek pleasure and avoid pain. They regard enjoying

pleasure and avoiding pain as the ultimate value pursuit in life, and it is also their only pursuit goal in life. Affected by this, hedonism and materialism tendencies have quietly spread among college students, and some college students take hedonism as their life goal, pursuing high consumption and material enjoyment, comparing consumption, overdue consumption, etc., and even a lot of borrowing consumption, heavily in debt. We all know that college students are a non-income group, and most of the money they spend is hard-earned by their parents. They blindly pursue material and sensory enjoyment, ignore their parents' hard work, and give up their spiritual pursuits, which has seriously affected their ideological and moral improvement.

### ***2.3. The phenomenon of quick success and instant benefit is prominent***

Modern utilitarianism attaches great importance to the actual consequences of actions, and often judges the quality of actions based on this. Affected by this, many college students have formed the idea of "as long as the result, regardless of the process". In order to increase their future employment resumes and find an "ideal job", many college students are keen on examinations, postgraduate entrance examinations, and civil servant examinations, while ignoring the accumulation of theoretical courses and basic courses. Some students even skip classes regularly. In their learning motivation, content and process, they show a tendency to only focus on immediate success and short-term profits, and lack long-term life pursuit, which leads to a serious decline in the campus humanistic spirit. From a long-term perspective, such behavior has seriously affected the overall development of college students.

## **3. The harm on the ideological and political education in colleges and universities**

Since the birth of human society, ideological and political education has been a universal social activity shared by different historical periods and different classes of human society. As we all know, ideological and political education has different names in different countries and periods, but every society and country must It is essential to implement this practice.

### ***3.1. Influence the teaching effect of the courses***

Under the influence of Western utilitarianism, some parents and students have always attached great importance to intellectual development and often neglected the development of moral education. After entering colleges and universities, college students still only learn professional knowledge and skills that are "useful for themselves in the future", and still ignore the study of personal ideological and moral theoretical knowledge. Therefore, the comparison of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities with professional courses is often not taken seriously, and the phenomenon of skipping classes is serious, and it is difficult to achieve the predetermined teaching effect.

### ***3.2. Weakening the educational function of the campus environment***

External factors have an important impact on the change and development of affairs. The campus is the place where college students live and study, and its quality has an important impact on the growth of college students. The western utilitarian trend of thought took the opportunity to spread to the campus and accelerated its spread with the help of the Internet and mass media. The value orientation of college students has also become more realistic, and the overall atmosphere of the campus is relatively impetuous. The new theory of the futility of reading has quietly emerged and spread rapidly. Such a utilitarian campus environment will inevitably affect the ideological and moral education of college students.

### ***3.3. Affect college students' understanding of ideological and political education***

Due to the characteristics of immature physical and mental development, college students are prone to confusion and inaccurate grasp in the process of screening affairs, and cannot achieve rational screening. Under the influence of Western utilitarianism, their understanding of Marxist theory and ideological and political education has become deviated. Some students think that communism is too far away or difficult to achieve, and instead advocate pragmatism, materialism and utilitarianism. They think these are closer to themselves or easier to achieve. Therefore, they overemphasize and pursue self-worth, emphasize individual freedom, and pay great attention to the realization of their own interests, while they are relatively indifferent to the realization of the interests of the collective and others. In this way, college students become more eager for quick success, which seriously affects their healthy growth.

#### **4. Coping strategies**

Western utilitarianism has a series of adverse effects on the ideological and political education of college students, which can be attributed to the fact that the education function of the ideological and political education of college students has not been brought into full play. Therefore, we should make joint efforts to actively play the educating function of college students' ideological and political education, and eliminate the adverse effects of Western utilitarianism with the Marxist utilitarian view.

##### ***4.1. Innovative teaching mode***

Nowadays, ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities should also keep pace with the times, adapt to the new social development requirements, and conform to the characteristics and laws of the physical and mental development of college students in the new era. In the new era, college students are active in thinking, outstanding in personality, and have a strong ability to accept new things. This requires colleges and universities to continuously update the teaching mode and teaching content of ideological and political education. First, we must continue to expand teaching methods. In addition to the traditional teaching mode, new teaching methods are integrated, such as micro-lectures, mobile teaching and other new methods are gradually integrated into the classroom, and the innovative teaching mode can double the active effect of the classroom and make students more fond of and easier to accept. Second, we must pay more attention to practical teaching. Ideological and political courses in colleges and universities can not only talk about theory, but also need to always pay attention to and connect with the society and the daily life of college students, pay attention to introducing practical problems into the classroom, inspire students to discuss and think, and guide students to learn to use Marxist theory to solve practical problems encountered, so that theoretical integrated into the daily life of college students. At the same time, we must improve the interest and effectiveness of ideological and political theory courses, so as to attract more students' love for it, so as to resolve the prominent contradictions such as the utilitarianization of college students' ideology.

##### ***4.2. Improve the campus cultural environment***

The healthy growth of college students is related to the stability and harmony of the campus. Therefore, it is very necessary to weaken the atmosphere of utilitarianism on campus. First, we must deepen the publicity work. Colleges and universities should make full use of various propaganda media, such as websites and WeChat public accounts, various propaganda boards, electronic screens, etc., to widely publicize the content of Marxist theory and build a harmonious and progressive campus cultural atmosphere. Second, we must cultivate an excellent school ethos. Regularly carry out campus activities, encourage teachers and students to participate together, enhance the cohesion of teachers and students and perceive the fun of collectivism in the activities, and deeply guide college students to improve their perceptions in the activities, so as to form a healthy and upward campus spirit. Third, colleges and universities should actively promote role models and Establish advanced models, and further form a good campus cultural atmosphere through typical demonstration leading and radiation driving effects, and continuously expand the position of spiritual civilization construction.

##### ***4.3. Deepen ideal and belief education***

Ideals and beliefs are the beacon and source of motivation for people to move forward. If college students lack ideals and beliefs, they will lose their direction and lose motivation. First of all, college students should understand their responsibilities and missions. College students are the builders and successors of the future development of the country and society. They have an arduous historical mission and a heavy responsibility on their shoulders. Secondly, college students should deepen the study of Marxist theoretical knowledge. Deeply understand the nature of utilitarianism and improve the ability to analyze and solve problems. College students should understand that the standard for measuring the social value of life is the individual's contribution to society and others, and the collective interest is the first. Only when college students unify their personal interests with social interests and the interests of others, study diligently, and work hard, can they maximize their legitimate interests.

#### **5. Conclusion**

College students are the future and hope of the country, and their ideological and moral level directly

affects the progress of the great cause. It is precisely because of the special stage of their physical and mental development, coupled with the rapid changes in society, that Western utilitarianism seizes the opportunity to erode their values and affect their healthy growth, while ideological and political education both promotes people's all-round development and The function of resisting bad thoughts has inescapable responsibilities and obligations. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the ideological and political education of college students in multiple ways, guide them to establish a correct outlook on life and values, and promote them to become socialist builders and successors with both political integrity and ability.

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### **References**

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