

Characteristics and laws of youth values cultivation in the new era

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Abstract: *Since the 18th Party Congress, the Party Central Committee has stood at the strategic height of the development of the new era and paid more attention to the education and guidance of the worldview, outlook on life and values of youth groups. Doing a good job in leading and cultivating youth values and actively cultivating youth socialist core values have become the requirements of the times for national development and policy orientation in the new era. Leading and cultivating contemporary youth values is conducive to a comprehensive analysis and in-depth understanding of the current situation of youth values, guiding youth to correct their personal ideological and political quality, moral quality and psychological quality with socialist core values, and promoting the effective improvement of the comprehensive quality of youth.*

Keywords: *Youth; Values guidance; Socialist core values*

1. Introduction

In the context of the unprecedented changes in the past century, young people are facing unprecedented challenges to their outlook on life and values. To a certain extent, the networked negative energy information has dismembered and alienated the worldview, outlook on life and values of youth. With the development of the market economy, the influence of the commodity economy on society has gradually deepened, and the diversity of material choices has contributed to the blind comparison mentality of youth groups, resulting in the emergence of a socially impetuous culture of one-sided pursuit of material enjoyment and the growth of the value code of "money first" among youth groups. At the same time, the emergence of "Buddhist youth" is essentially a reflection of the social stratification of the young generation, which is also an irrational value. For this reason, it must be addressed and reasonably dealt with.

2. The connotation and formation mechanism of youth values

Values and values play an important role in social life. Defining the concepts of values and values is conducive to better grasp the essence of both. Different disciplines, such as economics, sociology and ethics, have different understandings of the concept of value. Among them, the concept of value is mostly understood from the perspective of Marxist philosophy. There are four views on the understanding of "value" in philosophy education. First, the "subject theory" emphasizes that the subject's attitude is the criterion for judging whether there is value and the size of value. The "object theory" believes that value is equal to the object itself. Third, "meaning", emphasizing that value is the negative or positive significance of the object to the subject's survival and development after the object acts on the subject. Fourth, the "relationship theory" emphasizes that value is explained from the perspective of subject-object relationship. Value is produced when the subject acts with the object. [1] In summary, value is essentially a relationship between things and people, and the nature of people is the sum of social relations. Therefore, the essence of value is a relationship with a social character, centered on the satisfaction of human needs and aimed at the enhancement of human subjectivity.

Values belong to the category of ideology. Luo Guojie (2007) [2] believes that values are value consciousness, which is a spiritual form unique to human beings. Yuan Guiren (2006) [3] believes that values are people's views, opinions and attitudes about the role, meaning and value of something to people. Zhang Jinsu (2007) [4] believes that values are a system of people's perceptions of the importance of things in terms of their own needs. To sum up, values are the sum of positions and attitudes of gradually recognizing whether objects have value or not or the magnitude of value in the process of repeated

practice under certain historical conditions, and they are the basic views on values and their related contents. Youth values are the most basic viewpoint of young people's perception and evaluation of things, phenomena and their own values. It influences the way young people think and feel, and is of great importance to their development.

Values have the characteristics of stability, sociality and topicality. Stability is reflected in the fact that the formation of values is a step-by-step process, and once they are formed, they are relatively stable. Sociality reflects that values are formed in the process of youth playing different social roles, and they belong to individual youth values, but also reflect the value tendency of a specific youth group and the value consensus of the group. Temporality reflects the fact that youth's views and attitudes change with the development of the times under specific historical conditions, emphasizing the dynamic development of youth values.

Guiding youth to establish correct values requires understanding the mechanism of youth values formation. Studies by domestic scholars have focused on internal and external environmental aspects. Zeng Yanbo (2007) [5] systematically analyzed the generation mechanism of youth values from three aspects: youth's own developmental characteristics, social environment changes, and social and cultural influences. Guo Xin and Wang Qingya (2021) [6] explored the mechanism of youth employment values generation from four dimensions: internal needs, social cognition, self-awareness and individual experience. Youth values are formed in the process of personal interaction with the environment and change with the enrichment of individual practical experience and social cognition. The empirical investigation by Jinping Liu and Jie Ren (2019) [7] analyzed the influence mechanism of college students' values, emphasizing that social role models, school, family, culture, emotion and emotion, personality factors, self-awareness, individual cognition and individual will are important factors that influence values. At the same time, some scholars explore the formation mechanism of youth values from a process perspective, and believe that the formation of values is a process in which subjects receive, cognize and integrate external information, internalize it into their own attitudes and tendencies and externalize it into their actions, and finally form fixed views and opinions. This process can be summarized as a closed loop of values from cognitive internalization, orientation generation, and then practical implementation.

Looking at the existing studies on the formation mechanism of youth values, we can find that scholars generally believe that the formation and development of youth values are influenced by two major environments. The first is the internal environment, which includes physiological and psychological factors. These factors are the basis for the formation of youth values; the second is the external environment, which includes natural and social factors. The characteristics and changes of natural factors are factors that cannot be ignored in the formation of values. Social factors include environment, education and social practice activities. The formation of youth values is the result of the combined effect of these factors. From the perspective of the specific process of values formation, the process of youth values formation also needs to consider the role of three factors: the recipient, the receiving object and the receiving link.

3. Analysis of the current characteristics and influencing factors of youth values

Research on the characteristics of the current situation of youth values has been a hot spot for scholars in China. On the current situation of contemporary youth values, Li Zuchao and Yang Liuqing (2019) [8] used semi-structured interviews to survey 90 college educators, and the results showed that the new-age college students have positive political values, rational and pragmatic values in career selection, and liberal and open values in marriage; their development characteristics are manifested as multiple contradictions, multi-terminal plasticity and multi-dimensional fluctuations. Wang Yuanyuan (2015) [9] analyzes the current situation of post-90s youth values from the perspective of Confucian culture, and believes that the values of this group present many contradictions, diversified and diversified value orientations and value judgments, individualized value orientations, strong subject consciousness, and realistic and utilitarian value goals. By studying the current situation of youth values, scholars further summarize the basic characteristics of contemporary youth values, which are mainly divided into two characteristics, four characteristics and six characteristics. The two characteristics theory refers to the duality of youth values in terms of value orientation, value evaluation and value choice. The four characteristics say that youth values have four value tendencies of pursuing openness and autonomy, focusing on worldly success and wealth, pursuing self and risky and exciting life, and agreeing to follow social norms and traditions. [10] The five characteristics say that youth values are unqualified, pioneering, egoistic, dualistic, marginal and central. [11] In addition, youth values are also characterized by subordination and novelty. [12] In summary, influenced by many factors, contemporary youth values

have different forms and diverse characteristics. In-depth grasp of the current situation and characteristics of youth values development can help understand the essential connotation of values, combine values education with the actual situation of youth, and promote the effective development of values education practice.

Since the change and development of China's social environment since the reform and opening up, the academic community has taken youth values as the target orientation and studied youth values in terms of network society, multiculturalism, new media, and social trends.

One is to explore in detail the influence of cultural forms represented by online culture and subculture on youth values. Qiu Ji and Yang Xiuting (2021) [13] and Zhang Tongtong et al. (2012) [14] argue that while promoting students' broadened horizons and enhanced abilities, online culture can also lead to cognitive disorientation, emotional indifference and misbehavior, and blurred political concepts. The subcultures such as online anchor culture, rice circle culture and Buddhist culture, which are popular among youth groups nowadays, profoundly affect the development of youth values, which may cause youth value orientation and ideology to deviate from the mainstream value orientation, [15] and even inappropriate and even extreme behaviors such as cyberbullying, malicious reporting and loan chasing. Secondly, it focuses on the influence of new media on youth values. Zhao Jinguang (2014) [16] argues that the information explosion in the field of new media technology has eroded the integrity and solidity of socialist core values. While Wang Jinlei (2014) [17] argues that new media bring a revolution in communication methods and open a brand new window for the cultivation of socialist core values. Thirdly, we are concerned about the influence of social trends such as consumerism, postmodernism and historical nihilism on youth values. Consumerism is a negative cultural state, and its deconstruction of traditional values negatively affects the construction of socialist core values. [18] Postmodernism with its fragmented, fractured, de-rationalized, de-centered, and fluid characteristics brings negative effects on youth such as value nihilism, alienation of value rationality, and weakening of value identity. [19] And the historical nihilism trend [20] presents fragmentation, casualization and white-hot characteristics, and some youths have a crisis of faith in communism, triggering wrong historical views and values.

4. Changes in contemporary youth values and their laws

4.1. Changes in youth values

China's economic development and social transformation have contributed to the transformation of young people's ideology, and the two have influenced each other and are mutually beneficial. Since the reform and opening up, along with the reform of China's economic, political and cultural systems and the all-round opening up of society, contemporary youth values have undergone epochal changes. There are three main views on the change of youth values: the three-stage theory, the four-stage theory and the six-stage theory. One of them is that scholars have divided youth value changes into three stages since the reform and opening up, namely, the stage of recovery and confusion, the stage of conflict and differentiation of values, and the stage of reconstruction and development of values. [21] presenting the pattern of unity of naturalness and sociality, subjectivity and objectivity, and periodicity and nationality. [22] Secondly, the four-stage theory believes that the change of youth values includes four periods of experiencing reflection and awakening of the subject, the formation and development of multiple value orientations, the coexistence of rational pragmatism and utilitarianism, and the gradual movement of conflict and differentiation toward integration. [23] Third, the six-stage theory on youth values change [24] holds that youth values go through the trajectory of change of construction and development, twists and turns and turmoil, awakening and reflection, reshaping and conflict, pluralism and integration, and return and transcendence.

4.2. The law of youth values change and development trend

The study by Yang Jing and Kou Qingjie (2018) [25] shows the changing characteristics of youth values change in line with the development of socialist economic situation, socio-political situation and socio-cultural development, and always focuses on three basic themes of self-worth, social value search and finding spiritual fulcrum. The study of Ren Peng (2020) [26] shows that the process of youth values change resonates with the development of China's society, intersects with the awakening of youth self-awareness, coexists with the differences and similarities of dominant social values, and there is a tension between youth value ideals and realistic value choices [27]. In conclusion, future research should combine the doctrine of youth values change, correctly examine youth values change and development,

recognize the law of youth values change, grasp the development trend, and provide valuable references for guiding and cultivating youth values in the new era.

5. The cultivation and guidance of youth values in the new era

One is to think holistically about youth values as a value whole, and to explore the concept and path of youth values cultivation from a macroscopic perspective, with most of the studies on cultivating and practicing socialist core values in particular. Typical ones include follow-up education, drip education, subject participation education, and collaborative education. Follow-up education refers to the enrichment and development of its own content, methods and means in response to objective environmental changes, and the continuous innovation of practical concepts, systems and mechanisms to improve the effectiveness of education. Drip education emphasizes the combination of common strategies echoing individual responses, dot penetration and lasting radiation. [28] From the perspective of cultivation paths, participatory education emphasizes "students as the main body" and "participation-oriented", and allows students to educate themselves and grow in the process of participation and experience, which is a new educational concept with characteristics of subjectivity, practice and diversity. [29] Based on the concept of collaborative innovation, collaborative education fully mobilizes the management, service and teaching resources of colleges and universities to form a situation of full, full and comprehensive youth values education. [30] constructs a collaborative education mechanism in four dimensions [31], namely institutional synergy, subject synergy, mediator synergy and ring synergy, in order to comprehensively coordinate and collaboratively promote the socialist core values education in colleges and universities.

Second, based on the perspective change of youth values cultivation and practice, we seek new effectiveness of youth values cultivation and practice with a new perspective. Under the influence of multiculturalism, social trends and material consumption, youth values are increasingly diversified. In response, scholars have expanded the space for youth values education through perspective innovation and paradigm transformation. Among them, Marxist theory guidance, cultural connotation education, daily life guidance, leveraging new media, grasping the psychological mechanism of conceptual transformation, moral and emotional identity, and aesthetic education shaping are the focus of scholarly attention.

First, Marxist theory is used as the theoretical basis for youth values cultivation. Scholars mainly provide theoretical paradigms and methodological guidance for socialist core values education for college students from the perspectives of Marxist values and Marxist needs theory. Xu Guifang (2020) [32] points out that youth values cultivation in the new era should follow the theoretical logic of the Marxist view of youth education and focus on comprehensive development. Ma Xiaohua (2016) [33], starting from Marxist anthropological theory, argues that there is an inherent logical relationship between the Marxist theory of human nature and the cultivation of socialist core values, which is the philosophical basis for college students to achieve individual development. Wang Guan (2019) [34] discusses the important initiatives to truly realize the state of socialist core value education in the three dimensions of Marxist need theory human nature, value and practice.

Second, values cultivation is studied from a cultural perspective. Wang YM and Zhao Dandan (2020) [33] emphasize the important role of Chinese excellent traditional culture in the cultivation of socialist core values, and emphasize the connotation of socialist core values in family culture, so that the new-age youth can receive the infusion of Chinese excellent traditional culture. Wang Yuanyuan (2015) [34] explores the role of values such as harmony, morality, humanism, benevolence, and etiquette in guiding the values of post-90s youth from the perspective of traditional Confucian culture, and proposes to integrate socialist core values with the values of traditional Confucian culture to build a set of composite value system.

Again, the path of values cultivation is explored by returning to the practical activities of daily life of youth. Ma Chao (2020) [35] argues that volunteer activities are an effective carrier and practical way for youth values cultivation, and the long-term development of volunteer services should be promoted. Ren (2016) [36] argued that the identification of socialist core values should be based on daily life, and the core values and daily life should be sought to fit from the youth themselves. In addition, Hou Kun (2021) [37] and others, from the perspective of aesthetic education, proposed to further improve the relevance and effectiveness of socialist core values education for college students in the new era through such paths as improving the mechanism of aesthetic education, increasing the penetration of aesthetic education, adding aesthetic education courses and strengthening the aesthetic education team.

Third, relying on new media tools, we seek breakthroughs in the construction of carriers and content innovation for youth values cultivation. Scholars have not only focused on the new media as providing both opportunities for youth values cultivation, but also seen the impact of the negative effects they bring on the formation and shaping of youth values. In response to the impact of modern networks on youth values, Chen Wei (2012) [38] and others propose to answer new questions arising in the network era with theoretical innovation, to guide the direction of youth values cultivation with advanced network culture, and to establish an online and offline linkage mechanism to form a synergy of youth values cultivation. Zhang Shule (2021) [39] proposed that taking advantage of the information age, strengthening capacity building for values education, and multi-level linkage inside and outside the school are three important strategies for cultivating young students' values.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, through the combing of the current research on youth values, it can be found that the current academic research on youth values is rich, especially the research on the cultivation and practice of socialist core values among college students has been innovated and developed in terms of concepts, methods and applications. However, there is still room for further research on the existing research results.

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