

On the Dilemma of Ideological and Political Education in Fostering Character and Civic Virtue in the New Media Era and the Countermeasures

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ABSTRACT. Colleges and universities must uphold the concept of moral education, with the goal of cultivating and educating students, and take “fostering character and civic virtue” as the fundamental task and central work. In the context of the era of new media, it is needed to adhere to the orientation of moral education. On the basis of in-depth understanding of the current status of colleges and universities, the author analyzed and studied the dilemma faced by colleges and universities in the role of fostering character and civic virtue in terms of teaching mode, education orientation, student cognition and teacher team. And targeted, operational and scientific countermeasures and suggestions are also proposed in this paper.

KEYWORDS: *The era of new media, Ideological and political courses, Fostering character and civic virtue*

1. Introduction

The Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China put forward the idea of establishing “fostering character and civic virtue” as the fundamental task of education and cultivating socialist builders and successors featured by all around development of moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetics and labor education. At the National Education Conference, College Ideological and Political Work Meeting, and Teachers Symposium of Ideological and Political Theory Courses, General Secretary Xi Jinping put forward a clear requirement on the ideological and political work of colleges and universities: it is needed to cultivate new people of the era who are in charge of national rejuvenation and closely combine “what values to cultivate” and “what people to cultivate”.

2. The Dilemma That Colleges and Universities Face in Playing the Role of Fostering Character and Civic Virtue in the New Media Era

2.1 Relatively Simple Teaching Modes

In recent years, although the process of social informatization has been accelerating, the ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities still use the traditional “cramming education”. There are more and more smartphone addicts, and the traditional teaching model is facing the challenge from new online media. In addition, related teachers lack the sense of innovation and cannot fully integrate ideological and political theory education with innovation, entrepreneurship, social practice and student management. In the teaching process of ideological and political courses, some teachers ignore the self-consciousness and personality of college students. They cannot fully integrate theoretical teaching with the characteristics of students, and thus it is difficult to arouse students' interest and motivation in learning. Besides, the assessment form of ideological and political theory courses is single. Specifically, the exam only assesses the students' mastery of knowledge points, and does not pay much attention to their ability of using ideological and political theories to analyze and solve practical problems.

2.2 Deviations in Education Orientation

With the advent of the informationize era, the demand for talents is more focused on skills and technology. In this context, colleges and universities show a certain degree of utilitarian in fostering character and civic virtue. In order to guarantee the employment rate and social popularity, some colleges and universities even carry out “assembly line” training for college students. They set up courses and teaching goals according to the needs of the talent market, and at the same time, they play down the cultivation of college students' ideology and morality,

values, innovation awareness, and comprehensive ability. This kind of education orientation deviates from normal track and also does not meet the needs of social development. "Fostering character and civic virtue" is not only for the cultivation of high-skilled talents, but also for the cultivation of students' ideological and moral values, value orientation, professional ethics and other spirits. Colleges and universities should improve the comprehensive qualities and abilities of students through the refinement of socialist core values, so that they can truly become the builders and successors of the socialist cause, and have sufficient abilities and mental power to shoulder great causes and social responsibilities^[1].

2.3 Limited Cognitive Ability of Students

The emergence and development of the new media era and its platforms have promoted the convergence and integration of the diverse cultures all over the world^[2]. The new media has brought about earth-shaking changes in people's lifestyles, the way of thinking and behaviors. However, new media has become an obstacle to the full development of college students due to their limited cognitive ability. They are in an important period of value formation. They have not yet fully possessed the ability to distinguish right from wrong, yet they pursue individuality and love freedom. Especially for college students from rural families, the real society they see is quite different from the online virtual world, and it is inevitable that there will be a psychological gap. Therefore, they are extremely vulnerable to the negative ideas and multiculturalism on the Internet. If they are unable to resist bad temptations and go astray, there will be deviations in their worldview, outlook on life and values.

2.4 Weak Teaching Staff

At present, the work of ideological and political education in colleges and universities is mainly undertaken by two types of staff. One is full-time ideological and political teachers who are responsible for teaching college students ideological and political theory courses. The other is ideological and political counselors who are responsible for the daily ideological and political education of students. On the one hand, in terms of discipline construction, teacher training and research, colleges and universities generally only put energy and investment into teachers of professional disciplines, which limits the staff development of the ideological and political courses to a certain extent. On the other hand, there are not sufficient full-time teachers for ideological and political courses in colleges and universities. They can only get low the professional titles, and their output of scientific research results is low. Moreover, some full-time teachers are not good in theoretical level and practical ability. They usually ignore the in-depth and systematic study of professional knowledge and lack political acumen. They are not sure about the hot political issues and the concerns of college students, and thus they cannot answer questions for college students. Full-time teachers of ideological and political courses can only provide students with ideological and political theory education in limited classroom time, and the counselors are often busy with the daily management of students, and they cannot provide enough political and ideological education for students.

3. Countermeasures and Suggestions for Colleges and Universities to Play the Role of Ideological and Political Courses in Fostering Character and Civic Virtue in the New Media Era

3.1 To Innovate in the Teaching Mode of Ideological and Political Courses

In the era of new media, colleges and universities should pay attention to fostering character and civic virtue. Relevant teachers should fully and accurately grasp the ideological status, behavior and personality characteristics of college students, and make use of new media tools and methods to integrate new teaching forms and elements into the ideological and political theory classroom. In addition, it is necessary to standardize the methods for ideological and political classroom teaching, give full play to the role of classroom teaching as the main channel, enrich the form and content of extracurricular educational activities for ideological and political courses, and continuously improve the effects of ideological and political education. Only in this way can colleges and universities root the good ideological and moral qualities deep in the minds of college students and help them form a correct worldview, outlook on life and values. In addition, with the help of human-oriented teaching concepts, diversified teaching perspectives, daily teaching content, interactive teaching methods and practical teaching links, colleges and universities can teach college students according to their aptitude, and formulate targeted, practical and operable teaching programs; this will effectively resolve the conflict between the development of new media and the ideological and political education of college students, rationally and scientifically use new media and new technologies, and innovate to promote online education^[3].

3.2 To Establish a Correct Educational Orientation

For colleges and universities, to foster character and civic virtue is to establish the correct orientation of educating students. In other words, it is to abandon the tendency of utilitarianism, get rid of the shackles of market economic thinking, and combine the development of college students' professional ethics and academic ideals with life beliefs and social needs. Only by focusing on strengthening the cultivation of college students' ideology, moral values, innovative consciousness and comprehensive ability can colleges and universities truly train qualified successors who meet the needs of socialist development. Ideological and political courses are the main channels for colleges and universities to implement the purpose of fostering character and civic virtue, but they cannot ignore the role of professional disciplines and the teachers in moral education. It is necessary to fully tap the ideological and educational functions contained in different professional courses, and to build a moral education system based on ideological and political courses and supplemented by professional courses. In addition, the ideological and political elements and ideological connotations of professional disciplines must be deeply explored, so as to strengthen the complementarity and mutual promotion of ideological and political courses and professional courses.

3.3 To Improve Students' Comprehensive Quality

To achieve the fundamental goal of fostering character and civic virtue, the moral level and humanistic quality of college students is the key, and the theoretical level and political quality of teachers of ideological and political courses are important guarantees. Teachers of Ideological and political courses should strengthen their study of related theories, thoroughly study the important exposition of General Secretary Xi Jinping on ideological and political education, and deeply understand the connotation and essence of socialist core values. In addition, they must lay stress on drawing the essence and nutrients from traditional Chinese culture, and constantly improve their theoretical level and political literacy to apply what they learn. Teachers should use their actual actions to educate the students around them and effectively improve the overall quality of them. In response to the unique characteristics of college students, colleges and universities should give full play to the educational role of ideological and political courses, guide positive values, and improve the ideological awareness of college students and their ability to identify bad ideas. In addition, different forms of courses such as employment guidance education, mental health education and social practice education can also be used to improve their psychological health, professional ethics and social morality.

3.4 To Strengthen the Construction of Teaching Staff

Colleges and universities should strengthen the construction of Marxist academies, increase the introduction of high-level staff for ideological and political education, provide full-time and excellent teachers for ideological and political courses, and focus on supporting valuable research projects. It is needed to attach importance to the cultivation of assistants for political and ideological work, give full play to their advantages, and require them to use spare time to well carry out political and ideological education for college students. There is a need to strengthen training, study visits, exchanges and other programs to help teachers of ideological and political courses to broaden their horizons, increase their knowledge, and effectively improve their professional abilities and comprehensive qualities. Colleges and universities should also increase the special funds for ideological and political education, organize relevant teachers and college students to participate in social practice, and promote the exchange of ideas between teachers and students.

4. Conclusion

Affected and restricted by the network factors in the new media era, colleges and universities face many difficulties in playing the role of ideological and political course in fostering character and civic virtue. They should adhere to the fundamental task of fostering character and civic virtue, establish the correct talent training goals, and strengthen the reform and innovation of the teaching modes for ideological and political courses. It is necessary to guide teachers of ideological and political courses to use new media tools and technologies in a comprehensive manner. There is also a need to adhere to the principles of teaching students according to their aptitude, optimize teaching methods, enrich teaching content, and improve the quality and effectiveness of ideological and political education. Only in this way can colleges and universities guide students to establish a correct worldview, outlook on life and values, and to cultivate builders and successors with both political integrity and professional competence for the cause of building socialism with Chinese characteristics.

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