

# The Educational Value, Pathways and Effectiveness of Classic Literature Study Activities in Ideological and Political Courses in Universities

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**Abstract:** *The study of classic literature in the ideological and political courses of colleges and universities has an important educational function in improving students' ideological realm, cultivating political identity, enhancing cultural confidence, and shaping moral cultivation. In order to better play its educational function, it is necessary to continuously optimize the teaching content, select classic literature; innovate teaching methods to stimulate students' interest; strengthen teacher guidance to improve the effectiveness of activities; strengthen practical links to promote the unity of knowledge and action. Through the study of classic literature, students have been significantly improved in moral education, intellectual education, independent learning ability and comprehensive quality.*

**Keywords:** Ideological and political courses in colleges and universities, Reading of classic literature, Educational function, Educational path.

## 1. Introduction

In order to implement the fundamental task of cultivating morality and educating people, it is not new for colleges and universities to carry out classic literature reading activities, especially Tsinghua University's "Classic Reading Plan" is the most typical. Practice has proved that classic reading can improve students' personal abilities and has obvious results in improving critical thinking and interdisciplinary ability transfer. As the crystallization of human thought and culture, classic literature contains rich wisdom and values, and is also an important teaching resource for ideological and political courses in colleges and universities. Carrying out classic literature reading activities in the teaching of ideological and political courses in colleges and universities can enable students to deeply understand the basic principles of Marxism, the theoretical innovation achievements of the Communist Party of China, and the essence of China's excellent traditional culture in the process of reading classics, so as to receive comprehensive education and guidance in ideology, politics, culture and morality, and achieve the goal of cultivating people through ideological and political activities.

## 2. The Educational Value of Classic Literature Reading Activities in the Ideological and Political Courses of Colleges and Universities

### 2.1 Ideological Guidance: Improving Students' Ideological Level

Classical literature is an important carrier of Marxist theory. By studying classical literature, students can directly contact the original texts of Marxism and the sinicization of Marxism, and deeply understand the basic positions, viewpoints and methods of Marxism. This direct collision of ideas can help students establish a scientific world outlook, outlook on life and values, and improve their ideological realm. For example, the Communist Manifesto, with its clear class standpoint, scientific theoretical exposition and vision of the lofty ideal of

communism, can inspire students' yearning and pursuit of the cause of communism and guide them to maintain a high degree of ideological consistency with the party ; On Contradiction, with its rigorous Marxist materialist dialectics, deeply explains and analyzes the universality and particularity of contradictions, identity and competitiveness, main contradictions and main aspects of contradictions, etc., which can well cultivate students' philosophical thinking and logical thinking, and constantly improve their ideological realm.

### 2.2 Political Identity: Cultivating Students' Political Literacy

One of the important tasks of ideological and political courses in colleges and universities is to cultivate students' political identity and enhance their confidence in the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The General Secretary pointed out that "the party's document work is an important part of the party's ideological and theoretical construction. The large number of documents formed by our party in the long-term struggle, especially the important documents of the party's main leaders, record the struggle history of our party's arduous exploration in the practice of revolution, construction and reform, record the valuable experience accumulated by the party in completing great and arduous tasks under different historical conditions, and record the theoretical achievements and historical process of the sinicization of Marxism. It is the crystallization of the wisdom of several generations of Chinese Communists and our precious political and spiritual wealth for governing the party and the country [1]. Carrying out classic document reading activities can enable students to have an in-depth understanding of the important theoretical achievements and practical experience of the Communist Party of China in different historical periods, so as to have a deeper understanding of the scientific nature and superiority of socialism with Chinese characteristics. For example, studying the classic documents of Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the "Three Represents" Important Thought, the Scientific Outlook on Development and the Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era can

enable students to fully understand the great achievements made by the Communist Party of China in leading the Chinese people in revolution, construction and reform, and enhance their sense of identity and responsibility for the cause of the party and the country.

### **2.3 Cultural Inheritance: Enhancing Students' Cultural Confidence**

The excellent traditional Chinese culture is the root and soul of the Chinese nation and is an important part of cultural education in the ideological and political courses of colleges and universities. The theoretical achievements of the sinicization and modernization of Marxism itself contain rich excellent traditional Chinese culture. The process of students studying classic literature is also a process of feeling the charm and wisdom of traditional culture in reading. While they are learning traditional culture, they can also further understand how traditional Chinese culture is combined with Marxism, that is, they can comprehend the charm and innovative transformation of excellent traditional Chinese culture at the same time, and enhance their cultural confidence in reading. In particular, the classic literature in the history of the Party is full of the wisdom of excellent traditional Chinese culture. When studying the theoretical achievements of the sinicization and modernization of Marxism, if relevant classic literature reading activities can be effectively carried out, it will definitely greatly enhance students' cultural confidence.

### **2.4 Moral Formation: Improving Students' Moral Character**

Classical literature not only contains rich ideological theories, but also contains profound moral concepts and codes of conduct. "Studying classics does not provide a simple and direct set of behavioral norms, but allows us to experience the complexity of the world in context, open up our curiosity and understanding of the principles behind all things, and then try to explore a path of enlightenment that belongs to us." [2] By studying classics, students can draw moral wisdom from them and improve their own moral cultivation. For example, the style of doing solid research and seeking truth from facts advocated in the "Report on the Investigation of Hunan Peasants" and the qualities of emancipating the mind, seeking truth from facts, and being patriotic and dedicated contained in the "Key Points of Talks in Wuchang, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shanghai and Other Places" provide students with comprehensive moral cultivation guidance, which can guide them to pay attention to moral cultivation in their daily lives and cultivate good moral qualities.

## **3. Paths to Realize the Educational Function of Classic Literature Study Activities - taking the "Introduction Course" and "Classic Study" Activities as Examples**

### **3.1 Optimize Teaching Content and Select Classic Literature**

To carry out classic literature reading activities in college ideological and political courses, we first need to optimize the teaching content and select classic literature suitable for

students to read. These classic literature should cover many aspects, such as Marxist classics, important documents of the Communist Party of China, and classic works of China's excellent traditional culture. "We must achieve a high degree of fit between typical party history literature and specific content and issues in college ideological and political courses" [3]. For example, in the "Introduction to Mao Zedong Thought and the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" (hereinafter referred to as the "Introduction Course"), we have selected some classic literature of the Communist Party of China at different stages of revolution, construction and reform, such as Mao Zedong Thought: "Analysis of Various Classes in Chinese Society", "Report on the Investigation of Peasants in Hunan", "On the Ten Major Relationships", "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People", etc. Deng Xiaoping Theory: "Emancipate the Mind, Seek Truth from Facts, Unite as One and Look Forward", "Key Points of Talks in Wuchang, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shanghai, etc." "Three Represents" Important Thought: "Speech at the 80th Anniversary of the Founding of the Communist Party of China", etc. Scientific Outlook on Development: "Scientific Understanding of the Scientific Connotation of the Scientific Outlook on Development". By carefully selecting these classic documents, we provide students with rich and high-quality ideological and cultural resources, ensuring the quality and effectiveness of classic document reading activities.

### **3.2 Innovate Teaching Methods and Stimulate Students' Interest**

Classic literature reading activities need to adopt a variety of teaching methods to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning. In addition to traditional classroom lectures, group discussions, special reports, book sharing sessions, academic debates and other forms can also be used. For example, in group discussions, teachers can divide students into several groups to discuss an important viewpoint or issue in classic literature, allowing students to collide with sparks of thought in the exchange and deepen their understanding of classic literature; in the reading results report, students can share their own experience in reading classic literature, exchange reading experience and insights, and create a good learning atmosphere. In addition, modern information technology means, such as online course platforms and multimedia teaching, can also be used to provide students with richer and more convenient learning resources, and enhance the attractiveness and appeal of classic literature reading activities. The reason why classics become classics is that they are not only timeless, but also always new when read.

### **3.3 Strengthen Teacher Guidance and Improve Activity Effectiveness**

Teachers play a key guiding role in the study of classic literature. In order to ensure the accuracy, depth, substance and adequacy of the study of classics, teachers should strengthen the guidance of students' study of classic literature. Therefore, teachers should not only have a solid theoretical foundation and rich teaching experience, but also be able to guide students to correctly understand and interpret classic literature. In the teaching process, teachers should focus on

cultivating students' reading and analysis abilities, and guide students to master the correct reading methods and analysis ideas. For example, in the study of classic literature in the "Introduction Course", students are required to understand the classic literature, interpret and apply the course theory points, grasp the combination of classic literature and course theory, use the literature classics to deeply interpret and prove the course theory points, and consult relevant materials to supplement and extend the theory points, explain how the theory is combined with practice, and the final results are reflected in the PPT. The whole process is difficult and challenging, and students are prone to fear and retreat. At this time, teachers need to provide timely guidance and encouragement.

### **3.4 Strengthening the Practical Link and Promoting the unity of Knowledge and Action**

Classical literature reading activities cannot just stay at the theoretical level, but also need to strengthen the practical links to promote students to transform what they have learned into practical actions. The practical activities include two parts. First, students should give oral reports on the results of their reading in class and accept questions from teachers and students on the spot. Second, students can be guided to combine the ideological theories in the classic literature with real life and carry out social practice activities, such as volunteer service, community research, and visits to patriotism education bases. Through these practical activities, students can exercise their language expression ability on the one hand, and apply the moral concepts and behavioral norms in the classic literature to real life on the other hand, and cultivate good moral qualities and social responsibility.

### **3.5 Emphasize the Role of Students and Establish an Evaluation and Feedback Mechanism**

Establishing morality and cultivating people is the fundamental purpose of ideological and political courses. The study of classic literature should be student-centered, highlighting the dominant position of students. In the evaluation of value, students should also be the main body, and a diversified and scientific evaluation mechanism should be established. In terms of the evaluation subject, some evaluation rights should be given to students to achieve mutual evaluation between teachers and students; in terms of evaluation content, not only should students' knowledge mastery be evaluated, but also their ideological transformation, political identity, cultural inheritance, and moral character formation should be evaluated. At the same time, students' language expression ability, typhoon style, on-site response ability, and ability to make PPT should be evaluated. In terms of feedback, teachers should adjust teaching content and methods in a timely manner according to students' performance and feedback to ensure the educational effect of classic literature study activities.

## **4. The Educational Effect of Reading Classic Literature in Ideological and Political Courses**

### **4.1 Better Understand Theoretical Knowledge and Help Achieve Results in Intellectual Education**

The study of classic literature in the ideological and political course is itself one of the course teaching activities. The process of teachers organizing and carrying out activities is the process of learning course theory, and the process of students studying classic literature is the process of learning course theory. As a teaching activity that integrates teaching and learning, its direct purpose is to help students better understand theoretical knowledge and experience the sense of learning through learning. For example, the "Classic Research" activity organized by the "Introduction Course" is closely related to the corresponding theoretical points of the course. When students study literature, they must clearly explain the historical background, content introduction, theoretical analysis, and combination of theory and practice of historical literature. When students go from "unknown" to "familiar" or even "deeply aware" of a document, they not only understand the course theory, but also broaden their horizons and gain extracurricular knowledge.

In addition, the classic documents required for students to study in the "Introduction Course" are mainly historical documents of the Party. These documents have rigorous political and academic norms, and their argumentation and logical structures are rigorous. After in-depth reading, students will not only understand the theoretical knowledge carried by the text, but also receive certain academic training, which plays a good role in enlightening undergraduate students to start their academic research. For example, by carefully reading the article "Report on the Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan", students can learn from Chairman Mao how to conduct social surveys and how to write research reports.

### **4.2 Establishing the Correct "Three Views" and Improving the Level of Moral Education**

Moral education is the first priority in cultivating people with moral integrity. Knowledge learning is not the ultimate goal of student learning. "The real development of students cannot just stay at the level of understanding knowledge and other people's experience. They must also deepen their own subjective experience through in-depth understanding and participation in the world, and then start from subjective experience to continuously realize dialectics with objective knowledge, and realize the unity of theory and practice in the learning of unity of knowledge and action." [3] Classic literature reading activities can help students draw ideological nourishment from classic works, thereby establishing a scientific world outlook, outlook on life and values, strengthening their recognition of mainstream ideology, and enhancing their political recognition, ideological recognition, theoretical recognition and emotional recognition of the theoretical innovation of the Communist Party of China. By studying classic literature, students can have a deep understanding of Marxist theory and the important ideas of the Communist Party of China in different historical periods, as well as the formation and development process of important ideas, consciously arm their minds with the Party's innovative theories, deeply understand the century-long history of the Communist Party of China, and strengthen their sense of identity with the Party and socialism with Chinese characteristics from the bottom of their hearts, and enhance their sense of responsibility for the cause of socialism with

Chinese characteristics.

Classic literature reading activities can also cultivate students' critical thinking and independent thinking abilities. Students analyze, question and discuss important viewpoints in classic literature through group cooperation, activate and improve their logical thinking abilities in the collision of team ideas, learn to think about problems from multiple perspectives, and form independent opinions and judgments, so that when they encounter important moral choices in life, they can make rational and correct choices.

#### **4.3 Highlight Student - centeredness and Enhance Students' Enthusiasm and Initiative in Independent Learning**

Classic research activities are mainly based on student independent research, supplemented by teacher guidance. Whether it is collective research by student groups or individual research, it is a manifestation of student independent learning. The entire activity process reflects the teaching concept of "learning-centered and teaching-oriented", focusing on giving full play to students' initiative and enthusiasm in learning and strengthening practical hands-on ability. The process of student participation is a process of dialogue with classics, a process of equal dialogue with classic literature based on their existing foundation, a process of continuously improving classic research and understanding ability under the guidance of teachers, and a process of gradually solving theoretical problems, understanding theories and appreciating the charm of theories through their own efforts. The whole process adheres to the student-centered concept, and students become the masters of their own learning. After research, they share and communicate their results, continuously improve their sense of learning, further stimulate their confidence and desire in course learning, and have more internal motivation for independent learning, and their enthusiasm and initiative are greatly improved.

#### **4.4 Cultivate Non-cognitive Abilities and Improve Overall Quality**

For ordinary undergraduates who are not majors, classic literature is difficult and obscure, and is a "tough nut to crack". The process of reading quietly and looking up materials to assist understanding is a process of tempering students' minds. This process is destined to be lonely and painful, but precisely because of the difficulty, group members are more united and work together for the same goal. With the effective guidance of teachers, students can calm down and be patient for a period of immersive study, and ultimately greatly improve their concentration and perseverance, and their ability to resist frustration is also enhanced. Classic study activities are usually carried out in a collaborative way, with the implementation of the group leader responsibility system. The leadership and organizational skills of the group leader are tested, and students learn to express their own opinions, listen to the opinions of others, learn to integrate and improve their teamwork ability.

In summary, as one of the teaching activities, the reading of classic literature in the ideological and political courses of

colleges and universities plays an irreplaceable role in educating people. It provides a strong educational value for colleges and universities to implement the fundamental task of cultivating morality and cultivating people. Classic literature, especially the classic literature of party history, is an important witness to the process of the sinicization and modernization of Marxism. Teachers of ideological and political courses in colleges and universities should organize and carry out the reading of classic literature, constantly innovate the methods and means of reading classic literature, and better play its role in educating people.

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