

A Study on the Current Situation and Countermeasures of Integrating Local Red Culture into Moral Education in Basic Education Schools: A Case Study of Tonghua Region

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Abstract: *Moral education constitutes a fundamental aspect of youth education, serving as its core essence. Red culture, representing revolutionary culture, is a crucial component of socialist advanced culture and encompasses a wealth of resources for moral education. Integrating red culture into youth moral education ensures that the spirit of red culture permeates the hearts of every student, enhances their ideological understanding, fosters patriotic sentiments, transmits the red gene, and promotes the dissemination of red culture.*

Keywords: Red Culture, Fundamental Education, Moral Education, Subject Teaching, Educational Reform.

1. Introduction

Youth moral education serves not only as a guiding direction for their comprehensive development and personal growth, but also as their era-specific responsibility as builders and successors of the socialist cause. It is an issue that demands the attention of the entire society. Moral education is a crucial component of youth education and constitutes its very essence.

The theoretical basis for integrating red culture into moral education includes:

Social Cognitive Theory: Proposed by Albert Bandura, social cognitive theory emphasizes that learning occurs through observing the behaviors, attitudes, and outcomes of others. The heroes and revolutionary events in red culture provide concrete role models for students. Through observation and imitation, students can internalize the spirit and qualities of these role models.

Constructivist Theory: Constructivist theory posits that learning is an active process in which students construct knowledge and understanding. Integrating red culture into moral education through contextual teaching and project-based learning can stimulate students' interest and initiative, allowing them to experience and appreciate the essence and value of red culture in real-life contexts.

Affective Education Theory: Affective education theory emphasizes that education should focus not only on students' cognitive development but also on their emotional development. The moving stories and heroic spirit in red culture can evoke emotional resonance in students, enhancing their emotional experiences and promoting the formation of their moral sentiments and values.

Red culture, as an integral part of revolutionary culture and advanced socialist culture, contains a wealth of moral education resources. Over time, the spiritual essence and material manifestation of red culture have been continually

enriched and expanded through practice, reflecting its inclusive cultural characteristics. This process of constant evolution ensures that red culture remains relevant and innovative.

Local red culture refers to the unique red cultural elements specific to different regions. It is deeply rooted in and closely connected to the local social and cultural environment, making it an inseparable part of the local history. This localized red culture is intricately linked with local social life and even blends into local folk customs.

From the fundamental task of moral education to the need for red culture inheritance and the requirements of the new curriculum reform, it is essential to integrate local red culture into school moral education. This integration not only facilitates the transmission of red culture among the youth but also promotes the deeper development of moral education.

2. The Realistic Challenges of Moral Education in Basic Education Schools

Moral education plays an extremely important role in student education, but it is also one of the most challenging aspects to implement effectively. Through visits and research conducted in primary and secondary schools in the Tonghua region, it has been observed that most schools exhibit significant shortcomings in their moral education programs. A majority of these schools have not successfully integrated the region's rich red culture and red spirit into their moral education curricula. As a result, moral education often remains at a generalized level and fails to develop unique school-based or regional characteristics.

Currently, the status of moral education within the overall school education system is relatively low, lacking systematic and long-term planning. Although some schools have established moral education courses, these courses often tend to be superficial and formalistic. They fail to deeply explore and utilize red cultural resources to conduct effective

teaching.

1) Low Emphasis on Moral Education in Schools, Lack of Professionalism, and Single Educational Content

For a long time, primary and secondary education in China has been predominantly guided by "achievement-oriented" principles, focusing more on intellectual development (cognitive education) while paying limited attention to moral education, which is often relegated to course offerings only. Due to the perception of moral education courses as "non-mainstream," older teachers who are unable to handle core subject teaching are often assigned to the moral education group, or moral education is taught by teachers from other disciplines. As a result, moral education classes seem to become courses that do not require a specific professional background and are considered less challenging, making it appear that anyone can teach them. Non-specialist and part-time teachers, lacking relevant professional background, mostly stick to the script without deep exploration or expansion of the materials, causing moral education to become superficial. This superficial approach fails to truly inspire and guide students' thoughts and behaviors, thus deviating from the fundamental objectives and purpose of moral education.

In the Tonghua region, most schools still rely on traditional lecture methods and indoctrinative education techniques for moral education, lacking innovation and interactivity. Students in moral education classes are typically in a passive state of receiving information, with few opportunities for active participation and experiential learning, leading to unsatisfactory educational outcomes.

2) Insufficient Modernization of Moral Education Methods

Currently, most teachers in basic education schools rely heavily on a single method for integrating moral education, primarily through lectures. While lecture-based teaching offers advantages such as high teaching efficiency and broad applicability, it also comes with certain drawbacks. For instance, it places the teacher as the central figure, which can lead to student passivity, fatigue, and loss of interest during the learning process. Although supplementary tools like audio-visual aids are sometimes used, their frequency of use is low, and the materials are often outdated, making it challenging to effectively capture students' attention and fully achieve educational goals.

In the Tonghua region, there exists a wealth of resources related to revolutionary culture (red culture), yet these are underutilized in moral education. Many schools have not fully explored or integrated local red culture resources into their educational practices. As a result, the integration between red culture and moral education remains low, failing to establish distinctive and effective models of moral education.

3) Segregation between Subject Teaching and Moral Education

Currently, moral education in basic education schools is primarily overseen by class advisers, with subject teachers rarely taking on moral education tasks or integrating moral

education into their subject teaching. Due to the myriad of daily responsibilities of class advisers, there is insufficient time allocated for specialized moral education, resulting in shortcomings in students' moral education. This issue is particularly acute at the high school level, as this stage is crucial for adolescents to form their worldviews, life outlooks, and values. The inability to integrate moral education into subject teaching isolates moral education and leaves it without substance.

Furthermore, some moral education teachers lack professional backgrounds and systematic training, leading to uneven educational standards. Many moral education teachers are appointed from other subject areas, lacking specialized knowledge and teaching skills, thereby compromising the quality of moral education courses.

4) Changes in modern ideological education.

With the progress of society and the evolution of educational philosophies, modern ideological education has undergone significant changes. The content of ideological education has become more diverse, encompassing not only traditional political theory education but also psychological health education, legal education, environmental education, and more. Educational methods now emphasize student autonomy and participation, employing interactive, experiential, and inquiry-based teaching approaches to enhance students' independent learning and critical thinking abilities.

There are several reasons behind these changes. Firstly, societal development and openness have brought about diversification in ideological perspectives, necessitating ideological education to adapt to societal changes and meet diverse student needs. Secondly, ongoing educational reforms have driven the renewal of educational philosophies, emphasizing holistic student development and quality education, prompting adjustments in the content and methods of ideological education. Lastly, globalization and informatization have presented new challenges and opportunities for ideological education, requiring it to stay current to effectively fulfill its role.

Based on the above analysis, it is evident that there is considerable room for improvement in integrating and utilizing red cultural resources in moral education in the Tonghua region. By enhancing theoretical background, diversifying educational methods, and strengthening teacher training, the quality of moral education in Tonghua can be effectively elevated, achieving a profound integration of red culture and moral education.

3. Implementation Strategies for Integrating Red Culture into Moral Education in Tonghua Region

The historical background of red culture is unique and holds profound educational value. Integrating red cultural resources into the moral education work of schools can effectively enrich moral education content, innovate moral education forms, enhance moral education vitality, and improve moral education outcomes. This approach is an effective way for schools to explore the path of characteristic moral education.

It transforms moral education classrooms into real classrooms where students can truly listen, observe, and experience. Transitioning from classroom teaching to real-life scenarios innovates the form of moral education, enhances students' experiential learning, deepens their understanding of moral education knowledge, and plays an irreplaceable role in achieving the goal of "cultivating virtue and nurturing talents" that other subjects cannot replace.

1) Relying on Red Culture to Create a Positive Campus Atmosphere

Basic education schools should actively explore the red culture heritage of the school. For example, Tonghua Jingyu Middle School, formerly known as Tonghua Third Middle School, was renamed "Tonghua Jingyu Middle School" to promote the spirit of Jingyu and inherit the aspirations of the martyrs. As a basic education school in Tonghua, it should uphold the educational goal of "promoting the spirit of Jingyu and cultivating well-rounded individuals." Utilizing forms such as campus radio stations, cultural corridors, and classroom culture creation, the school should promote red spirit and inherit red culture. By integrating the inspiration of the martyrs, historical and cultural influence, and spatial interaction, the school can achieve the goals of cultural education, soul-building education, and practical education. This approach enhances the red background of moral education, promotes quality education, and cultivates new talents for the times.

2) Implementing Curriculum Reform to Strengthen the Educational Role of Moral Education

Classroom teaching is the main battlefield of education and also the main place for quality education. For young people, red culture is the best textbook and nutrient. Strengthening the construction of red courses, integrating the study and education of Party history, the history of New China, the history of reform and opening up, and the history of socialist development into ideological and political courses. Taking the spirit of the Northeast Anti-Japanese Allied Forces and the spirit of Jingyu as important carriers, develop red school-based courses and widely carry out activities such as reading red classics to nourish students' minds with red education. Integrating red spirit into subject teaching, for example, in Chinese classes, organize pre-class red classic recitation activities to understand red culture through classic red stories and red songs; based on the content of the textbook, arrange for students to collect relevant historical materials related to heroic figures and their deeds, enrich students' cultural life, and enhance students' cultural confidence and patriotism. In art classes, students can organize red history painting and calligraphy exhibitions, calligraphy exhibitions, hand-made newspaper exhibitions, and bulletin board exhibitions, using brushes to reproduce the heroic deeds of heroes, experience red culture, and inherit red spirit. The teaching of various subjects and moral education courses go hand in hand, fostering and educating people together, inspiring children to strive to be good teenagers of the new era, consciously integrating their personal ideals into the development of the country and the nation, and striving to be well-rounded youth with all four capabilities.

3) Conducting Moral Education Teacher Training to Improve Moral Education Capabilities

Training is an effective way to improve the quality of the faculty of moral education teachers in basic education schools. Through training, teachers can acquire the latest educational ideas and concepts to enhance their teaching abilities. Schools should prioritize the importance of moral education training, seek appropriate training resources, encourage exchanges and learning among teachers within and outside the school, and create conditions to make moral education teachers willing to participate, actively participate, and enjoy training. The content of the training should mainly focus on learning about red culture, inheriting red spirit, current political events, new concepts of moral education, and interpretations of relevant national government spirits. By training, the political literacy of moral education teachers can be enhanced, their horizons broadened, and their thinking enlightened. Using red culture to strengthen teacher morality and forge teacher souls, actively promoting the enhancement of the attractiveness of moral education classrooms, and advancing the cause of moral education are all crucial outcomes of such training.

4) Organizing Special Moral Education Activities Through Red Stories and Red Sites

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: Revolutionary traditional education should start from children, emphasizing both knowledge imparting and emotional cultivation, so that the red genes can penetrate the blood and immerse into the hearts, guiding young people to establish correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values. Tonghua City is a city with a long history and rich cultural heritage, and it is also a city with red memories. It was the main battlefield of the "Four Guarantees Along the River" battle, where General Yang Jingyu fought bravely, and it is home to the Northeast Democratic Allied Air Force School and the Helieri Meeting Site. There is also the Hero Air Force Gao Zhihang Memorial Hall. The abundant red cultural resources help enhance the quality and effectiveness of moral education in Tonghua area's basic education schools.

For schools, they can organize students to participate in red-themed study tours and other activities on major festivals such as Qingming Festival and the Party's founding day. They can use the heroic deeds of figures like Yang Jingyu and Gao Zhihang as scripts to organize drama performances, speeches, themed class meetings, etc., enriching students' extracurricular activities and enhancing their understanding of red culture.

5) "Home-School Collaboration" Promoting the Integration of Red Culture and Moral Education

Sukhomlinsky believed, "The effectiveness of education depends on the consistency between school and home. Without this consistency, the teaching and education of the school will collapse like a paper house." Schools play an important role in talent cultivation and student education, which also allows parents to be liberated. On January 1, 2022, the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of Family Education" was officially implemented, marking the first specialized legislation on family education in China.

This signifies the establishment of the important status of family education in law. Schools and families should build a bridge of cooperation and collaboration. Only by forming an educational force between schools and parents can we achieve twice the result with half the effort in moral education. Organizing activities such as red-themed parent meetings, parent-child study tours, and red-themed sports events strengthens communication between parents and schools. By jointly promoting students' moral education, we can cultivate more young people who meet the requirements of the times and the needs of the country.

Red culture is an essential spiritual nourishment for students and urgently requires the transmission by the youth. Integrating red cultural resources fully into educational content is an inherent requirement of modern education resource integration and vivid moral education courses. By utilizing local red cultural resources, breaking the traditional form of moral education confined to the classroom, moral education can become more vivid and tangible, enhancing students' sense of identity and subtly educating their moral character. Research on the integration of domestic red culture with moral education courses is currently in an ascending development stage. Conducting studies on the integration of local red cultural resources into moral education courses can enrich and develop relevant theoretical research. In an era of diverse cultures and ideological fusion, instilling the spirit of red culture in every young student's heart can promote the refinement of their ideological cognition, nurture their patriotism, and inherit the red genes while promoting red culture. By deeply exploring and utilizing local red cultural resources, their integration with school moral education courses can be facilitated. Enhancing the effectiveness of moral education courses through improving the curriculum system and implementing the fundamental task of fostering virtue and talent, not only enables the function of moral education in forging the soul with revolutionary culture but also strengthens the cultural confidence of students, nurturing them to become qualified successors in the construction of the motherland.

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