

# Cultural Cognition and Educational Inheritance: An Investigation on the Ideological and Political Education Embedded in Colleges and Universities Based on Lao Tzu's Thought of "Returning to Simplicity and Returning to Truth"

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## Abstract

In recent years, with the diversification of social development, some problems such as eager for quick success and instant benefits in daily behavior, weak awareness of the overall situation of responsibility, material benefits and so on also follow. Lao Tzu's thought of "returning to simplicity and returning to truth" advocates returning to nature and being extraordinary, which can play a role in debugging and recuperating human psychological activities and give people spiritual enlightenment and purification. It is particularly important to apply Lao Tzu's thought of "returning to simplicity and returning to truth" in traditional culture to college ideological and political education in order to enhance the educational effect of Ideological and political education. At the same time, it is also a new situation and method of contemporary cultural cognition and inheritance.

## Keywords

Culture; Lao Tuz; Recover one 's original simplicity; Ideological and Political Education.

## 1. Introduction

In 2014, general secretary Xi Jinping pointed out at Peking University's Teacher Student Symposium that "teachers of Ideological and political education should lay the seeds of truth, goodness and beauty for students' minds, and guide students to buckle the first button of life"[1]. Ideological and political education is an important base and ideological position to strengthen college students' moral education. If its content and direction are correct, it can guide college students to show their abilities and apply their strengths. However, the current university ideological and political education is facing many severe challenges in the development process: for example, ignoring the formation law of students' Ideological and moral character and physical and mental development, the teaching content is too boring, and it is difficult to display students' personality and subjectivity. As a part of the excellent traditional culture of Taoism, Lao Tzu's thought of "returning to simplicity and returning to the truth", An in-depth analysis of his thought can find that the contained natural moral education concept of Taoism, the moral education principle of less selfishness and less desire, and the moral education method of quiet and inaction can bring the baptism of truth, goodness and beauty to college students' thought, which has great enlightenment and reference value for today's College Students' Ideological and political education, and strengthen the cognition and inheritance of Chinese classical traditional culture in college students.

## 2. On the Connotation of Lao Tzu's Thought of "Returning to Simplicity and Returning to Truth"

The thought of "returning to simplicity and returning to truth" mainly comes from Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching, which divides the definition of "returning to simplicity and returning to truth" into two parts: the first part introduces "return" and "return", which is fully expressed as "the movement of the anti Tao and the use of the weak Tao". The original meaning refers to the transformation and development of "Tao" back to the original and the beginning. It is the movement of "Tao", in a weak position, and the application of "Tao". In short, "return" and "return" mean return. The second part introduces "simplicity" and "truth", which is fully expressed as "being simple, less selfish and less lustful", and advocates keeping the truth, overcoming selfish desires and being extraordinary. Generally speaking, Lao Tzu's thought of "returning to simplicity and returning to truth" can be divided into three aspects: Taoism follows nature, selflessness without desire and Taoism follows nature.

### 2.1. Tao Follows Nature

"Tao" is a main thread running through the Tao Te Ching. At the beginning of the Tao Te Ching, it is mentioned that "Tao can be Tao, extraordinary Tao. Name can be name, extraordinary name." "Tao" is the law of all things in the world. The law of "Tao" can be recognized by us, but it is not the "Tao" in concrete form in daily life. It doesn't have nothing at all, but it really exists in reality. It's just that it can't see its specific form. From this point of view, it has. In Chapter 25 of Tao Te Ching, it is said that man, earth and heaven are in harmony, and the three are based on nature. The growth of all things has its own law. The reason why "Tao" is precious is to comply with current events and develop freely. By deeply analyzing the thought of "Tao follows nature" advocated by Lao Tzu, it is not difficult to deduce its rich content of moral education. The thought of "Tao follows nature" emphasizes the moral truth of returning to human nature and respecting the law of moral development, which can put forward principles to improve the moral level of college students and shape their sound personality. The essence of College Students' Ideological and political education lies in "authenticity". College students' Ideological and political education should always maintain their natural nature, in order to restore human nature and return people to their true state. In Chapter 57 of Tao Te Ching, Lao Tzu said, "I do nothing and the people become self-centered. I am quiet and the people are self righteous." this sentence makes it clear that the people have the ability to advance themselves, but if rulers blindly intervene and disturb the people, they will not achieve the effect of self-regulation. If the rulers implement the strategy of inaction, reduce corruption and be quiet and natural, the people will be simple. This is the way to respect the "Tao". Lao Tzu especially advocated self-regulation, emphasizing that the key to social stability lies in the natural obedience, voluntary obedience and internalization of the people, which is by no means the ruler's arbitrary intervention. If people tend to keep their nature with simple moral consciousness, they will achieve the goal of self-education. As another example, in Chapter 23 of Tao Te Ching, Lao Tzu wrote: "Tao is always nameless. Although simplicity is small, there is no minister in the world." this sentence means that Tao is eternal, and there is no clear and fixed title. It seems simple and small, but it is supreme, no one can resist, and nothing can control it. "Whether the policy is effective depends not on quantity, but on quality" [2], which depends on whether it is in line with morality. If Hou Wang can respect morality, everything will actively obey and educate itself.

### 2.2. Selfless and Lustless

The selfless desire contained in the Taoist thought of returning to simplicity is the ideal state strongly advocated by Taoism. Lustlessness is a positive attitude towards life in the face of secular material problems. It is also a supreme realm and pursuit in the face of life. Selflessness and no desire means to exclude and remove any selfishness and always be consistent with the

public interest. Lao Tzu believes that disputes in the world are caused by people's selfishness and excessive pursuit of selfish material pursuit, which runs counter to the natural nature of "nature is good". Only when the common people are honest and upright, and restrain their desires can the country be peaceful and the people be safe. This thought undoubtedly has important enlightening significance for improving personal morality. At the same time, it opens up new ideas and opinions for dealing with the psychological problems of college students, such as eager for quick success and instant benefit, lack of belief and so on. The heart of the people is the heart. Chapter 49 of Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching wrote: "saints have no constant mind and take the hearts of the people as their hearts. Good people are good, and bad people are good." saints are saints because they take the aspirations of the people as their starting point and foothold. Treat good people equally with bad people. Lao Tzu here mainly emphasizes how saints love, protect and benefit the people. Chapter 7 of the Tao Te Ching points out that the reason why heaven and earth can remain unchanged forever is that they do not operate for their own interests. The reason why saints can be loved and respected by others is that they ignore their own interests and advocate that the interests of others are above their own interests. This is a manifestation of selflessness. A gentleman is always modest and good, does not fight or rob, and does good deeds without asking for return. It is contrary to one's wishes not to expand one's selfish desires and lose one's pure nature. Lao Tzu also pointed out in the Tao Te Ching that rulers should be open-minded and tolerant, selfless and broad-minded. Tolerance for everything is the so-called "fairness and selflessness". Only when they govern the country fairly can they last for a long time.

### 2.3. Do Nothing but Do Everything

The thought of "Inaction" is the essence of Lao Tzu's thought. The word "Wuwei" appears in the Tao Te Ching many times, obviously its importance. Lao Tzu's thought of "Inaction" is not our literal understanding of doing nothing. Its basic meaning is to achieve the ideal state of "inaction without inaction". Action and inaction are a group of opposite concepts. "Action" refers to deliberate human intervention to promote the development of things, "Inaction" refers to respecting objective laws and following things without imposing intervention. The purpose of Lao Tzu's thought of "Inaction" is to achieve inaction and finally get twice the result with half the effort.

### 2.4. For the Weak

"Weak" in "the use of Tao by the weak" means weak. One of Lao Tzu's unique charm thoughts is to use the weak to control the strong. To show the characteristics of water is to be inferior and humble. In Chapter 8 of the Tao Te Ching, it is said that "the highest good is like water. Water works for all things without contention, which is the evil of all people, so it is more than Tao." Lao Tzu believes that saints are as good as water, flexible, moisten the earth without reward, always contribute silently, and do not argue with all things for profit. At the same time, chapter 73 of Tao Te Ching puts forward Lao Tzu's unique dialectical thought. If you use courage to be competitive and blindly show off your ability, it will bring harm. On the contrary, you will often live a better life if you are weak and cautious. Lao Tzu explained the philosophical wisdom of "weak" by comparing the ending of "weak" and "strong". This truth can also be reflected in the daily communication between teachers and students. If a teacher has a gentle attitude and a euphemistic way of speaking when communicating with students, students can often listen attentively, accept and consciously obey. If teachers blindly take a tough critical attitude, students will feel disgusted and unwilling to listen. Therefore, to a certain extent, the "weak" management method is closer to humanization. The "weakness" here is not the timidity and cowardice we usually understand, but tolerance, modesty and cautious speech. Only by understanding the transformation of the opposite of things can we grasp the cleverness of their thoughts.

### **3. Main Problems in Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities**

#### **3.1. The Formalization of Education Is Serious, and the Subject Status of the Educated Is Missing**

On the one hand, in the process of Ideological and political education, students' subjective status has not been paid attention to. Under the background of the deep-rooted concept of exam oriented education, the concept of "learning theory, strong indoctrination and re entering higher education" has long been deeply rooted. Students and parents tend to enter higher education examination with all their energy. Teachers pay attention to students' enrollment rate to create a good reputation. Over time, the purpose and utility of education are obvious. The characteristics of the educational process under the guidance of this concept are that teachers apply high-pressure policies to impart book knowledge, ignore students' nature and needs, lack of humanistic care, students have no free space and development potential, their subjectivity and natural nature are eroded, their interest and practicability are not strong, moral education knowledge often can not be internalized and explicit as moral education behavior, and the timeliness of moral education is low. College students are independent individuals who can conduct self-examination, self-discipline and self-education. Many educators do not realize the importance of students' participation.

On the other hand, educators often ignore the ideological and moral character and the law of physical and mental development of college students. The growth of college students is inseparable from their ideological and moral character. College students are the finalization period of Ideological and moral character, but they still have variability. Only when the moral education method is correct and the guidance is appropriate, can educators achieve good moral education effect. At present, educators often give students too much explicit education in the process of moral education, ignore the combination of other people's education and self-education in the process of moral education, ignore the formation law of College Students' ideology and morality, and take moral education as a tool and decoration. The formalization trend is serious, and moral education is difficult to achieve good results. However, the key to the formation of College Students' good ideological and moral character lies in subjective autonomy and initiative. Educators should "supplement the nature of all things, but dare not do it", guide the free development of the educated, not inhibit the development of students' personality. "If people's behavior choice is voluntary, people tend to increase their liking for the selected behavior; when behavior choice is forced, people will reduce their favor for the selected behavior and have a high degree of psychological resistance to this behavior, and this mentality will also urge people to do the opposite behavior "[3]. At present, the most important thing for college students is the healthy growth of psychology, However, modern moral educators fail to grasp the characteristics of the educated, lack face-to-face spiritual and emotional communication with the educated, have little communication with students on weekdays, and know nothing about the real situation of the educated. Therefore, they are unable to help solve the problems encountered by each educator. Over time, the educated also lose their due self-confidence in moral education, We cannot give full play to the joint force of educators and educatees.

#### **3.2. The Utilitarian Trend of Education Is Serious**

Reform and opening up and the progress of the times have not only gradually accelerated the pace of people's life, but also had a lot of negative effects. People began to be eager for quick success and instant benefit, pursue fame and wealth, abandon the basics and ignore people's natural nature, and ignore people's internal moral cultivation and pure and simple state. In the process of College Students' Ideological and political education, many educators can not

surpass the ordinary secular life, but are bound by material interests and lose the selfless truth that educators should have. Some teachers regard moral education as their own means of making a living, simply believe that completing the teaching task will complete their own work and pay attention to their own life needs, Lack of happiness and well-being to communicate with students, lack of motivation to devote themselves to education, and unable to understand the real value and significance of life. If teachers have such a value orientation, the educated will be influenced and influenced by bad values, and many bad habits will follow the teachers. At present, some college students are not enterprising, lax in behavior, serious in pleasure and comparison, and turn a blind eye to behavior habits and moral cultivation. Some college students often think about what benefits I can get before doing things, and don't ask anything that has nothing to do with their own interests, This deviates from the educational goal of college students with a sound personality and a new style of great wisdom.

### **3.3. The Educational Method Is Single**

The appropriateness of educational methods is related to the key links such as classroom efficiency and the speed of students' digestion of knowledge. Under the background of examination oriented education and the guidance of traditional educational ideas, moral education methods are obviously single and lack of diversity and innovation. On the one hand, educators indoctrinate students in order to improve the efficiency of moral education. Most moral education classes adopt explicit promising education. Teachers are involved and students study hard, which makes students produce all kinds of rebellious emotions. The method of moral education lacks flexibility and scientificity, and does not absorb the wisdom advantages of "promising" and "Inaction". The ideological and political education of college students should not be limited to the teaching of textbook contents, but should focus on the cultivation of moral character and learning habits. At present, the ideological and political education of college students is used to the traditional rigid education method. When the educatees make mistakes, the educators often adopt the method of criticism and ignore the educational value of flexible education methods such as respect, care, understanding, trust and listening, Successful education should be the education that touches the mind of educators and the education of two-way emotional communication.

On the other hand, at present, the moral education materials of College Students' Ideological and political education are divorced from real life, and some moral education contents also lack the characteristics of the times. Educators are not good at grasping social hot topics for discussion and effective guidance, and the methods of moral education are stereotyped, even some teachers ignore the influence of their behavior on their students.

## **4. The Path of Lao Tuz's Thought of "Returning to Simplicity and Returning to Truth" Embedded in Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities**

Ideological and political education in Colleges and universities is the main classroom to improve the moral level of college students. It mainly serves to cultivate a new generation of socialist builders and successors. Firmly grasping the fundamental task of Building Morality and cultivating people is of great significance to improve the moral quality of college students and continuously strengthen the ideological and political education in Colleges and universities. As a part of China's traditional culture, Lao Tzu's thought of returning to simplicity and returning to truth can give spiritual enlightenment to college students and ideological and political educators, "integrate the ideological essence of Lao Tzu's" returning to simplicity and returning to truth "into the current ideological and political education and guide the ideological and political education to move forward steadily." [4]

#### **4.1. Adhere to the Moral Guidance of Returning to Nature**

To improve the subject status of college students, college students are relatively independent people in society, often have their own foresight and rational thinking ability, and have a certain level of self-education. Therefore, in college students' Ideological and political education, ideological and political educators should adhere to the principle of "students as the main body", rather than let students passively learn all knowledge and highlight the subject status of the educated, Break through the traditional mode of simple indoctrination and preaching, and pay attention to the communication and interaction between teachers and students. Use limited guidance to maximize students' unlimited ability, provide students with a platform for personality development, feel the sense of ownership in the process of moral education, highlight students' participation and enhance their sense of acquisition. So as to spontaneously restrain themselves and consciously correct bad habits. Constantly carry out self-education, self-development and self-improvement of personality, so that college students can become self-conscious people. On the one hand, college students are the mature period of the formation of ideological value and psychological quality. With the growth of age and grade, students' personality tends to mature. Relying solely on Ideological and political educators' empty preaching often can not achieve good results, but guiding students to seriously understand and experience can get more feelings of life. Therefore, the ideological and political education of college students should be good at grasping the remarkable characteristics of college students different from other groups, because the needs of contemporary college students are often omni-directional and wide-ranging. Therefore, in the process of moral education, we should fully understand college students, patiently listen to real ideas, and accurately grasp the dynamics of students, Make the moral education of College Students' Ideological and political education meet the nature and needs of college students, and let college students identify with the content and methods of moral education from the bottom of their heart, so as to consciously put it into practice and externalize it into practice. On the other hand, the ideological and political education of college students should focus on the practical level, so that students can experience it personally in the activities, so as to leave a deeper impression on students. At the same time, college students can strengthen their social mission and sense of responsibility by participating in various patriotic practical activities, For example, you can feel the heroic character of the Red Army by visiting the red revolutionary base, or draw moral nutrients from it by participating in voluntary activities, feel the revolutionary spirit of the older generation, truly understand the connotation of morality, and constantly expand the channels and methods of College Students' moral education, so that college students can continue to harvest in happiness.

#### **4.2. Adhere to the Moral Feelings of Being Indifferent to Fame and Wealth**

Should be selfless, life epiphany. In the process of applying Taoist thought to college students' Ideological and political education, educators should treat every student equally, not determine their conduct due to their grades, treat students without bias and differentiation in daily life, and give students a lot of care. Strengthen the construction of teachers' ethics, remove fame and wealth, make selfless dedication, and be willing to be an unknown and selfless contributor behind. Don't let your own selfishness disturb your original heart, advocate selfless teaching morality, eliminate and curb selfishness, highlight the nature of life, adhere to the pure land of education, firmly grasp the general tone of education to build morality and cultivate people, and be proud of being a teacher and content to be a teacher Be willing to be a teacher, show the pure heart of educators, devote themselves to serving students, set a good example for students, and let students move forward in the fertile soil of moral education. Educators should also combine their own educational undertakings and educational ideals, stand on the commanding height

with a broader vision, advance and retreat and develop together with students, and suddenly realize the value of life in dedication.

#### **4.3. Advocate the Moral Method of Moistening Things Silently**

The way of valuing softness. When the thought of "the best is like water" is applied to the ideological and political education of college students, educators should not be aggressive, sarcastic and reprimanding students. They should mainly focus on positive encouragement and encouragement. In daily teaching, management methods should be used scientifically, reasonably and appropriately, neither too strict requirements, stick management, nor too free indulgence, and master the "degree" of management methods, strict and affectionate, educators should have the spirit of tolerance to students, teach students through peaceful communication, shape values with philosophical and artistic educational methods, achieve educational goals, and implement them in daily life. Ideological and political educators should be good at listening to and understanding students, guide and cultivate carefully, which is the embodiment of abiding by "Tao" and "Virtue" Your accomplishments.

#### **4.4. Silent Teaching**

Teaching without words is opposite to teaching with words. The basic feature of "Inaction" is teachers' empty preaching and simple indoctrination in the whole process of moral education. "Inaction" education means that educators adopt non compulsory in the teaching process, not relying on external forces, but more indirect means such as inspiration and subtle and penetrating teaching methods, so as to make the educatees change their passive obedience consciousness into students' conscious obedience consciousness. The thinking mode of "Inaction" should be applied to education, "which is more conducive to highlighting the subject status of the educated, returning to the nature of the educated, making them happy to learn and improving their learning enthusiasm." [5]To put this thought into practice in the process of Ideological and political education, on the one hand, educators should get rid of the traditional educational concept of only fraction and only further study, and give reasonable consideration to the relationship between knowledge and morality. In terms of moral education teaching methods, educators can not only focus on the explanation and publicity of moral education knowledge theory, which will not only make students one-sided development, but also the educational effect is difficult to achieve results, which violates the correct educational law. The key function of education is to help shape good moral conduct and form correct values, so as to carry out self-education and consciously transform moral requirements into their own internal morality.

### **5. Conclusion**

Under the background of education in the new era, the general tone of College Students' Ideological and political education focusing on the fundamental task of "Building Morality and cultivating people" can not be ignored. Laozi's thought of "returning to simplicity and returning to truth" contains philosophical wisdom. Applying the moral education laws and methods contained in it to college students' Ideological and political education has enlightening significance for exploring a new path of moral education. At the same time, integrating the essence of Chinese traditional culture into the current ideological and political education curriculum, so that the cultural heritage and ideological guidance stir each other, perhaps it is a new way for the inheritance of culture in the new era.

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