

Research on Integrating Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture into College Students' Ideological and Moral Education

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Abstract: As the revival of Chinese traditional culture progresses and the national emphasis on ideological and moral education strengthens, the effective integration of traditional Chinese medicine culture into the ideological and moral education of college students has become a significant topic in educational reform. This study aims to explore the application and mechanisms of traditional Chinese medicine culture within the ideological and moral education of college students, in order to enhance their ideological and moral literacy and cultural confidence, providing both theoretical and practical support. The research begins by outlining the core values and educational significance of traditional Chinese medicine culture. By analyzing the current state and existing problems of traditional Chinese medicine cultural education in universities, it highlights its crucial role in cultivating students' sense of responsibility, collective consciousness, and a harmonious view of nature.

Keywords: Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture; Ideological and Moral Education; College Students; Core Values; Educational Significance; Challenges

1. Introduction

In recent years, the revival of Chinese traditional culture has gained momentum, and ideological and moral education has received increasing attention at the national level. The integration of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) culture into college students' ideological and moral education has emerged as a vital area of research in educational reform. TCM culture, a precious heritage of the Chinese nation, embodies profound philosophical, ethical, and medical wisdom. It not only offers rich resources for ideological

and moral education but also plays a unique role in shaping students' values and cultural identities [1]. This research endeavors to explore how TCM culture can be effectively applied in college students' ideological and moral education, aiming to enhance their ideological and moral qualities and cultural confidence. By clarifying the core values and educational significance of TCM culture, analyzing the current situation and challenges of TCM culture education in universities, and highlighting its positive impact on cultivating students' sense of responsibility, collectivism, and harmony with nature, this study provides theoretical and practical guidance for educational reform.

2. Core Values and Educational Significance of TCM Culture

2.1 Core Values of TCM Culture

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), as a precious treasure of the Chinese nation, has a long history and profound significance. Its core connotations cover multiple dimensions. It is not only the essence of TCM but also an important manifestation of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

2.1.1 People-center and life

TCM adheres to a patient - centered approach, placing the value of life at the forefront. In the process of diagnosis and treatment, it takes into account individual differences and comprehensively safeguards people's physical and mental health. For example, in TCM diagnosis, practitioners consider various factors such as a patient's constitution, lifestyle, and emotional state, rather than simply treating symptoms [2].

2.1.2 Harmony between man and nature and holistic

TCM upholds the unity of man and nature and the holistic view. It emphasizes the organic

connection between different parts of the human body and the close relationship between the human body and the natural environment. TCM believes that human health is closely related to the changing seasons, climate, and geographical environment. For instance, in different seasons, TCM advocates different health - preservation methods, such as tonifying the liver in spring and nourishing the lungs in autumn [3].

2.1.3 Great doctors with integrity and proficiency

TCM advocates that excellent doctors should possess both high - level medical skills and noble medical ethics. The concept of “great doctors with both integrity and proficiency” sets high - standard requirements for medical practitioners. They are encouraged to treat patients with a compassionate heart and excellent medical techniques [4].

2.1.4 Balancing yin and yang and advocating harmony

TCM follows the principle of balancing “yin” and “yang” and promoting harmony. This principle aims to regulate the balance of yin and yang within the human body and also pursues harmonious coexistence between humans and nature and among people in society [5].

2.1.5 Striving for self - improvement and being vigorous and promotive

TCM shows great values in the long - term development. In the face of various problems and challenges, it has always been proactive and enterprising, constantly exploring new theories and therapies. Successive generations of TCM practitioners have carried forward and innovated, promoting the continuous development of TCM. Nowadays, TCM also shows new vitality in the integration with modern medicine [6].

2.2 Educational Significance of TCM Culture

As a treasure of Chinese civilization, TCM education not only carries the mission of cultural heritage but also serves as a core driver for the "Healthy China" strategy and the cultivation of new quality productivity. In the new era, TCM education must deepen its development from multiple dimensions, including national strategy, cultural identity, educational innovation, and

internationalization, to address global challenges and enhance its international influence.

2.2.1 Cultural heritage and value reshaping

2.2.1.1 Cultivating cultural confidence

TCM, as a crystallization of thousands of years of Chinese wisdom, serves as an important carrier for cultivating cultural confidence. By studying classic TCM works like “Huangdi Neijing” and “Treatise on Febrile and Miscellaneous Diseases,” students can gain in - depth knowledge of the remarkable medical achievements of the ancients. These classic works not only record medical theories and practices but also reflect the profound connotations of Chinese culture, such as the concept of “qi” and the theory of the five elements. This knowledge can arouse students' strong sense of national cultural identity and pride [7].

2.2.1.2 Shaping moral qualities

The values advocated by TCM culture, such as “high - level medical skills and sincere medical ethics” and “physicians with benevolence,” have a positive impact on students' moral cultivation. During the learning and practice of TCM - related knowledge, students are influenced by these values and gradually develop excellent qualities. They learn to care for others, respect life, be dedicated to their work, and have the courage to take on responsibilities. For example, in TCM practice, students are taught to be patient and empathetic when dealing with patients, which helps to cultivate their sense of responsibility and compassion [7].

2.2.1.3 Improving thinking abilities

The unique theoretical system of TCM provides a good platform for students to improve their thinking abilities. The holistic concept in TCM, which emphasizes the interconnection of all parts of the human body, helps students develop holistic thinking. Syndrome differentiation and treatment, which focuses on individualized treatment, can exercise students' dialectical thinking. Moreover, the method of using natural phenomena to understand human physiology and pathology in TCM, such as comparing the growth of plants in nature with the development of the human body, promotes students' innovative thinking [8].

2.2.1.4 Promoting physical and mental health

TCM is rich in health - preservation knowledge. Dietary health - preservation methods in TCM, which arrange diets according to seasons and individual constitutions, can help students develop healthy eating habits. Exercise health - preservation, which advocates moderate exercise, is beneficial for students' physical fitness. Emotional health - preservation, which focuses on regulating emotions, is conducive to students' mental health. For example, practicing Taijiquan, a form of exercise in TCM, can not only improve physical strength but also relieve stress and promote mental relaxation [9].

2.2.2 Supportive role at the national strategic level

2.2.2.1 Pillar of the "Healthy China" initiative
TCM education fosters composite talents with traditional thinking and modern skills, ensuring talent support for the "Healthy China" strategy. For example, higher TCM institutions optimize their professional layouts by adding specialties like Pediatric TCM and Geriatric Medicine, precisely meeting societal needs. The practical application of TCM in epidemic prevention and control (e.g., "Three Medicines and Three Formulas") further validates its clinical value and strengthens its position in the public health system.

2.2.2.2 Incubator of new quality productivity
By integrating modern technologies (e.g., artificial intelligence, big data) with classical theories, TCM education spawns new growth points of productivity. For instance, virtual reality technology simulates TCM diagnosis and treatment processes to enhance teaching effectiveness, while molecular biology research explores the mechanisms of TCM drugs, promoting integrative innovation. Data shows that the TCM health industry exceeded 10 trillion RMB in scale in 2023, highlighting the sector's driving force for industrial upgrading.

2.2.3 Internationalization and global communication

2.2.3.1. global layout of tcm Centers
Through overseas TCM centers and "Belt and Road" cooperation, TCM culture is disseminated globally. For example, by 2024, TCM centers covered 43 countries, facilitating international standard-setting and academic exchanges.

2.2.3.2. International discourse power in education standards

Developing international standards for TCM terminology (e.g., ISO 19465) and promoting standardization in diagnosis and herbal processing breaks cultural barriers. The inclusion of a TCM chapter in the International Classification of Diseases, 11th Revision (2022) marks its formal entry into mainstream international medicine.

3. Current Situation of TCM Culture Education in Chinese Colleges and Universities

3.1 Enhanced Integration Awareness

Colleges and universities have been continuously deepening their understanding and research on integrating TCM culture into ideological and political education. They are actively exploring the inclusion of TCM culture in curriculum construction. Many professional courses have also carried out relevant explorations, regarding TCM culture as an important ideological and political element. For example, in medical ethics courses for TCM - related majors, the spirit of benevolence in TCM culture is combined with modern medical ethics concepts to guide students to establish correct values.

3.2 Diverse Educational Forms

3.2.1 New media platform construction

Many universities have established official websites, WeChat public accounts, and other new media platforms dedicated to TCM culture dissemination. These platforms regularly release content about TCM knowledge, cultural stories, and research achievements, enabling students to access TCM - related information conveniently.

3.2.2 Theme activities

Universities often hold TCM culture festivals, during which there are TCM exhibitions, traditional Chinese medicine tasting activities, and TCM health preservation experience sessions. These activities attract a large number of students to participate, enhancing their interest in TCM culture.

3.2.3 Social practice

Organizing students to visit TCM museums, TCM hospitals, and TCM production bases allows students to have an in - depth

understanding of the development history, clinical applications, and production processes of TCM. For instance, students can observe TCM diagnosis and treatment methods in TCM hospitals and learn about the processing techniques of Chinese herbal medicines in production bases.

3.3 Promotion of Collaborative Education

Colleges and universities pay attention to exploring the collaborative educational role of TCM culture and red resources. By integrating TCM culture with red culture, such as the spirit of the revolutionary predecessors' arduous struggle and dedication, they construct a "three - all - round education" system for ideological and political work. This system gives full play to the collaborative effect of cultural education and ideological and political education, enabling students to receive multi - dimensional educational influences.

4. Existing Problems in TCM Culture Education in Colleges and Universities

4.1 Curriculum - Setting Issues

4.1.1 Disproportionate course proportion

In some TCM - major courses in colleges and universities, Western medicine and foreign language courses account for a relatively large proportion. For example, in some TCM undergraduate programs, the total credit hours of Western medicine and foreign language courses may exceed 40% of the total curriculum credit hours, while the education of TCM classic works is insufficient [10].

4.1.2 Deviation in textbook compilation

The compilation of some curriculum textbooks deviates from traditional TCM thinking. Textbooks often tend to use a Western - medicine - centered logical structure, lacking in - depth exploration and elaboration of traditional TCM theories such as the theory of yin and yang and the five - element theory, which is not conducive to students' formation of orthodox TCM thinking.

4.2 Over - Detailed Professional Division

The professional division in TCM is too detailed. For example, in a medical university, there are separate TCM colleges, Chinese materia medica colleges, and acupuncture and tuina colleges. This over - detailed division

leads to students lacking a comprehensive understanding and overall control ability of TCM. Students majoring in Chinese materia medica may have little knowledge of acupuncture and tuina techniques, and vice versa, which restricts the cultivation of comprehensive TCM talents.

4.3 Weak Teaching Staff

4.3.1 Insufficient quantity

The overall number of teaching staff in TCM - related majors is insufficient. In some newly established TCM - related majors in colleges and universities, the ratio of teachers to students may be as high as 1:30 or even higher, which makes it difficult to ensure the quality of teaching.

4.3.2 Lack of high - level teachers

There is a shortage of high - level TCM teachers. Many teachers lack in - depth research and high - level achievements in TCM theory and clinical practice. In addition, some teachers' clinical skills are not excellent, and they cannot provide students with effective practical guidance [11].

4.3.3 Low cultural and theoretical accomplishments

Some teachers' TCM cultural literacy and ideological and political theory accomplishment need to be improved. They may not be able to fully and accurately impart TCM cultural connotations and integrate ideological and political elements into teaching.

4.4 Lagging Teaching Models

The teaching model still mainly relies on traditional lecture - based methods. In the classroom, teachers often dominate the teaching process, with limited opportunities for students to participate actively. For example, in TCM basic theory courses, teachers usually explain the content from the textbook, and there are few interactive discussions, group projects, or practical demonstrations. Moreover, the backward teaching facilities, such as a lack of advanced TCM simulation teaching equipment, limit students' practical teaching opportunities [12].

4.5 Insufficient Student Literacy

4.5.1 Low attraction of tcm education

TCM education has relatively low attraction

for students. In the college entrance examination volunteer - filling process, compared with some popular majors such as computer science and finance, TCM - related majors receive less attention.

4.5.2 Unstable professional thoughts

Some students who enter TCM - related majors have unstable professional thoughts. They may be influenced by the long - term learning cycle of TCM, the difficulty of learning TCM theories, and the relatively low - paid initial employment situation, resulting in a lack of enthusiasm for learning.

4.5.3 Weak value identification

Students' value identification of TCM culture is insufficient. They may not fully understand the profound value and unique advantages of TCM culture, and some students even question the scientific nature of TCM.

4.5.4 Lagging construction of clinical teaching bases

The construction of TCM clinical teaching bases is lagging. Some teaching bases lack sufficient beds, advanced medical equipment, and experienced clinical teachers, which affects the cultivation of students' professional qualities and clinical abilities.

4.6 Uneven Educational Development

There is an imbalance in the regional development of TCM higher education. TCM - related colleges and universities in developed regions usually have more abundant educational resources, such as advanced teaching facilities, high - level teaching teams, and more research funds. In contrast, those in less - developed regions have relatively backward educational conditions, and there is a significant gap in teaching quality. This situation affects the overall level of TCM culture education.4. Role of TCM Culture in College Students' Ideological and Moral Education [13].

5. Comprehensive Development of Students' Virtues

5.1 Cultivating a Sense of Responsibility

TCM culture emphasizes the moral responsibility of medical practitioners to serve society and care for others. By integrating TCM culture into ideological and moral education, students can be inspired to develop

a strong sense of social responsibility. For example, through studying the deeds of famous TCM practitioners like Hua Tuo and Bian Que, who dedicated their lives to treating patients and saving lives, students can understand the importance of taking on responsibilities. Case - based discussions on TCM ethical principles can also guide students to think about how to fulfill their responsibilities in different situations.

5.2 Enhancing Collectivism

The holistic concept of TCM culture, which views the human body as an integrated whole, can be extended to the idea of social harmony and collectivism. Just as different parts of the body work together to maintain health, in society, individuals also need to cooperate and unite. By understanding the inter - connectedness of different parts of the body and their functions in TCM, students can better understand the importance of cooperation in society. Group activities related to TCM, such as TCM health - care volunteer services, can help students experience collectivism in practice and enhance their sense of teamwork.

5.3 Promoting Harmony with Nature

TCM culture advocates living in harmony with nature, which is in line with the modern concept of environmental protection and sustainable development. Integrating TCM culture into ideological and moral education can help students develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between humans and nature. For example, learning about TCM's view on the influence of natural environment on human health can make students realize the importance of protecting the environment. Activities like planting TCM herbs can let students experience the interaction between humans and nature firsthand and encourage them to adopt an eco-friendly lifestyle.

6. Conclusion

Integrating TCM culture into college students' ideological and moral education is of great significance. It is not only an effective way to inherit and promote traditional Chinese culture but also an important means to improve students' ideological and moral qualities and cultural confidence. By clarifying the core

values and educational significance of TCM culture, addressing the existing challenges, and highlighting its positive role in cultivating students' sense of responsibility, collectivism, and harmony with nature, this study provides valuable insights for educational reform. Future research should focus on developing more systematic TCM culture courses, improving teaching methods and resources, and exploring the long - term impact of TCM culture integration on students' personal and professional development.

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