

Research on Innovative Paths for Integrating Red Culture into Ideological and Political Education of University Students in the New Era from the Perspective of the “Belt and Road” Initiative

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Abstract

The “Belt and Road” initiative promotes deep integration of cultures from different countries and regions, influencing the learning and life of university students in the new era. This cultural diversity sometimes undermines students' political and value identification. Red culture, an excellent culture accumulated by the Party and the people during the revolution, construction, and reform periods, is a vital cultural resource for ideological and political education in universities. Integrating red culture into ideological and political education from the “Belt and Road” perspective can effectively promote cultural integration, ensure the implementation of educational goals, and provide talent for societal modernization.

Keywords

Belt and road; Red culture; University students; Ideological and political education.

1. Introduction

The Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee proposed the vision of building a culturally strong country by 2035. The report of the 20th CPC National Congress emphasized the need to promote cultural confidence and self-reliance and to create new glory in socialist culture. Red culture, formed during arduous anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolutionary wars, is the "ballast stone" for building a culturally strong country and the spiritual wealth of the entire nation.

The “Belt and Road” initiative enhances deep cultural integration among countries and regions. Under the influence of multiculturalism, the environment, resources, and space for ideological and political education have changed. University students in the new era are in a critical growth period, making ideological and political education in universities crucial. Integrating red culture into ideological and political education can effectively promote the integration of youth in ideals, values, and morals, fully stimulating their learning enthusiasm and interest, helping them grow into successors of socialist modernization.

2. The Significance and Value of Integrating Red Culture into University Ideological and Political Education from the Perspective of the “Belt and Road” Initiative

Since the Belt and Road Initiative was proposed in October 2013 and up until the ten years leading to the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, China has adhered to connectivity as the main thread, injecting new impetus into world economic growth and opening new spaces for global development. China has become the main trade partner of over 140 countries and regions and the main source of investment for an increasing number of countries. The decade-long journey has proven that the joint construction of the Belt and Road

is in line with the logic of progress and follows the right path. University students, as the main force in the construction of the Belt and Road, are the most energetic, dream-driven, and motivated builders, and they are also the biggest beneficiaries of the Belt and Road achievements.

2.1. Laying the Ideological Foundation for Cultivating and Practicing Socialist Core Values

The principles of consultation, co-construction, and sharing, along with the concept of common development, are important connotations of the Belt and Road Initiative. Under these principles and concepts, China's exchanges and communications with countries in Asia, Europe, and Africa have become increasingly frequent and in-depth. Chinese culture is spreading outward, while Western culture is coming in, enriching people's perspectives with diverse foreign thoughts and cultures. University students in the new era, growing up in this inclusive and diverse background, are exposed to the rich histories and vibrant cultures of different countries. However, under the influence of diverse ideologies and cultures, some students are easily affected and eroded by negative Western ideologies, leading to wavering beliefs. The formation and development of red culture have gone through several periods—it was formed during the New Democratic Revolution, developed and innovated during the socialist revolution and construction period, and the reform and opening-up period. It is an indispensable "second tradition" and a fundamental element that cannot be discarded. Integrating red culture into university ideological and political education can provide strong internal motivation and good external support for university students in the new era, making the "red" redder, the "black" fade, and the "gray" turn red. This helps to guide and regulate students' behavior from an ideological perspective, preventing them from being troubled by chaos or tempted by interests, and nurturing them into well-rounded socialist builders. In the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, this ensures that students can maintain their identity, becoming the greatest beneficiaries of the Belt and Road strategy, while also contributing positively to its construction. This supports the achievement of the Two Centenary Goals[1].

2.2. Cultivating Students' Holistic Thinking

In today's society, the world, the era, and history are unfolding in unprecedented ways. China is at a critical juncture in realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, with a historic convergence of global changes and China's rapid development. This era requires successive generations of young people to work hard and persevere through difficulties. The Silk Road spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit, is the most important source of strength for jointly building the Belt and Road. Red culture has multifaceted value and functions, covering political, educational, economic, and cultural areas. On the path to fully building a modern socialist country, it is necessary to properly and fully utilize the functions, roles, and significance of red culture. The report of the 20th CPC National Congress pointed out that education, science and technology, and talent are fundamental and strategic supports for the comprehensive construction of a modern socialist country. During the critical stage of university students' growth and success, it is essential to guide them to deeply understand red culture, gain insights into the Party and the country's major policies, and understand their own missions. Students should be encouraged to take on their responsibilities with courage and clarity, understanding "what it is," "what to do," and "how to do it." This approach will allow their youth to shine through hard work and to define their responsibilities through striving and dedication.

2.3. Gathering Momentum for Advancement

As the Belt and Road Initiative continues to progress, the demands from all sides are increasingly high, not only in terms of the quantity of talent but also the quality, both of which

are crucial. Whether it involves bringing in external resources or sending talents abroad, university students in the new era must bravely shoulder historical responsibilities and forge ahead with determination, working alongside scholars from various countries to contribute their wisdom and brilliance to the Belt and Road Initiative. The realization of red culture's value has been integral throughout the various stages of the Chinese Communist Party's development, from its inception, planning, establishment, growth, and maturation. It is a significant political resource. Serving the people wholeheartedly is the core value of red culture. University students are the driving force and hope for the future development of the country. Consequently, the ideological and political education of university students has always been a focal point of attention for both universities and society. Integrating red culture into university ideological and political education helps guide students to closely connect their personal destinies with the future of the nation in the new era. It enables them to shoulder the significant mission of contemporary university students, using their youthful vigor to help realize the Chinese Dream[2-3].

3. Challenges of Integrating Red Culture into University Ideological and Political Education from the Perspective of the “Belt and Road” Initiative

Achieving good results in ideological and political education requires the combined effect of both subjective reasons and objective factors. From the perspective of the Belt and Road Initiative, successfully integrating red culture into the ideological and political education of university students in the new era also requires considering both subjective and objective factors. To promote the integration of red culture, it is necessary to thoroughly analyze these reasons and take targeted measures accordingly.

3.1. Lack of Experience, Difficult to Empathize

The formation of red culture stems from specific revolutionary war periods, and people of different eras, age groups, and backgrounds have varying understandings and views of red culture. The older generation, even without detailed data and historical records for proof and explanation, firmly believes in red culture. In contrast, the younger audience finds that period of history too distant, and the hardships and humiliations endured during the revolutionary war are very abstract to them. Although many literary works and films have recreated that history and can evoke strong emotions and reverence, once removed from specific contexts, young audiences still find it difficult to emotionally resonate. This phenomenon is often described as "feeling touched when hearing about it, getting excited when talking about it, but taking no action afterwards."

3.2. Ideological Impact and Multiple External and Internal Interferences

Against the backdrop of the Belt and Road Initiative, various Western ideologies have flooded into the lives of university students in the new era. Growing up in an era of rapid internet development, these students have more frequent exposure to Western thoughts and concepts. The internet offers a mix of information, and under the impact of various ideologies and viewpoints, the thought and value systems of the new era university students are characterized by independence, diversity, and variability, manifesting in increasingly diverse demands and consumption concepts. Under the influence of erroneous ideologies such as historical nihilism, some young students waver in their acceptance of mainstream culture and become confused and troubled about the value of red culture. Furthermore, in the educational process during their growth, red education is often equated with ideological indoctrination, which is heard but rarely internalized. In the context of cultural diversity, the ideas and practices from some Western countries inevitably clash and conflict with domestic concepts and lifestyles. The

complex interplay of these dual factors inevitably affects the actual effectiveness of realizing the value of red culture.

3.3. Hollow Forms and Insufficient Red Atmosphere

In the past, many universities have conducted ideological and political education in monotonous forms, such as singing and essay writing. With the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, university students in the new era have gained some understanding of foreign educational approaches. Compared to traditional education, Western teaching methods are more appealing to students, which in turn highlights the shortcomings of traditional ideological and political education. While traditional ideological and political education can have some effect on red culture education for university students, its depth is far from sufficient. Due to a lack of innovative teaching methods, the red culture atmosphere on some campuses has not become widespread. Red culture promotion often appears as a short-lived trend, and the regular, standardized, and orderly promotion of red culture education has not kept pace, resulting in an insufficiently "red" campus environment. Additionally, as the pressures of modern society increase, students tend to focus more on studying for their major courses or improving extracurricular skills, making red culture education seem merely formalistic. There remains a significant gap in making red culture education truly resonate with students and integrate into their thoughts, actions, and daily lives.

4. Basic Paths for Integrating Red Culture into University Ideological and Political Education from the Perspective of the Belt and Road Initiative

4.1. Expanding Channels for Red Culture Communication to Enhance its Penetration and Cohesion

Effective communication of information requires leveraging specific channels and platforms. To promote the effective realization of the value of red culture, it is essential to integrate and utilize various media resources, refining them to retain the essence, and fully capitalize on the respective advantages of traditional media, new media, and converged media. This approach will amplify and highlight the main theme and keynotes of red education, creating a powerful force for the dissemination of red culture. With the advancement of the Belt and Road Initiative, China's international exchanges have been continually strengthening, providing opportunities for universities to integrate red culture into ideological and political education. First, university ideological and political educators should adopt a broader perspective in their work and appropriately incorporate advanced external teaching methods. Additionally, universities should use red culture as an entry point, deeply exploring and integrating relevant red culture materials, ensuring the thorough implementation of the "Six Entries of Red Culture" (entering campuses, dormitories, classes, party branches, classrooms, and sports fields). Wherever students go, red culture education should be present. An effective guiding mechanism should be established, wherein university ideological and political educators develop teaching models that integrate red culture with ideological and political education. This can be achieved through conventional teaching, shared learning, flipped classrooms, and other methods, encouraging students to deeply understand red culture from multiple angles. Emphasis should be placed on new media, ensuring the authenticity and historical completeness of the information, and combining red culture with new media[6-9]. Utilizing university websites, official WeChat accounts, and other platforms, micro-stories and micro-videos can be created, allowing audiences to access red culture without being limited by space, time, or distance, thus facilitating its dissemination[4-6].

4.2. Continuously Carry Out Party History Education to Enhance the Appeal and Guidance of Red Culture

The Chinese Communist Party is the creator of red culture, which is an interpretation of the Party's culture and values. Integrating red culture into university ideological and political education requires drawing strength from Party history. Creating "micro-videos" with the theme of promoting red culture can be an effective approach. Literary and artistic works are important carriers for telling red stories and realizing the value of red culture. These works can be created around significant historical events, revolutionary heroes, and the inheritance of red revolutionary culture. Red sites such as martyr cemeteries, former residences of famous people, and memorial halls, which combine both tangible and intangible red cultural heritage, should be utilized. These sites can objectively present historical facts, serving as witnesses to history. Visiting these places is akin to stepping into a historical narrative. Forming red culture lecture groups is another effective method. These groups, as the vanguard in telling red stories of the new era, can effectively connect teachers, students, and red culture resources. By understanding the desires, needs, and deficiencies of post-95s and especially post-00s university students, these groups can add new, vibrant content to help young students undertake historical missions and play their roles in the modern era. Through a variety of methods, such as storytelling, situational involvement, emotional engagement, and spiritual integration, red culture can be deeply, genuinely, and compellingly conveyed to resonate in people's hearts[7-9].

4.3. Optimizing the Environment for Red Culture Recognition to Highlight its Affinity and Appeal

"Knowledge is the beginning of action, and action is the completion of knowledge." To achieve recognition of red culture, it is necessary to undergo the transformation process of "knowledge, emotion, intention, belief, and action." To realize the value recognition of red culture among university students in the new era, it is essential to fully respect their genuine meanings, combine different contexts, and follow different rules. This involves concretizing general, theoretical, and distant content into grounded, understandable, and acceptable information. In the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, conflicts between red culture and Western culture are inevitable. However, this should not lead to avoiding discussions about "Western culture." Instead, an open attitude should be maintained, shifting from traditional one-way indoctrination to two-way, interactive dialogue. On one hand, audiences should be allowed to discuss hot topics related to red culture; on the other hand, disseminators should promptly respond to these discussions. By mutually constructing sincere and frank dialogue spaces, university students can be guided to independently compare the differences between red culture and Western culture, evoking emotional recognition of red culture among new era university students and cultivating students with modern awareness. Additionally, in the process of teaching young university students, selecting stories from the youth of revolutionary heroes can help students of similar ages and psychological stages resonate and evoke positive emotions. Furthermore, choosing examples with negative energy appropriately can stimulate reverse emotions among young students, avoiding emotional numbness. This approach will better promote the integration and self-assurance of university students in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative[10-12].

Integrating red culture into the ideological and political education of universities in the new era is a crucial aspect of the development and cultivation of moral values in higher education. In the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, red culture holds significant importance for the ideological education of university students. On the basis of preserving, innovating, and promoting red culture, it is also essential to learn from and absorb foreign cultures reasonably, properly handling the relationship between indigenous and foreign elements. By extracting

value from the Belt and Road Initiative and closely combining red culture with contemporary development, it can be presented in a more diverse and enriched form. This approach aims to cultivate university students in the new era, further promoting the implementation of the Belt and Road strategy and advancing the modernization of socialism.

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