

## Exploration of College Ideological and Political Education from the Perspective of Wang Yangming's "Extension of Intuitive Knowledge"

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**Abstract:** Socialism with Chinese characteristics has stepped into a new era, and the ideological and moral construction has also entered a new stage of development. We should deeply explore the ideological concepts, humanistic spirit and moral standards contained in the excellent traditional Chinese culture, absorb the essence of the excellent ancient Chinese moral education, enhance the period feel and inheritance of the traditional culture, and provide new ideas and methods for the ideological and moral construction of China in the new era at the same time. Wang Yangming is the ancient Chinese Confucianism master of expounding ideas, morality and belief, and his moral education thought integrates ancient Chinese Confucianism, neo-confucianism and psychology. His moral practice theories such as "Unity of Knowing and Doing", and "Extension of Intuitive Knowledge" not only enrich the ideological and political theory system of moral education in China, but also have strong times value. Studying Wang Yangming's thought of moral education and its contemporary value is conducive to strengthening the cultural self-confidence of colleges, enhancing social cohesion, and providing a strong spiritual impetus for realizing the Chinese dream of great national rejuvenation.

### 1. Introduction

Currently, China has entered a new period of socialist modernization. On the path to establish a socialist modern and strong country, it requires a strong spiritual force and a solid social moral foundation to support. As general secretary Xi Jinping pointed out in his talk on powerful cultural country, "a country cannot thrive without morality, and man cannot thrive without morality. Whether a nation or a person can master himself or herself largely depends on moral values". The party and the state attach great importance to the building of civic morality, actively promote, foster and practice socialist core values, build Chinese spirit, Chinese values and Chinese strength, and better provide spiritual guidance to the people. Party secretary Xi Jinping showed at the national conference on ideological and political work in colleges that it was necessary to take moral cultivation as the central link, carry out ideological and political work throughout the whole process of education and teaching, and realize the whole-process and all-round education. The formation of personal morality and the improvement of moral level are not only personal problem but also social problem. It is necessary to strengthen moral education in the whole society so as to promote the overall improvement of social moral level. When individual morality conforms to social ethical norms and advocates the pursuit of better moral realm, our nation will always be full of hope.

### 2. Background and theoretical origin of Wang Yangming's moral education thoughts

In the middle of Ming dynasty, neo-confucianism prevailed. However, due to the increasingly acute social conflicts, new economic bud was about to produce new modes of production, and those in academia also sought new better strategy for solidifying the state. Wang Yangming's thought of moral education was produced under this specific political, economic and ideological culture. In addition, Wang Yangming's family background and personal experience also played a crucial role in the continuous development and improvement of his ideological system. Wang Yangming lived in the middle of the Ming dynasty. From the Zhengtong 7<sup>th</sup> year (1442) to the Zhengde 16<sup>th</sup> year, the

Ming dynasty began to get into decline stage from prosperity, and it was the period with social problems gradually exposed, political and military corruption, social conflicts intensified, social order turbulence. During this period of change, there were many political events such as Tumubao coup, southeast peasant uprising, border disorder of northern Mongolian tartar, southwest Dateng Valley event, capital peasant uprising, King Ning insurgency. In terms of economy, the land annexation was intensified, the gentry class rose, and the grassroots people began to live in luxury. The emergence of Wang Yangming's thought of moral education is closely related to his social background.

### **3. Rationality of Wang Yangming's thought of moral education**

Wang Yangming attached great importance to moral education and tried his best to carry out the moral cultivation advocated by the traditional Confucianism, so as to cultivate the inner mind. The neo-confucianism of the Song and Ming dynasties was in a dominant position. People all talked about the governance of the country and focused on seeking fame and fortune while ignoring the pursuit of virtue. The social morality declined, people's minds was in a state of suspense, academics were unclear, and people's thoughts were rigid. Wang Yangming broke the shackles of neo-confucianism and created a new path. Instead of keeping fame, he carried out teaching practice and put forward his own moral education concept. Despite of teaching or lecture, Wang Yangming always put moral accomplishment cultivating in the first place of moral education, and combined moral cultivation and moral practice, put moral concept into moral practice, realized "unity of knowing and doing". In his whole life, Wang Yangming pursued the moral practice spirit of "unity of knowing and doing", and carried it out into the moral practice of keeping idea, belief and morality. Wang Yangming's theory of "unity of knowing and doing", which emphasizes the practicality of morality, was to remedy the disadvantages, remold the pursuit of moral cultivation in the doctrine of Confucius and Mencius, with great importance to the conscious role of moral ethics, and improving people's moral value.

### **4. Inspirations of Wang Yangming's thoughts of moral education on the construction of modern college ideological and political education**

#### **4.1 Conductive to promoting the construction of benevolent social morality**

Social morality refers to the code of conduct that the people should abide by in social interaction and public life, and the moral rule that all social members need to abide by. It is close to the people, and it is the key element to maintain the harmony between social members, social stability, similar to the conventional criteria established by social members, with an important role in rewarding the good and punishing the evil, supervising the public opinion and recalling the spirit, arousing social positive energy [1].

In the empirical survey of "survey on the moral status of Chinese citizens", 34.31% of the respondents thought that the overall moral level had declined, while 54.09% argued that the moral level of citizens had improved. However, 66.32% of the respondents believed that compared with other fields, the field of public morality was the more serious field of moral problems. On the one hand, we can see that people's social public awareness has been significantly enhanced; on the other hand, moral issues in the public field have been relatively consistent, and there is a big gap between citizen quality and modern civilization. Currently, China is in the key period of social transformation, faced with the complicated environment both at home and abroad, especially the popularization of mobile terminal equipment, which greatly shortens the interpersonal communication cost; the network media expose the behaviors of the violation of social morality, and this powerful supervision by public opinion provides a shortcut for social morality construction; the influence of moral models and the spread of social objects create a harmonious and healthy environment for the construction of social morality. However, in the places where the network and high-tech equipment cannot reach the public exposure, there will still be the behaviors violating

social morality construction. For example, some merchants use the poor things as the good ones for interest, and poisonous milk powder and vaccine frequently appear; shared bicycles are seriously damaged in part of the cities; there is the frequent exposure of uncivilized tourists in tourist attractions; old people in the street fall down and no one helps them, etc., which seriously hinder the construction of social morality, and is the key object of college ideological and political education. It is temporary and impossible to rely only on strong legal violence to maintain long-term social stability. It is temporary to maintain social order by only depending on powerful law. It is urgent to promote the scientific and effective implementation of college ideological and political education by giving play to the role of moral ethics and spiritual culture in moral education.

#### **4.2 Conductive to strengthening professional ethics cultivating of college students with wholehearted devotion to public duty**

Professional ethics refers to the moral requirement and the code of conduct with professional characteristics that people in a certain career should follow in professional life, of which main content includes: cherishing posts and devote wholeheartedly to work, honest and trustworthy, fair and just in handling affairs, serving the masses, contributing to society, quality accomplishment, which are moral responsibilities and obligations that practitioners at all walks of life should have. Professional ethics widely permeates all aspects of professional activities, and is one of the most common and basic moral codes in human social life. It can guide and restrain the practitioners from all walks of life, and ensure the sustainable, stable and orderly development of the society at the same time. In the context of economic globalization and market economy, the social division of labor is becoming more and more detailed, the field of professional activities is becoming more and more extensive, and the role of professional ethics in economic and social development is becoming more and more important.

In terms of the tension between doctors and patients that have been frequently exposed recently, it is doctors' profession and responsibility to heal the wounded and rescue the dying, but they collect extra benefits from patients. Also, Hangzhou nanny fire incident reminded people of reflecting on the quality of professional ethics of service industry staff. In a series of typical cases, such as the child abuse by kindergarten teachers, some practitioners are devoid of morality, which has brought a bad impact on the society and its members. Therefore, it is urgent to strengthen the construction of professional ethics.

Wang Yangming advocated "examining and governing" in moral education, recognizing his own heart. "Examining" is to conduct self-reflection against moral standards, and "governing" is to correct his evil thoughts as well as shortcomings and mistakes. The purpose of recognizing his own heart is to do good according to the conscience of the heart, with the conscience as the judgment standard of the right and wrong, self-reflection at any time, strengthening the supervision of their own moral cultivation, and timely curbing evil thoughts and evil deeds. In addition, in the imperial competitive examination of selecting officials, Wang Yangming paid attention to the virtue and moral cultivation of scholars and advocated governing the world with virtue [2]. This is also applicable to the construction of socialist professional ethics in the new era. In the cultivation of professional ethics, we should pay attention to the construction of moral cultivation, complete personality, and be able to examine our own shortcomings and restrain selfish desires. Also, in strengthening the construction of professional ethics, practitioners should correctly handle the relationship between individual interests and collective interests, be honest and trustworthy, be loyal to their duties, and be willing to make contributions. Wang Yangming, as an educator and a teacher used the model power to explain that teachers should impart knowledge and explain the puzzle, take students as friends in the teaching activities, be willing to accept challenge, and reflect on their own behaviors; he said, "those tapping my lost are all my teachers. Why not accept it kindly?" His tolerant magnanimous mind and practise character is an example to be set for all walks of life.

Wang Yangming's ideological theory of moral education emphasizes students' subjectivity and affirms the value of the educated. No matter whether they are stupid or smart, they all have innate conscience and can become sages. He insisted on student-oriented, encouraged students to dare to

question, but not to be afraid to put forward different views because Confucius was recognized as a sage. He taught students in accordance with their aptitude, and set learning time according to the nature of Montessori curriculum content, teaching through lively activities. He affirmed that students played a leading role in education and teaching, and teachers played a role in guiding and stimulating students' enthusiasm, creativity, harmonious and relaxed teaching atmosphere, which is more conducive to students' understanding and absorption of knowledge.

## **5. Conclusion**

Currently, the ideological and political education in the schools in China is mainly that teachers conduct the injection of theoretical knowledge. No matter whether it is ideological and moral course in primary school or junior middle school, or political influence with exam-oriented education in high school, or the spread of college public course of thought morals tutelage and legal foundation, although there is innovation in teaching form and content, such as the introduction of the Internet new media as micro medium, and the increase of the moral practice course, there is the phenomenon of ignoring students' subjectivity to some extent. Moral education in schools is to promote students' moral accomplishment and improvement of ideology, internalize moral education theory in heart, make it externalized, adhere to "unity of knowing and doing", assume responsibility to family, society, country and people, and also need to develop their creativity and fine quality of independent thinking and evaluating self.

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