

Research on Optimization Paths of General Education in TCM Colleges and Universities in the Construction of “Double First-rate”

Ding Chen

Changchun University of Chinese Medicine, Changchun, Jilin, China

Keywords: the construction of “Double First-rate”; general education; professional education; TCM colleges and universities; optimization path

Abstract: General education, as an indispensable component of higher education system, is the inherent requirement and critical support for the construction of “Double First-rate”. At present, for general education in colleges and universities of traditional Chinese medicine, there are such realistic problems as the obsolete educational concept, the rigid integration with professional education, imperfect curriculum system, the insufficient teaching resources and immature teaching evaluation system. The optimization of general education in TCM colleges and universities based on the goal of “Double First-rate” relies on starting from national and social demand, with the goal of training talents with comprehensive development, promoting the integration of general education and professional education in balanced development, updating education concept, strengthening teaching staff and improving the mode of general education, thus enhancing the quality of TCM higher education and cultivating qualified talents of traditional Chinese medicine.

The policy of “Double First-rate” is a powerful measure for the nation to break the constraints of developing higher institutions on the basis of education dividend and inject vigor to the development of higher education, which has a great influence on general education of TCM higher education. Traditional Chinese medicine is the precious cultural heritage of the Chinese nation, and the responsibility of TCM colleges and universities is to cultivate high-quality talents of traditional Chinese medicine for the nation and society. Therefore, it is necessary to carry forward traditional Chinese medicine culture. Under the construction of “Double First-rate”, how to integrate general education with professional education and cultivate professional talents with professional quality and humanistic care is the focus for personnel in the education of traditional Chinese medicine.

1. It is inevitable to improve the quality of general education in constructing “Double First-rate”

In the key stage of social development, the central government put forward the construction of “Double First-rate”, which plays an important role in national revitalization and social development. It considers the higher education as the power source for the continuous development of the state. Since the establishment of People’s Republic of China, the central government pays attention to the development of higher education. Two major reforms in 1950s and 1990s in the history of Chinese higher education are under the background of national development, led by central government, and take the method of copying advanced education. When planning to promote Chinese higher education up to a new stage, the construction of “Double First-rate” appears, proposing clear objective for the development of Chinese higher education. It has an extensive and profound influence on Chinese higher education. For related subjects, only the in-depth adjustment carried out can overcome difficulties and grasp opportunities. General education in curriculum system of higher education shall become a significant aspect in in-depth adjustment of higher institutions. With the continuous transformation of the nation and society, general education has become an ability-oriented educational concept to train people’s comprehensive quality. Under the background of “Double First-rate”, the reform of general education is inevitable in higher education. On the one hand, general education itself is an indispensable part in the construction of world-class colleges and universities. On the other hand, without generation education as basic support, the construction

of first-level discipline cannot be completed.

2. The necessity of optimizing general education under the background of “Double First-rate”

General Secretary Xi Jinping proposes that the construction of “Double First-rate” shall be faced with the frontier of world science and technology, national great demand and the main battlefield of national economy, and break the original solidified pattern of high-level and low-level colleges and universities, so that colleges and universities from different regions, at different levels and in different types can be involved in competing for the first rate. The construction of “Double First-rate” puts forward higher requirements for the cultivation of talents. It is required to face challenges and actively grasp the opportunity. “The way of Great Learning lies in the enlightenment of brilliant virtues, the remoulding of people, and the pursuit of ultimate goodness. The ideal of college is not pure technocrat any more, but modesty, mercy and humor in addition to professional knowledge and authority”. [1] Only the professional quality and moral quality are coordinately developed can “Double First-rate” talents in traditional Chinese medicine be cultivated.

To optimize general education is the demand for the development of modern society. Innovation is the inexhaustible driving force for social development, and the development of modern society requires innovative talents. Innovative talents cultivated by higher education play a significant role in social development. In the continuous development of society, it is necessary to constantly train innovate talents in traditional Chinese medicine so that they can make their contributions to social development in their own fields. Innovative talents shall be equipped with not only intensive professional ability, higher research ability, also rational thinking, better humanistic quality and healthy psychological quality. To optimize general education provides theoretical basis for cultivating innovative talents who can adapt to social environment and promote social development, and it is one of necessary and sufficient conditions for the continuous development of modern society.

To optimize general education is the demand for the academic development of traditional Chinese medicine. Things in the world are universally related, and knowledge is no exception. If limited to small circles of your own profession, you will lack the ability to think and deal with problems from an open perspective, and your professional skills will not improve. Practice proves that top-notch personnel in discipline is people with strong professional ability, extensive knowledge, rich practical experience and powerful psychological quality. The core of traditional Chinese medicine relies on the constant integration between its origin and development and other disciplines. The inheritance and innovation of traditional Chinese medicine is inheriting and innovating traditional culture. The thinking way, theoretical constitution and diagnosis and treatment all reflect the extensive and profound oriental culture and the wisdom of Chinese nation. The optimization of general education can enhance students’ traditional cultural quality, effectively expand students’ horizon, improve their cross-disciplinary thinking ability and explore the unique depth within traditional Chinese medicine while consolidating theoretical basis.

To optimize general education is the demand for shaping noble teachers’ ethics. Medical technology is called humanity skill by the confucianist which is the high generalization of doctors’ professional ethics, and the overall, comprehensive and profound interpretation of medical technology by Chinese traditional culture. Chinese traditional culture, with a long history, containing rich moral ideas and noble personality spirit, plays an important role in developing the occupational integrity and personality cultivation of medical staff. The key of medicine is moral cultivation. Medical staff, especially personnel in traditional Chinese medicine, shall strengthen general education while learning professional knowledge, absorb essence from Chinese traditional culture, train moral cultivation, and integrate ethics and skills to develop a manner of moral integrity in medicine.

3. Problems in general education in TCM colleges and universities

3.1 The obsolete concept with more emphasis on professional education than general education

At present, in China's TCM education system, the status of general education is lower than professional education, with insufficient emphasis on general education. Colleges and universities develop more professional education, whereas, general education just assists higher education. In some TCM colleges and universities, there is a lack of talent cultivation scheme formulated by correct guidance concept. There is a certain increase in the proportion of general education in form, however, general education and professional education still are independent, without being integrated together. Many students think that only they learn well their major can they find a better job. They believe that professional education is the only important support for future life, not general education which cannot bring benefits for their employment. The deviation in students' recognition of general education causes their faded focus on general education, further causing the less proportion of general education in college curriculum setting. Thus, the quality of education is worrying.

3.2 The lack of teaching resources and low quality of general education

In terms of education, only insufficient teaching resources can efficiently complete the teaching task. On the one hand, the strength of teaching staff in general education is weak. Currently, the infrastructure of general education including high-quality teaching staff, curriculum design and teaching equipment in TCM colleges and universities is lack. Due to people's misunderstanding of generation education, in distributing teaching staff, high-quality resources naturally tend to be distributed to professional education. Teachers in general education is less in quantity and lower in quality than professional education. Professional education pays more attention to teachers' professional ability, whereas, general education put more emphasis on teachers' comprehensive quality, which directly decides the quality of curriculum in general education. For instance, when instructing classics such as *The Internal Canon of Medicine* and *Treatise of Febrile Diseases*, teachers with insufficient comprehensive quality cannot explain them deeply, and students cannot feel the cultural deposits in classics, and it is more difficult for them to understand and inherit extensive and profound connotations of classic works. At present, there is a lack of teachers with higher comprehensive quality in general education. On the other hand, general education falls behind professional education in curriculum design and teaching equipment. In curriculum design, due to more emphasis on major, the class time for general education is far less than time for professional education. Students do not have enough time to think and absorb the contents of general education systematically and deeply.

4. Paths to optimize general education in TCM higher education

4.1 To establish correct educational concept

Nowadays, people have higher requirements for healthy, and the demand for professional talents in traditional Chinese medicine is increasing, which leads that some people increase the proportional of professional education in a utilitarian way. However, TCM colleges and universities are not training class for professional skills, but a place to integrate students' lifetime development through the entire process of education. Therefore, it is necessary to establish correct educational concept and promote it to be rooted in people's mind, so as to improve people's educational recognition and lead higher education to a normal and reasonable development path. At present, impacted by original educational ideology and social environment, there is a certain deviation in the recognition of general education. In order to solve this problem, correct concept shall be established from two aspects. Firstly, to correct students' deep-rooted prejudice on general education and eliminate students' concept that professional education is first, so that they can realize general education is an important means for the cultivation of basic ability and comprehensive development;

secondly, to create the consensus that general education is an indispensable component of people's comprehensive development on campus and even in the society, so as to involve students in general learning and form a good campus atmosphere.

The promotion of general education is not to suppress professional education. Whether it is professional education or general education, it should not be the only strongest status but a balanced development. Professional education and general education should influence each other, enhance each other and integrate with each other, which is an in-depth thinking and long-term planning for the future of education. The goal of colleges and universities is to improve the overall quality and professional ability of students. This is the goal of professional education, the goal of general education, and the goal of university education. The education of TCM colleges and universities is to "find out a path to inherit ideology and method to cultivate people, infiltrating and supporting the goal of professional education". [2] In other words, under the background of inheritance and development, it is required to balance the development of general education and professional education, and to strengthen the in-depth integration of general education and professional education so as to promote the progress of students' comprehensive quality in TCM colleges and universities.

4.2 To optimize the mode of general education and strengthen the teaching staff

The education mode of TCM higher education is the basic structure of education activities established under the guidance of Chinese traditional medicine education, which is the specific reflection of cultivation objective and development trend of education. In establishing education mode and curriculum system, TCM colleges and universities shall combine their own characteristics and cultivation objective to ensure the quantity and quality of general education courses. In order to train talents of traditional Chinese medicine, general education shall be endowed with the function of training talents to inherit traditional Chinese medicine, with Chinese traditional culture as the center, appropriately combined with other human sciences and natural sciences, to indicate the uniqueness of general education of traditional Chinese medicine education. Courses of TCM general education must be related and integrated with professional courses, fully considering that general education is the deepening and expansion of professional education. For example, general course such as ancient literature, philosophical methods and humanistic care are important for cultivating students of TCM. The examination of general education courses should avoid being proceduring, but pragmatic, to guide students to deeply think and study the problems, and cultivate students' ability to analyze problems and solve problems. It shall be carried out specifically from two aspects. Firstly, curriculum system shall be optimized. TCM colleges and universities can simultaneously set curriculum as the core curriculum and general curriculum according to their professional conditions. Some courses closely related to traditional Chinese medicine should be set as core courses for intensive reading, and the remaining courses can be set as general courses. This will prevent students from being bored because of the many courses, but also can highlight key points and ensure the quality of general education. Secondly, teaching modes shall be enriched. In the era with rapid development of informationization and network, even if traditional Chinese medicine is an ancient subject, it must be integrated into the convenience brought by Internet. This requires teachers to apply the latest teaching equipment and adopt innovative teaching forms to present an ancient subject to everyone with strong interestingness.

5. Conclusion

Teachers of general education in TCM colleges and universities shall be professional in professional knowledge and spirits and extensive in other knowledge related to traditional Chinese medicine to integrate professional knowledge and other relevant knowledge. The corresponding reward and punishment mechanism shall be established to inspire the enthusiasm and initiative of teachers and students, so as to promote the cultivation of qualified talents in traditional Chinese medicine.

Acknowledgements

Fund project: The work is the higher education research project of Jilin Association for Higher Education in 2018. Project Name: Research on Problems and Measures of General Education in TCM Colleges and Universities in the Construction of “Double First-rate”. Project No.: JGJX2018D125.

References

- [1] Huang Kunjin. General Education of American Universities –The Climbing of the American Mind [M]. Beijing: Peking University Press, 2006.
- [2] Wang Defeng. General Education and Cultural Consciousness of Chinese Universities [N]. Wenweipo, 2009. 1, 10.