

Research on Extracurricular Activities of College Students Under the Perspective of Ideological and Political Education

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Abstract:

Under the background of the new era of higher education development in our country and the changes in the global political and economic landscape, ideological and political education has undertaken unprecedented tasks and is an important educational field for adhering to the socialist educational direction. Since the late 1980s, college students' extracurricular activities have entered the stage of higher education. After more than 30 years of development, it has become an educational means that integrates various functions such as ideological and political education, campus cultural inheritance, comprehensive quality training, and student management. With the development of the theory and discipline of ideological and political education, the role and significance of college students' extracurricular activities as an important approach to ideological and political education are increasingly clear. This article elaborates on the relevant concepts of student behavior in extracurricular activities, analyzes the generation and development of student behavior in extracurricular activities, and summarizes the ideological and political education guidance based on extracurricular behavior. This provides a theoretical basis for the innovation, implementation of reforms, and the cultivation of more qualified successors in ideological and political education in the new situation, and is also of great significance for enhancing the effectiveness of talent training and the basic model theory.

Keywords:

Ideological and Political Education; College Students' Extracurricular Activities, Behavior Research

1. Introduction

After years of unremitting efforts, the superiority of the extracurricular activities in the talent cultivation of universities has become increasingly prominent. It not only provides a good platform for broadening the horizons and enhancing the abilities of college students, but also offers them practical opportunities for the sound development of their personalities, thus becoming the fundamental prerequisite for

building a comprehensive education system. The relevant policy documents of ideological and political education in the new era have already incorporated extracurricular activities into the daily education and teaching system, which fully demonstrates the recognition of its educational value at both the university and national levels, and considers it as an important educational and teaching component in the cultivation of talents in higher education institutions [1]. Therefore, the macro background of this kind presents a profound contemporary issue on how to enhance the value of extracurricular activities for contemporary university students and how to help students grow and develop more effectively, which requires in-depth research. In order to meet the needs of the growth and development of college students, it is crucial for the extracurricular activities in universities to play a positive role in line with ideological and political education. The most urgent task at present is to reform the talent cultivation system, further clarify the importance of extracurricular activities, plan related activities, enhance systematic and standardized management, and strive to develop it into a basic approach for cultivating innovative talents. In the process of talent cultivation, universities should consider extracurricular activities as an integral part, not only as an extension and sublimation of the formal curriculum, but also as an effective way to cultivate talents, and more importantly, as the main force in carrying out quality education and enhancing students' innovation capabilities.

2. Related Concepts

“Extracurricular activities” and “student behavior” have been widely studied in various academic fields from different perspectives. Student behavior is a direct result of education, whether it is focused on knowledge and skills or on comprehensive abilities, it will have an impact on student behavior. In order to focus on the content of this study, and enhance the pertinence and effectiveness of the research, this study will focus on the extracurricular activities of students from the perspective of evaluating ideological and political education. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify several key concepts.

2.1. *College extracurricular activities*

The concept of the classroom originated from the reform of the workshop-style education model for individual teaching in ancient times proposed by the Czech educator Johann Amos Comenius (1592-1670). He advocated for the education model of academic year system and class organization, the core of which is to realize one-to-many educational activities, effectively utilize teacher resources, enable students to obtain systematic education, and establish a grade system based on students' learning outcomes and intellectual factors. Subsequently, with the development of capitalist production, the concept of the first classroom gradually became clear, characterized by standardization and specialization [2]. Combining current domestic and international research on the second classroom, it can be seen that there are different emphases and differences in the concept and connotation of the second classroom, as well as commonalities. In general, the main conceptual basis of the second classroom includes the following points: First, the teaching content and plans of the second classroom are not included in the university teaching plan or professional education. This forms the basis for the flexible arrangement of educational content, time, and form of the second classroom, and also implies the educational status of the second classroom. Second, the second classroom is a planned and organized educational activity. Third, it emphasizes that the value of the second classroom education is

“meaningful”, “purposeful”, “healthy and beneficial”, and so on.

In a broad sense, the concept refers to all environments and activities outside the first classroom that influence the ideological and political qualities of students. The changes and expansions in the form, operation, and positioning of the second classroom have comprehensively entered the talent training teaching plan system, and practical education is no longer a characteristic feature outside the traditional teaching plan. In particular, the content of practical education is rich and is an important means of talent training [3]. When studying the second classroom from the perspective of ideological and political education evaluation, its concept cannot be generalized to all practical education of students during their time in university, in order to focus and guide ideological and political education work and student evaluation.

2.2. Extracurricular Student Behavior

The extracurricular behavior of students is a response to the ideological and political education, “thought and behavior”, “internalization and externalization” are the fundamental issues of the research of ideological and political education as the object and result of ideological and political education. Ideological and political education emphasizes the correspondence between thought and behavior, and behavior is the result of thought guidance, including thinking behavior, moral behavior, ethical behavior, habitual behavior, etc. The extracurricular activities are a form and means of ideological and political education, and the ultimate result is the externalization of students’ ideological qualities, which is the result of other forms of education, including the knowledge and skill education of the first classroom. However, in the theoretical research of extracurricular activities, as educational research, the meaning of extracurricular behavior is not the direct result of extracurricular education, but should pay more attention to the behavior in extracurricular education, that is, the need to distinguish between learning behavior and result behavior, the two cannot be treated equally. Extracurricular education is different from the first classroom, and its learning behavior is rich and characteristic [4]. The learning behavior of the first classroom focuses more on the cognitive and acquisition levels, which is the improvement of thought and cognition, while the learning behavior of the second classroom focuses more on the behavioral and practical levels, which is the improvement of the material movement level. The learning behavior of the second classroom itself has the characteristics of personal response to the situation, is the externalization of thought, and at the same time, the learning behavior reinforces, enhances, weakens the counteraction and thought consciousness.

Ideological and political education is an educational activity, and the behavior of students in extracurricular education is the result of education. The study of behavior can adopt an experimental and controlled “stimulus-response” model, which is closer to the research paradigm of behaviorist psychology, where education is the stimulus and behavior is the response. At the same time, the research on the occurrence of learning behavior points out that simple “process-result” research tends to overlook the influence of the consciousness of the behavioral subject, only focusing on the students’ behavioral model, forming a mechanical behavior theory. Therefore, the study of student behavior in the second classroom should pay more attention to the fundamental purpose of behavioral science, that is, to solve the contradiction between individual needs and social development, to treat education, behavior, and development as a systematic study, and to focus on the impact and relationship of

behavior on students' growth and development. Only by placing the educational process and behavioral results in the contradiction movement between the individual and society can we improve the effectiveness of ideological and political education and the guiding significance of the behavioral model.

3. The Generation and Development of Extracurricular Student Behavior

The extracurricular activities are the carrier of ideological and political education, and behavior is one of the results of education, as well as the process of education. It is also a learning behavior of students, and learning is a broad concept, not just to understand more knowledge, but to guide one's behavior on the premise of cognition. Learning is the change of behavior. The generation and development mechanism of students' behavior in extracurricular activities is the basis for understanding this basic human activity at the micro level. The factors that influence the process of behavior generation and development, and what they influence, are the basic operating rules of behavior. The learning behavior of extracurricular activities is not only the relationship between education and being educated, but also the practical activities of students towards themselves and the environment. Therefore, this rule is not equivalent to the behavior mechanism of psychology, nor is it equivalent to the input-output process of education. It requires a combination of theories and practices of various disciplines for understanding.

3.1. Mechanism of Behavior Generation and Development

The mechanism of behavior generation and development refers to the internal transformation process of student behavior in extracurricular activities, which is the systematic way in which behavior changes from one state to another. Behavior is divided into individual behavior and group behavior. The mechanism of individual behavior in extracurricular activities can be divided into psychological and physiological mechanisms. From a psychological perspective, behavior is driven by external stimuli and internal needs, but the process of behavior generation is not a mechanical change of "stimulus-response" pattern, but a cycle of occurrence from external to internal and then from internal to external. External mechanisms refer to the relationship between students and the information provided by extracurricular education, which can be divided into three levels: vague, perceptual, and creative. Student behavior in extracurricular activities is the external manifestation of the continuous cycle between internal and external mechanisms in the information obtained from extracurricular education [5].

In extracurricular education, external information is the knowledge and experience transmitted and instilled in the form of ideological and political education. From this process, it can be seen that behavior is not only the result of cognitive balance and innovation, but also the intermediary between the new state of student ideological quality and external information. It is worth noting that in the mechanism of behavior generation and development, whether it is Piaget's theory of development or the theory of needs in psychology, the concept of motivation is not specifically mentioned. So, is motivation a factor in the study of the mechanism of behavior generation and development? Motivation refers to the idea that drives people to engage in certain behaviors, indicating that motivation is a psychological process. From a psychological perspective, it is a need. The humanistic psychology theory, mainly founded by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, has wide applications in various fields. From a

cognitive perspective, human needs originate from cognitive development and change, so fundamentally, needs are consistent with the three processes in the mechanism.

3.2. Factors Influencing Behavior

The mechanism of behavior development shows that the factors influencing behavior come from external information and the individual's cognitive structure. In the development of extracurricular student behavior, this is manifested in the following aspects:

(1) Students' knowledge structure and thinking methods

Unlike other forms of education, the object of ideological and political education is also the subject of education. On the one hand, only when the educated actively participate in ideological activities can they be "educated." On the other hand, the contradictory movement of thought in the process of education is the fundamental guarantee for the implementation of ideological and political education. If the relationship between students and ideological and political education only remains in a vague or perceptual state, ideological and political education cannot achieve its internalization and externalization effects [6]. Therefore, whether extracurricular student behavior is generated depends not only on the "teaching" of ideological and political education, but also on the "learning" of the students. Specifically, it can be summarized that students' knowledge structure and thinking ability are the direct internal factors that affect extracurricular behavior.

(2) Extracurricular curriculum and teaching methods

As a curriculum education, the subject, object, and relationship of teaching have a significant impact on the behavior of students. The influence of the curriculum includes aspects such as content, methods, and physical conditions. The curriculum content can be divided into two categories: students' ideological and political qualities and comprehensive abilities. The principles of ideological and political education point out that the content of ideological and political education should apply systemic thinking, adhere to the integrity, coordination, and hierarchy of the content, so as to achieve the education of students not by mechanically adding various contents, but by reconstructing the cognition of students to form a thought system with individual characteristics, and achieve the result of internalization and externalization. Ideological and political education methods refer to the methods and means used by the educational subject in the process of carrying out ideological and political education. The methods and means have an equally important impact on the degree of student information acceptance. A large amount of practice has shown that even when facing the same group of students, if different methods and means are used, different teaching effects will be produced, which is an important content of educational research. The main methods of ideological and political education include theoretical education, practical exercise, exemplary demonstration, self-education, comparative discrimination, and counseling [7]. In the educational practice of extracurricular activities, some educational methods can be clearly reflected in the form of extracurricular courses, while others are integrated into various methods, but all have a significant educational influence. The content, methods, physical conditions, and the knowledge mastered by the students mutually influence each other, all of which will have an important impact on the development of extracurricular educational activities and become key factors.

(3) Management and evaluation mechanism of extracurricular activities

The management and evaluation of extracurricular activities refer to the application of supervisory information exchange and result feedback in the educational process of extracurricular activities. The management of extracurricular activities mainly includes guiding, organizing, supervising, and assessing students' participation in extracurricular courses, while evaluation mainly includes behavior evaluation, evaluation of educational outcomes, evaluation of ability development, and the application of evaluation in students' daily management. Under the state of perception, this information easily forms the direct psychological needs of students' behavior and generates behavioral motivation. Management information generally generates motivation to satisfy students' needs for respect, achieving the purpose of behavior correction; evaluation information satisfies students' needs for value realization, achieving the purpose of behavioral motivation [8]. The influence of management and evaluation on student behavior is essentially the use of the principle of behavioral reinforcement. The so-called behavioral reinforcement is the process of strengthening the immediate results that follow a behavior. When a behavior is reinforced, it is more likely to occur again in the future. This is an analysis of the development of behavior from a different perspective than subject factors such as course information and one's own foundation. Although behavioral reinforcement emphasizes the operating mechanism of behavior itself, it is indeed an important factor that influences student behavior, not just a response to stimuli, but a natural process of behavior generation.

The above three factors are the direct factors influencing student behavior in extracurricular activities analyzed from the perspective of the theory of behavior generation and development. From other disciplinary perspectives, there may be other conclusions, such as family background, teacher quality, social environment, economic conditions, and so on. However, regardless of the perspective, behavior is produced and developed in the cyclic development of students' cognitive restructuring and adjustment. It is precisely because of the complexity and complexity of human learning and development that educators should pay more attention to the growth and development of students from the ultimate result of behavior.

4. Ideological and Political Education Guidance Based on Extracurricular Behavior

4.1. Establish the concept of "broad ideological and political education"

"Broad ideological and political education" means expanding the scope of ideological and political education, integrating it with daily educational work, student management services, and permeating every corner of teaching and life, so that educational work can be systematically carried out. First, build a huge ideological and political team through "all-staff" ideological and political education. It is necessary to promote the construction of the ideological and political education faculty as a whole. In this team, there should be not only philosophy teachers and ideological and political professional teachers, but also counselors, class teachers, as well as Communist Youth League and party and government cadres. In the process of ideological and political education in universities, counselors are the backbone and responsible for students' daily life, while guiding students in education; philosophy and ideological and political professional teachers should ensure that every knowledge point and every word spoken in the classroom have a good ideological and political education effect; Communist Youth League and party and government cadres should provide supplementary support for the development of ideological and

political education. Second, extend the education time with “full-course” ideological and political education. Ideological and political work should not be separated from education and teaching, but should accompany it. General Secretary has put forward the requirement of continuity for ideological and political education, not only to give full play to the educational function of classroom teaching, but also to permeate ideological and political education into scientific research, campus activities, and other contents. At the same time, targeted ideological and political education activities should be carried out according to the characteristics of students in different developmental periods, guiding them to achieve comprehensive and free development. Third, in the process of ideological and political education for students, classroom teaching is the main camp and main channel, and it should play a role in cultural education. With the assistance of new media and new technology, ideological and political work should be made “alive”. It can be seen that not only should the classroom be utilized well, but also all the systems in school life should be utilized.

4.2. Consolidate and strengthen the concept of innovative content to enhance the sense of achievement

First, when organizing extracurricular activities, we need to balance quantity and quality. Taking the enhancement of students’ sense of achievement as the starting point, all activities should be ensured to maintain quality. Without quality, no matter how many activities there are, they will become alienated. Students will be misled, merely pursuing the accumulation of numbers on their report cards, causing serious waste of human, financial, and material resources. However, if only quality is emphasized without ensuring quantity, the coverage of activities will be limited, leading to the elitization of education, which cannot produce good educational results. While controlling quantity and quality, adjustments need to be made to the knowledge structure of both curricular and extracurricular activities to ensure a balance between classroom and extracurricular time, allowing theory and practice to be coordinated and leveraging their strengths to form a powerful force.

Second, when organizing extracurricular activities, more effort and resources should be directed towards practical and innovation-oriented activities. Extensive practice has shown that students are most willing to choose social practice projects during extracurricular activities. However, students’ enthusiasm for participation is not high, resulting in poor activity outcomes and difficulty in promoting student development. Higher education institutions realize that in cultivating students, they need to demonstrate their own characteristics. In addition to focusing on the effectiveness of other modules, they also need to cultivate students’ innovation and practical awareness. This enables students to closely connect their personal development with the national interest and the future of the nation before formally entering society, achieving the unity of personal and social values, allowing them to deeply perceive the close connection between personal growth and the future of the motherland, and to form a sense of achievement. Only by truly meeting the needs of students can ideological and political education produce the intended results, enabling students to truly understand the content of ideological and political education and apply ideological and political theory in practice.

4.3. Innovative Concept of Strengthening Synchronous Information Technology

First, enhance teachers’ level of information-based teaching. In the process of carrying out ideological and political education work, teachers are the key figures. By

enhancing teachers' proactive and creative consciousness, the effectiveness of ideological and political education can be guaranteed. The Ministry of Education has put forward specific requirements for the improvement of teachers' Internet teaching skills: it is necessary to simultaneously make good use of various advanced information technologies, including online platforms, self-media, etc., and encourage teachers to apply new technological means to teaching practices, and promptly share high-quality teaching resources with colleagues. For ideological and political education workers, it is not enough to carry out work using traditional methods; instead, they should boldly explore new methods and new forms to comprehensively enhance the educational effectiveness.

Second, enrich the online ideological and political education teaching resources. Currently, college students are ideologically advanced. If only traditional ideological and political education methods are used to carry out extracurricular activities, it is difficult to gain their recognition. This requires ideological and political education workers to enrich online teaching resources in various ways as a prerequisite to improve the quality of ideological and political education. Firstly, it is necessary to enhance the inclusiveness of Internet teaching resources. Teachers should not only give full play to the advantages of traditional ideological and political education, allowing students to master more theoretical knowledge, but also select more high-quality ideological and political education resources from Internet platforms. Under the guidance of scientific theories and based on teaching materials, select teaching resources that are close to students' lives and reflect social hotspots. By applying these resources to extracurricular activities, it can not only enrich the ideological and political education curriculum system but also facilitate the smooth implementation of ideological and political education.

Third, construct a mixed online and offline teaching method based on the "extracurricular activities". Under the background of "Internet +" and the intertwining and collision of new media technologies with the context of higher education ideological and political education, this provides favorable conditions for the innovation of the organizational forms of ideological and political education in higher education institutions, and can also make ideological and political education have a more powerful impact. In recent years, major universities have carried out beneficial explorations in this regard, and academic research in this area has become increasingly profound. This article suggests utilizing traditional ideological and political education advantages while applying new media technologies, namely a mixed teaching mode. In this mode, students are encouraged to choose courses freely, and teaching tasks can also be arranged according to the teachers' expertise.

5. Conclusions

The extracurricular activities of students are diverse and complex, which has been one of the reasons why it was difficult for people to engage in the evaluation and research of ideological and political education in the past. In today's highly developed information technology era, it not only provides us with the basis and data to study this complex phenomenon, but also offers us ideas and analytical methods. This meets the current societal demand and expectations for a scientific, data-driven, and explicit thinking approach to argumentation. Consequently, it has brought the study of ideological and political education into the common approaches and methods of educational and sociological research. The second classroom is an important carrier for the comprehensive quality cultivation of college students, and how to harness its

role in curriculum teaching, entrepreneurial practice, and comprehensive quality cultivation has always been a focal point of research both domestically and internationally. In the later stages of research, it is also necessary to continue to increase the attention and research efforts in the areas of ideological and political education in the second classroom, as well as in the behavior of students in the second classroom.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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