
Inheritance and Innovation of Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture in Higher Vocational Education

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Abstract: This paper systematically explores the inheritance and innovation of excellent traditional Chinese culture in higher vocational education. By elaborating on its unique value in cultural education, comprehensive quality training, and professional spirit shaping, it clarifies core contents such as craftsman spirit, classic works, and traditional virtues. Focusing on curriculum integration, teaching methods, practical carriers, and campus culture construction, specific integration paths and innovative practice strategies are proposed. A guarantee mechanism is constructed from the dimensions of teachers, resources, and evaluation to promote the in-depth integration of traditional culture and technical education, providing theoretical support and a practical framework for cultivating high-quality technical talents with both humanistic literacy and exquisite skills.

Keywords: excellent traditional Chinese culture; higher vocational education; cultural inheritance; craftsman spirit; curriculum integration

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1. Introduction

Excellent traditional Chinese culture is the spiritual lifeblood of the Chinese nation. Its organic integration into the modern higher vocational education system is a strategic choice to meet the needs of the times and improve the quality of talent cultivation. Currently, cultivating high-quality technical and skilled talents requires not only solid professional capabilities but also profound humanistic heritage, sound professional literacy, and innovative abilities^[1]. The craftsman spirit, ethical wisdom, and moral norms contained in traditional culture provide unique and rich educational resources for higher vocational education. Exploring how to effectively inherit and innovate these contents in higher vocational education is of crucial practical significance for deepening the connotation of vocational education, promoting the all-round development of students, and consolidating cultural confidence.

2. The value of inheriting traditional culture in higher vocational education

2.1. The unique function of cultural education

Excellent traditional Chinese culture encompasses profound philosophical wisdom, moral norms, and aesthetic pursuits,

which bring a more hierarchical value orientation to higher vocational education than mere skill teaching. Its educational function is reflected in imperceptible infiltration, helping students establish correct outlooks on the world, life, and values, and making up for the potential instrumental rationality bias in technical education. Traditional culture guides students to understand the humanistic connotation and social significance of technology, enabling them to recognize the cultural spirit and ethical responsibilities behind craftsmanship^[2]. This value-shaping process can effectively enhance students' family and country feelings and cultural confidence, integrating their personal career development with social needs, thereby developing into modern technical talents with profound cultural heritage and social responsibility, achieving a leap from "tool men" to "all-round developed individuals".

2.2. The cultivation of students' comprehensive quality

Integrating traditional culture into higher vocational education is crucial for promoting the coordinated development of students' knowledge, abilities, and literacy. In terms of knowledge, studying humanistic classics can broaden students' cognitive horizons, break professional barriers, and establish an interdisciplinary knowledge system. In terms of abilities, traditional culture contains systematic thinking, dialectical wisdom, and innovative concepts, which help strengthen students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and lifelong learning abilities. In terms of literacy, traditional virtues and etiquette education are conducive to shaping students' moral sentiments, improving their personalities, and enhancing their interpersonal skills. The formation of such comprehensive qualities enables higher vocational students to not only master the exquisite skills required by their positions but also possess the core soft power to cope with social changes and achieve lifelong development, thus becoming high-quality laborers with both virtue and talent.

2.3. Shaping the professional spirit of technical talents

Traditional culture, with its rich humanistic heritage, is a precious asset for nurturing modern professional spirit. The craftsman spirit, which advocates meticulous craftsmanship, attention to detail, and continuous self-transcendence, originates from the ancient tradition of advocating craftsmanship and can promote students to develop rigorous, focused, and persistent professional qualities^[3]. Technical ethics, drawing on the essence of concepts such as "harmony between humans and nature", "governing technology with Dao", and "pragmatism" from traditional culture, provides students with value references for addressing ethical dilemmas such as efficiency and fairness, interests and responsibilities in the application of technology. Fine traditional virtues such as integrity, dedication, diligence, and cooperation can be directly transformed into modern professional norms such as dedication to work, emphasis on quality, and teamwork. Inheriting these core connotations can lay a solid foundation for students' professional ethics and shape a professional image with both superb skills and noble conduct.

3. The content and selection of traditional culture inheritance

3.1. Craftsman spirit and technical ethics

In the context of higher vocational education, craftsman spirit and technical ethics are key components where traditional culture aligns with modern professional needs. The craftsman spirit is not merely about exquisite skills but more about the value orientation of "unity of Dao and skill", that is, the unremitting pursuit of excellent product quality and the highest level of craftsmanship, which can inspire students to form lofty professional aspirations^[4]. Technical ethics must draw on ideological essence from traditional culture, such as "harmony between humans and nature", "governing technology with Dao", and "pragmatism", encouraging students to reflect on the boundaries of technological development and the impact of their actions on nature and society, thereby shaping a prudent and responsible technical attitude. During education, it is necessary to focus on extracting timeless and universally applicable principles and further transform them into specific, feasible, and evaluable professional codes of conduct, enabling students to establish correct technical cognition while learning skills.

3.2. Classic works and humanistic literacy

Classic works contain the basic cultural genes and thinking modes of the Chinese nation, and they are key materials for improving students' humanistic literacy. When selecting content, attention should be paid to meeting the cognitive characteristics and professional backgrounds of higher vocational students, achieving "extracting essence and applying extensively". We can select the ancient scientific and technological wisdom and systematic thinking reflected in Kaogong Ji (Records of Examination of Craftsmen) and Tiangong Kaiwu (Exploitation of the Works of Nature); study the maxims on self-cultivation, aspiration, and dealing with others in The Analects of Confucius and Mencius; and appreciate poetry, songs, and traditional art to cultivate aesthetic sentiment. The focus is not on rote memorization but on guiding students to understand the humanistic spirit, thinking methods, and timeless wisdom contained therein, thereby enabling students to gain a sense of historical depth and cultural resonance in the process of technical learning, and improving their overall cultural taste and spiritual level.

3.3. Traditional virtues and professional norms

Traditional virtues are the key foundation for shaping modern professional personalities and codes of conduct. Virtues such as benevolence, integrity, justice, harmony, dedication, and diligence have timeless value. In higher vocational education, these virtues need to be innovatively transformed and interpreted, connecting them with specific professional environments and job requirements. Integrate "integrity" into quality awareness and contractual spirit, embody "dedication" as concentration and commitment in the workplace, and elevate "harmony" into teamwork and communication skills^[5]. Through systematic sorting and vivid interpretation, traditional virtues are no longer empty preaching but become specific professional standards that students can perceive and imitate, thereby providing a solid moral guarantee for their career development.

4. Innovative paths of integration into professional teaching

4.1. Integrated design of curriculum system

To achieve the in-depth integration of traditional culture and professional teaching, systematic and structured planning should be carried out from the top-level design of the curriculum system. In the public basic course module, compulsory or elective courses such as "Introduction to Chinese Craftsman Spirit" and "Scientific and Technological Ethics and Traditional Wisdom" can be set up to form a general cultural foundation. In professional courses, it is necessary to deeply explore the historical and cultural clues contained in each major (group) as well as their philosophical concepts, technical ethics, and aesthetic characteristics, and establish professional core courses or teaching units that incorporate traditional cultural elements^[6]. For example, integrate ancient engineering wisdom and systematic concepts into engineering and technical majors, and incorporate traditional business ethics and integrity culture into business and finance majors. The purpose is to break the boundary between cultural courses and professional courses, creating a new curriculum pattern of "cultural guidance, professional support, and mutual integration".

4.2. Innovative application of teaching methods

Innovation in teaching methods is crucial to ensuring the integration effect. Instead of one-way knowledge indoctrination, project-based, inquiry-based, experiential, and situational teaching should be fully adopted. For example, set project tasks based on the modern application of a certain traditional craft or technical ethical dilemmas, guiding students to understand the core of culture in the process of solving problems; use technologies such as virtual simulation and digital museums to recreate historical craftsmanship scenes and enhance immersion; hold classic text seminars and case debates to deepen the understanding of the modern value of traditional culture. Teachers should transform their role from knowledge transmitters to learning guides and communication partners, encouraging students to actively establish connections between knowledge and values through interaction, reflection, and practice, achieving in-depth internalization of cultural connotations.

4.3. Combination of carriers in practical links

Practical teaching is the most effective way to internalize the spirit of traditional culture. It is necessary to intentionally create cultural carriers in the entire process of experiments, practical training, internships, graduation projects, innovation and entrepreneurship, and other operational links. During skill training, industry masters and intangible cultural heritage inheritors can be invited to demonstrate and emphasize how “craftsmanship” is reflected in every operational detail; during on-the-job internships, add links to investigate and reflect on employees’ compliance with professional ethics and norms; in innovation and entrepreneurship projects, encourage students to explore the modern expressions of traditional cultural elements and their transformation methods to the market. It is also necessary to establish a school-enterprise cultural collaborative education platform, allowing students to experience and abide by the professional qualities and ethical norms advocated by traditional culture in real or simulated professional environments, achieving the unity of knowledge and action.

5. Innovative practices in campus culture construction

5.1. Creation of cultural environment

The material and spiritual cultural environment of the campus is crucial for exerting implicit influence on students^[7]. In terms of the material environment, careful planning is required to effectively integrate traditional cultural symbols with modern campus functions. For example, incorporate cultural imagery into the naming of buildings and roads, create thematic cultural corridors, landscape sketches, and master studios, and display industry maxims and craftsman deeds in practical training venues, making the campus space a “speaking” educational material. In terms of the spiritual environment, promote and advocate the value orientation of “respecting virtue and advocating skills, unifying knowledge and action” through the shaping of school motto, school spirit, and study style, tell traditional cultural stories through various media platforms, and convey the beauty of craftsmanship and the charm of craftsmanship, thereby forming an overall atmosphere that respects craftsmanship, values inheritance, and is full of cultural flavor.

5.2. Construction of brand activities

Building brand cultural activities with sustained influence and comprehensive participation is a key measure to enhance the vitality of cultural education. Systematic planning should be carried out to create a cultural activity atmosphere of “one school, one brand” or “one college, one brand”. Regular activities such as “Skill Culture Festival” and “Traditional Culture Activity Month” can be held, integrating skill competitions, works exhibitions, famous lectures, intangible cultural heritage interactions, classic recitations, and literary performances. In activity planning, professionalism, interest, and educational nature should be integrated, encouraging students to transform from passive viewing to active participation, and from superficial contact to in-depth understanding. Through these regular and brand-specific activities, a strong sense of cultural ritual is created, allowing students to deepen their cultural identity and leave lasting memories through personal participation.

5.3. Guidance of student associations

Student associations are the most dynamic part of campus culture and powerful supporters of the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture. Therefore, key support and guidance should be given to student associations related to cultural inheritance, such as Sinology societies, calligraphy and painting societies, traditional craft societies, opera societies, and Hanfu societies. Professional and enthusiastic instructors can be assigned to the associations, providing them with necessary activity venues and resource guarantees, encouraging the associations to independently organize learning, creation, display, social application, and voluntary service activities according to their own characteristics and current hot topics, such as setting up traditional craft workshops, organizing cultural thematic social investigations, and carrying out community cultural services^[8]. Through the operation of the associations and the independent organization of various

activities, students' enthusiasm and creativity are mobilized, achieving the multiplier effect of peer education and cultural communication.

6. Guarantee mechanisms and future outlook

6.1. Construction of teachers' team

Teachers are the key implementers of integrating traditional culture into education, and it is necessary to build a teachers' team with profound professional knowledge, high humanistic literacy, and excellent teaching abilities. Establish a sound regular training mechanism, and improve the understanding of traditional culture and the ability to integrate it into courses for all teachers, especially professional teachers, through thematic seminars, workshops, and cultural practice. Actively introduce or flexibly employ traditional cultural researchers, intangible cultural heritage inheritors, and industry masters as part-time teachers or guest lecturers. Moreover, form an incentive mechanism to encourage teachers to carry out relevant teaching research and reform, incorporate cultural education achievements into the teacher evaluation system, stimulate their internal motivation, and thus form a learning-oriented teachers' team that is willing and proficient in carrying out cultural inheritance education.

6.2. Construction of resource platforms

A sound resource platform is the foundation for the in-depth implementation of traditional cultural education. It is necessary to integrate various internal and external resources to form a comprehensive support system including "digital resource library + physical application platform". Establish a digital teaching resource library that collects classic works, teaching cases, audio and video clips, and virtual exhibition halls to realize the sharing of high-quality resources. Actively cooperate with cultural and museum institutions, cultural enterprises, intangible cultural heritage protection organizations, and industry enterprises to jointly build off-campus cultural practice bases, master studios, and industry-university-research collaborative platforms^[9]. Special funds should also be allocated to ensure stable financial support for curriculum development, activity organization, teacher training, and resource construction, thereby providing a reliable material support and resource framework for the innovation of traditional cultural education.

6.3. Construction of evaluation system

A scientific and reasonable evaluation system is a baton to guide and guarantee the quality and direction of traditional cultural education. The evaluation should adhere to the principle of combining process and development, and build a multi-participation and three-dimensional observation evaluation framework. For students, a comprehensive evaluation plan should be designed, incorporating cultural knowledge, value identity, and behavioral performance into the comprehensive quality evaluation, which is mutually verified with professional skill assessment. For teachers, their cultural education achievements in curriculum teaching, practical guidance, and cultural activities should be included in teaching evaluation and performance appraisal. For schools, an evaluation mechanism covering curriculum setting, activity achievements, environment creation, and resource guarantee should be established. Through evaluation feedback, the educational process is continuously optimized, forming a virtuous cycle of continuous improvement, and ensuring that the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture are implemented and achieve long-term results.

7. Conclusion

The inheritance and innovation of excellent traditional Chinese culture in higher vocational education is to inject profound humanistic spirit and value core into technical education. By forming an educational system including value guidance, content selection, path integration, practical experience, and mechanism guarantee, the in-depth integration of cultural

genes and modern professional qualities can be achieved^[10]. Looking forward to the future, higher vocational education should continuously explore innovative models that meet the needs of the times, cultivating high-quality technical talents who are proficient in craftsmanship, and possess elegant sentiments and cultural awareness. This is not only related to the connotative development of vocational education but also a strategic measure to enhance national cultural soft power and consolidate cultural confidence.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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