

Exploration of the “Ideological and Political Education + Traditional Culture” Educational Model in Dongguan Universities From the Perspective of Lingnan Culture

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Abstract: Lingnan culture, as a key part of China’s excellent traditional culture, contains rich resources for ideological and political education. Dongguan, located in the core area of Lingnan culture, benefits from the integration of Cantonese, Hakka, and maritime cultures, providing a solid cultural foundation for universities to carry out the “ideological education + traditional culture” educational practice. Based on the Marxist view of culture and the theory of the “second integration”, this study explains the value of integrating Lingnan culture into university ideological education, analyzes the current practices and existing problems in traditional culture education in Dongguan Universities, and then constructs a five-in-one educational model of “value guidance, curriculum integration, practical immersion, digital empowerment, and faculty support”, along with its implementation paths. The study shows that building this educational model from the perspective of Lingnan culture requires adhering to the Marxist view of culture, exploring the ideological elements within Lingnan culture, innovating educational methods, improving collaborative mechanisms, and achieving the organic integration of cultural inheritance and value guidance, so as to provide theoretical and practical support for cultivating new-era talents with cultural confidence and contemporary spirit.

Keywords: Lingnan Culture; Dongguan Universities; Ideological and Political Education; Traditional Culture Education; Educational Model

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1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background and Problem Statement

Against the backdrop of the “second integration”, integrating excellent traditional Chinese culture into ideological and political education in universities serves as an important pathway for fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue and enhancing college students’ cultural confidence^[1]. Lingnan culture, as a vital component of the excellent traditional Chinese culture, offers unique resources for ideological and political education in universities due to its openness, inclusiveness, pragmatism, and attentiveness. Located in the core area of the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area, Dongguan enjoys the advantage of being a convergence zone of Cantonese, Hakka, and maritime

cultures. Traditional cultural resources such as the Humen Opium Destruction, Keyuan Garden, Dongguan incense, and dragon boat racing contain rich ideological elements, laying a cultural foundation for the educational practice of “ideological education + traditional culture”^[2,3].

However, universities currently face practical challenges in integrating traditional culture into ideological and political education: collaborative mechanisms are incomplete, resulting in a noticeable disconnect between the two; The integration of content remains superficial, failing to fully reflect regional cultural characteristics; Educational carriers are limited, with insufficient application of new media technologies; And faculty competence needs improvement, as ideological education teachers lack sufficient traditional culture literacy, while traditional culture teachers lack adequate competence in ideological transformation. Therefore, exploring an educational model of “ideological education + traditional culture” with regional characteristics from the perspective of Lingnan culture has become an important issue that Dongguan Universities urgently need to address.

1.2. Research Significance

Theoretical significance. Guided by the Marxist view of culture, this study explores the intrinsic connection between Lingnan culture and ideological education, constructs a theoretical framework for the “ideological education + traditional culture” educational model, and enriches the application of the Marxist view of culture in university education, thereby providing theoretical support for implementing the “second integration” in educational practice^[2].

Practical significance. Based on the actual conditions of universities in Dongguan, this study systematically organizes Lingnan cultural resources and explores an educational model and implementation pathways with regional characteristics. It can provide useful experience and models for universities in Dongguan and the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area in carrying out traditional culture education, contributing to the development of the Humanities Bay Area.

1.3. Research Approach and Methods

This study follows the logical sequence of “theoretical interpretation—current situation analysis—model construction—pathway exploration”. First, using the Marxist view of culture and the “second integration” as the theoretical framework, it explains the value and internal logic of integrating Lingnan culture into university ideological education.

Second, through literature review and case analysis, it examines the current practices and existing problems of traditional culture education in Dongguan Universities. Third, based on this, it constructs a theoretical framework for the “ideological education + traditional culture” educational model. Finally, it proposes implementation pathways and supporting mechanisms for the model. The research methods mainly include: literature review, To systematically examine relevant works on the Marxist view of culture, Lingnan culture studies, And university ideological education; Case analysis, To conduct in-depth analysis of typical cases of traditional culture education in Dongguan Universities; And comparative study, To draw on successful experiences of cultural education from universities both in China and abroad.

2. Examination of the “Ideological Education + Traditional Culture” Educational Practice in Dongguan Universities From the Perspective of Lingnan Culture

2.1. Practical Exploration of Traditional Culture Education in Dongguan Universities

Practice of Guanxiang Culture Education at Dongguan University of Technology. The university has been dedicated to the inheritance of Guanxiang culture for over a decade and was designated as a “Guangdong Provincial Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture (Guanxiang) Heritage Base” in 2019. It has established a four-in-one educational system consisting of “courses, Student associations, Practice, And research” seven “Guanxiang Series” Zhixing courses have been offered, Cultivating more than 800 students; The Guanxiang Culture Association has 638 members, With the head being a direct disciple of a provincial-level intangible cultural heritage inheritor; Faculty–student projects have won bronze awards in the provincial competition of the “Internet + ”College Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition

for two consecutive sessions, And The Practice of Guanxiang Culture Education won the second prize in the Guangdong Provincial University Aesthetic Education Excellent Cases.

The “Guanmai Guardian Plan” at Dongguan University of Technology. Led by the School of Mechanical Engineering, the university implemented the “Guanmai Guardian Plan—Digital Campus Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritance Project”, promoting intangible cultural heritage inheritance through three driving forces: cross-college resource integration, digital technology empowerment, and youth engagement. It developed the “Guanmai Guardian” digital intangible cultural heritage H5 interactive platform, incorporating digital resources of three national-level intangible cultural heritage items—Guanxiang, Straw weaving, and dragon boat racing—to create a gamified interactive experience. The university hosted the “Guangdong 2025 University Digital Intangible Cultural Heritage Works Competition”, attracting 429 entries from more than 400 students from 57 universities. It also launched intangible cultural heritage experience courses, inviting inheritors to provide on-site instruction, reaching over 300 teachers and students in total.

Practice at Dongguan Polytechnic. Leveraging its strengths in vocational education, the university integrates intangible cultural heritage inheritance with labor education and the cultivation of craftsmanship spirit. In collaboration with the Dongguan Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center, it has established an intangible cultural heritage teaching base, inviting inheritors to serve as adjunct instructors and offering courses in intangible cultural heritage skills such as dragon boat making, Guanxiang making, and Kyle dance. Through a “learning by doing” approach, students gain insight into the charm of traditional culture while developing a spirit of continuous improvement in craftsmanship.

2.2. Examination of Problems in “Ideological Education + Traditional Culture” Education in Dongguan Universities

At present, the following underlying problems remain in the integrated education of “ideological education + traditional culture” in Dongguan Universities:

First, coordination mechanisms are superficial, and overall planning exists in name only. Traditional culture education is dispersed among departments such as the Youth League Committee, Student Affairs Office, and General Education Center, lacking substantive coordination. Ideological education courses and traditional culture courses operate independently, and the disconnect between the two has yet to be resolved. Surveys show that less than 40% of students believe their schools “value” the integration of the two^[1]. What appears as “multi-department involvement” is in fact “no department in charge”.

Second, content integration is superficial, leading to a hollowing out of regional cultural resources. The ideological elements within traditional culture are often only formally grafted, lacking deep transformation based on internal logic. Lingnan culture and local Dongguan resources such as the Humen Opium Destruction, Keyuan Garden, Guanxiang, and dragon boat racing are mostly used as “activity materials” rather than being systematically integrated into the curriculum as “educational resources”, narrowing their educational value.

Third, educational carriers rely on traditional approaches, and digital communication capabilities lag. Instruction remains largely based on classroom lectures and campus activities, with insufficient use of new communication methods such as short videos, VR, and AR. Although some universities have made digital attempts, their platform development and content production capacities remain generally weak, making it difficult to adapt to the cognitive habits and acceptance styles of students in the digital intelligence era^[8].

Fourth, there is a structural weakness in faculty competence, with insufficient capacity for transformation. Ideological education teachers lack traditional culture literacy, while traditional culture teachers lack the ability to make ideological and political transformations. This dual deficiency creates a dilemma. Systematic training mechanisms are absent, and most teachers rely on their own exploration to carry out integrated teaching^[1, 4].

Fifth, Evaluation mechanisms are lacking, resulting in the absence of incentive orientation. The outcomes of integrated education have not been incorporated into the evaluation systems for teacher teaching or student comprehensive quality assessment, leading to a situation where “effort makes no difference”, making it difficult to generate sustainable

internal motivation^[6].

3. Construction and Implementation of the “Ideological Education + Traditional Culture” Educational Model in Dongguan Universities From the Perspective of Lingnan Culture

Grounded in the theoretical perspectives of the Marxist view of culture and the “second integration”, And based on the actual problems faced by Dongguan Universities, This study constructs a five-in-one “ideological education + traditional culture” educational model encompassing “value guidance, Curriculum integration, Practical immersion, Digital intelligence empowerment, And faculty support”, And specifies implementation pathways from four aspects: curriculum, Practice, Platform, And mechanism.

3.1. Value Guidance: Guiding the Educational Direction with the Marxist View of Culture

Value guidance determines the direction of education and must run through the entire educational process.

Establishing cultural confidence as the core of education. This involves three levels of objectives: understanding, identification, and practice—guiding students to systematically understand the meaning and value of Lingnan culture; Fostering deep emotional identification with Chinese culture; And transforming cultural confidence into value pursuits and behavioral habits^[3, 7].

Implementing the “Two Innovations” principle. This involves the creative transformation and innovative development of Lingnan cultural resources, such as transforming Guanxiang making into educational content for craftsmanship spirit, using the Humen Opium Destruction as material for patriotism education, and utilizing dragon boat racing as a carrier for cultivating the spirit of perseverance^[7].

Fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue. This requires achieving the organic unity of “convincing through reason” in ideological education and “cultivating through culture” in traditional culture education, enabling students to achieve holistic development through the integration of cognition, emotion, will, and action^[6].

3.2. Curriculum Integration: Building an Integrated “Ideological Education + Lingnan Culture” Curriculum System

Curriculum serves as the main channel for education. Coordination should be advanced at three levels: ideological education courses, General education courses, And curriculum-based ideological and political education.

Integrating Lingnan cultural elements into ideological education courses. Special thematic modules on Lingnan culture can be added to courses such as “Ideological Morality and Rule of Law” and “Outline of Modern Chinese History”. Historical events such as the Humen Opium Destruction and the Revolution of 1911 can serve as core cases to illustrate the great spirit of the Chinese nation in striving for survival and rejuvenation, while values such as integrity and pragmatism in Lingnan culture can be incorporated into value education^[1, 7].

Developing university-based general education courses. Leveraging Dongguan’s local advantages, General education courses such as “Lingnan Culture and Contemporary Spirit”, “History and Culture of Dongguan”, “Introduction to Guanxiang Culture”, and “Appreciation of Lingnan Intangible Cultural Heritage” can be offered to systematically teach the origins, characteristics, and values of Lingnan culture, with emphasis on integrating theory and practice.

Advancing curriculum-based ideological and political education. Lingnan cultural resources can be explored across various disciplines. Architecture programs can incorporate Lingnan architectural aesthetics, using Keyuan Garden and the Chen Clan Ancestral Hall as case studies; Mechanical engineering programs can integrate traditional craftsmanship spirit, using Guanxiang making and dragon boat construction as materials; Arts programs can include art forms such as the Lingnan School of painting and Cantonese opera.

3.3. Practical Immersion: Building a Cultural Experience System of “Integration of Knowledge and Action”

Practice is a key link in education. With “Walking Ideological Education” as the core, a three-in-one cultural experience system is constructed, encompassing study tours, intangible cultural heritage inheritance, and volunteer services.

Developing the “Walking Ideological Education” study tour brand. Students can be organized to participate in thematic study tours to the Humen Fort, The Opium War Museum, Keyuan Garden, Nanshe Ancient Village, and technology enterprises in Songshan Lake, allowing them to connect with history, experience culture, and reflect on life through these journeys^[1].

Carrying out intangible cultural heritage inheritance practices. Themed activities such as “Our Festivals” can be organized around traditional festivals. Inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, including Guanxiang making, Dragon boat construction, and Kyle dance, can be invited to campuses to guide students in experiencing traditional skills. Student associations focused on intangible cultural heritage can be established to support students in learning and promoting intangible cultural heritage through association activities^[8].

Organizing cultural volunteer services. Students can be guided to participate in volunteer activities related to the preservation and dissemination of Lingnan culture, such as serving as volunteer docents at cultural sites like the Humen Fort and Keyuan Garden, and taking part in the documentation and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage projects. The outcomes of volunteer services can be incorporated into the comprehensive quality evaluation of students.

3.4. Digital Intelligence Empowerment: Innovating the Communication Carriers of “Lingnan Culture + Ideological Education”

Digital intelligence technology offers a new pathway for addressing the challenges of superficial integration and content disconnect, while revitalizing traditional culture.

Building digital cultural resource platforms. Digital resources of Lingnan culture can be integrated to establish platforms such as the “Lingnan Culture Digital Resource Repository” and the “Dongguan Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum”, enabling the digital preservation and sharing of cultural resources. Drawing on the experience of the “Guanmai Guardian” digital intangible cultural heritage H5 interactive platform developed by Dongguan University of Technology, interactive and gamified communication products can be developed^[8].

Creating online cultural products. To adapt to the information reception habits of university students in the digital intelligence era, online cultural products such as short videos, Micro-lectures, H5 applications, and VR applications can be created. Short video series such as “Lingnan Culture·Dongguan Stories” can be produced, VR applications like “Virtual Tour of Lingnan” can be developed, and animated works such as “The Legend of Guanxiang” can be created to disseminate Lingnan culture in ways that appeal to young audiences.

Building a new media communication matrix. Resources from platforms such as WeChat Official Accounts, Video Channels, Bilibili, Douyin, and Weibo can be integrated to form a communication structure featuring complementary content and coordinated efforts. Short video and live streaming technologies can be used to deliver content on Lingnan culture knowledge, intangible cultural heritage skill demonstrations, and cultural activities, thereby expanding the reach of communication.

3.5. Faculty Support: Cultivating a “Dual-Qualified” Team for Culture Education

The faculty team serves as a key pillar. Efforts should focus on cultivating a “dual-qualified” team of teachers proficient in both ideological education and traditional culture^[9].

Improving faculty training mechanisms. Traditional culture literacy can be incorporated into the training of ideological education teachers through specialized workshops on Lingnan culture. Likewise, the ability to conduct ideological education can be integrated into the training of traditional culture teachers to enhance their value guidance capacity^[1,4].

Building collaborative platforms for teachers. A coordination mechanism can be established among the School

of Marxism, the General Education Center, and the Schools of Literature and Art, encouraging teachers to form interdisciplinary teaching teams, jointly develop integrated courses, and engage in collective lesson preparation and teaching research^[6].

Bringing in social cultural resources. Intangible cultural heritage inheritors, cultural scholars, and experts in history and culture can be invited to serve as adjunct faculty, Establishing a long-term mechanism for inheritors to engage with universities and supporting them in offering courses, delivering lectures, and guiding student association activities.

3.6. Mechanism Support: Establishing a Long-Term Collaborative Education Mechanism

A long-term mechanism can be established from three aspects: organization, evaluation, and collaboration. Organizational leadership mechanisms can be improved by establishing an education work leading group under the leadership of the Party committee with participation from multiple departments, and by setting up a joint meeting system^[1, 5]. A diversified evaluation mechanism can be developed by incorporating educational outcomes into the assessment of secondary units, teacher teaching evaluations, and student comprehensive quality evaluation systems, combining both process and results^[6]. A university–local collaboration mechanism can be built by working with local governments, cultural institutions, and intangible cultural heritage inheritors to jointly establish practice bases, thereby opening up channels for transforming social cultural resources into university educational assets.

4. Conclusion

Based on the actual conditions of universities in Dongguan and grounded in the theoretical perspectives of the Marxist view of culture and the “second integration”, this study constructs a five-in-one “ideological education + traditional culture” educational model encompassing “value guidance, Curriculum integration, Practical immersion, Digital intelligence empowerment, And faculty support”. Relying on Lingnan cultural resources, the model achieves the embedded integration of ideological education and traditional culture through curriculum integration, promotes embodied cultural identity through “Walking Ideological Education” study tours, addresses the challenge of limited communication carriers through digital intelligence technology, fills the gap in faculty competence through the cultivation of “dual-qualified” teachers, and ensures the implementation of the model through university–local collaboration and diversified evaluation mechanisms.

The spirit of patriotism, openness and inclusiveness, pragmatism and innovation, and pluralistic integration embedded in Lingnan culture provide unique regional cultural resources for ideological education in universities. The key to transforming local cultural advantages into tangible educational outcomes lies in systematically converting cultural resources into educational resources, rather than relying on fragmented activities as mere embellishments.

Looking ahead, with the development of new technologies such as artificial intelligence and the Internet, the “ideological education + traditional culture” model should uphold the cultural core while innovating forms of expression, strengthen value guidance through technological empowerment, and continuously enhance the contemporary relevance and effectiveness of cultural education.

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