A Brief Analysis of the Organic Integration of Ideological & Political Education with Mental Health Education in Students’ Affairs Work of Vocational Colleges

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Abstract. Ideological and political education and mental health education are two important main bodies of students affairs work in vocational colleges. The organic integration of the two educational approaches via transforming the original educational concept, constructing professional teams for students affairs, expanding multiple educational approaches and motivating students’ enthusiasm for self-education can better facilitate the process of fulfilling its roles and educational objectives of vocational colleges.

Introduction
Colleges have three major functions: cultivating talents, carrying out scientific research and serving the society. Over the recent decade, with the expansion of colleges’ recruitment, the college enrollments are rising year after year. In such context, vocational colleges have witnessed rapid development.[1] The transformation of the society, speedy transmission of information and the diversity of adolescents’ personalities have jointly posed an unprecedented task to the students’ affairs work of vocational colleges. The organic integration of the two key contents of ideological & political education and mental health education will improve the efficiency of students’ affair work thus to better fulfill the roles and educational objectives of higher vocational colleges.

Relation between Ideological &Political Education and Mental Health Education
At present, a peculiar but important issue facing China’s college education is the integration of ideological & political education and mental health education. As regards to the relationship between the two, after reading a great number of materials, some researchers have summarized the three perspectives held by domestic scholars.[2]

Perspective of Supplement
This perspective considers colleges’ mental health education to be an important method and effective supplement to strengthen and improve the work of collegiate ideological & political education under the new situation. “On Further Strengthening And Improving Mental Health Education” points out that strengthening and improving collegiate mental health education remains an important measure to carry out the Party’s educational policy and promote quality-oriented education under the new situation. They remain an important approach to facilitate college students’ healthy development and training highly qualified talents as well as an important task to strengthen and improve collegiate ideological & political education.[3] Basic Construction Standard For College Students’ Mental Health Education Work of General Higher Learning Institutions(Trial) issued by the Ministry of Education 2011 points out that to strengthen and improve collegiate mental health education is to implement the core task of National Education Working Conference and National Medium and Long-term Educational Reform and Development Plan 2010-2020 under the new situation. It is an important measure to comprehensively carry out the Party’s educational guidelines and construct a
manpower country and it remains an important task to promote the reform of higher education and to strengthen and improve collegiate ideological & political education.[4]

**Perspective of Mother-Child Relationship**

The perspective holds that ideological & political education has an inclusive Mother-Child relationship, in which ideological & political education acts as the mother whereas mental health education acts as the child born by the former.[5] The other opinion assumes ideological & political education to be the child and mental health education to be the mother.[6]

**Perspective of Complement**

This perspective holds that mental health education and ideological & political education has the necessity of mutual complement and mutual integration. Take the example of Ma Jianqing. Through *The Analysis Of The Three Factors Of The Forming And Intervention Of College Students’ Mental Crisis*, he concluded that mental health education and ideological & political education have potential complementary relationship on an independent basis thus to fully realize the educational functions of the two.[7] He Xinghui points out ideological & political education and mental health education are parallel and overlapping, mutually complementary and interpenetrating. [8]Regardless of the differences in terms of such factors as theoretical basis, focus of work, way of education, tasks and functions, ideological & political education and mental health education are consistent in terms of educational objects, basic task and working targets. [9]Accordingly, there exists feasibility for the organic integration of the both.

**Significance of the Organic Integration of Ideological & Political Education and Mental Health Education**

The significance of organically integrating ideological & political education and mental health education of vocational colleges lies in improving efficiency of students affairs work and improving college students’ overall qualities as the country’s citizen and future constructor as well as realizing a college’s function of training and producing excellent talents for the society.

Social changes has a profound influence on the ideological and mental status of young college students, which adds extra difficulty to education and instruction. With the social and economic development, people’s living standards constantly improves while their value orientation is quietly changing. Born after the rudimentary results of reform and opening-up of China, young college students have received more favorable material conditions but have formed much dependence and inadequate independence and self-care ability during growing up. The implementation of China’s family planning policy led to higher proportion of only child in a family. They tend to be self-centered, lacking in collectivism spirit, cooperation awareness, sharing awareness and weak capability of establishing harmonious interpersonal relationship. Preschool education and primary education purely focus on students’ knowledge improvement but ignore educational mode of moral characters cultivation and personality development. Harmful information from the mass media has distorted some college students’ value outlook. Lack of social sense of responsibility along with pervasive descent of the recognition of conventional social ethics lead to the “moral slump”. [10]

In the face of new situation, in order to undertake work of college students’ ideological & political education including college students’ ideal and belief, value, patriotism, collectivism, socialism and vocational education and to undertake the work of college students’ mental health education including cognition, emotions, consciousness, personality and education for life, students affairs’ workers need to transform original educational mode and creatively carry out educational activities. Original ideological & political education and mental health education are partly overlapping in the contents adding up to the cost of education. Once organically integrated, they can be changed from the original “concurrent” to “coordinated” making them mutually supportive, interpenetrating, mirrored and complementary, which will tremendously elevate education efficiency.
The characteristics of vocational college students urge the organic integration of ideological & political education and mental health education. Compared with general college students, vocational college students tend to have lower points in their college entrance exam. They show little interest, negative attitude and inappropriate method towards study, resulting in dislike of study or even inferiority among quite a few of them. As for self-consciousness, plenty of vocational college students are unable to accurately locate themselves. They are short of objectives and short of organized plan for their future career and accordingly short of conduct restraint and inability to make full use of resources and put to use their skill advantages; diversity, abundant creativity, showmanship and dexterity feature their personalities; their value orientation tends to be more active, pragmatic, realistic and conspicuously utilitarian.[11]

General college education eyes on elite education whereas vocational college aims at training skilled, well-trained talents with professional qualities who can be suitable for jobs directly after graduation. The training objectives of vocational education are based on ability cultivation, service-oriented and guided by employment and entrepreneurship.[12] In order to realize the training objective, students’ affair work in vocational colleges needs to pointedly and strategically carry out effective and organic integration of ideological & political education and mental health education adhering to the features of the students.

Ways to Organically Integrate Ideological & Political Education and Mental Health Education

Transforming Original Educational Concept

In the previous students’ affairs work of vocational colleges, ideological & political education and mental health education are relatively independent. Over the recent years, domestic scholars and students’ affairs workers in vocational colleges are paying increasing attention to the integration of them and starting to explore the necessity, feasibility and measures of their integration. Managers in vocational colleges should comply with the development trend, fully realize the significance of their integration, transform the original educational concept, integrate curriculum resources, and reduce education cost to provide needed policy support and inclination for the integration of ideological & political education and mental health education. It is to make the integration happen rather than make it stay with mere level of discussion.

Building Up Professional Teams of Students’ Affairs Work

Instructors and students’ affairs workers in vocational colleges play multiple roles of commander, combatant, firefighter, and temporary parent. The work itself manifests the organic integration of ideological & political education and mental health education. Students’ affairs workers are almost at all times applying psychological interventions to implement ideological & political education and mental health education.

Besides being taught in the classroom by teachers, most of students’ ideological & political education and mental health education have been undertaken by students’ affairs workers. At times students are more widely and profoundly influenced by teachers’ unconscious instruction than classroom teaching. Personalized ideological & political education and mental health education exerts more far-reaching influence.

Accordingly, it is necessary to build up a team of students’ affairs work who have solid theoretical base, high-level political qualities and proficient communication approaches. Regular training should be carried out to the team for the purpose of strengthening existing qualities, constantly optimizing their knowledge, upgrading the content and skills of ideological & political education and mental health education work as well as developing their strong sense of responsibility and sense of mission. Students’ affairs workers should be encouraged to improve academic level whereas financial support should be granted to those who sign up for related registered qualification certificates examinations such as Psychological Counseling Qualification Certificate. The team’s professionalism level needs to be lifted progressively aiming for making the organic integration of ideological & political
education and mental health education in vocational colleges become the trailblazer and backbone.

**Exploring Multiple Educational Channels**

Conventional channels of carrying out ideological & political education and mental health education includes classroom teaching, extracurricular activities, campus radio and posters. In addition to the full use of original methods, vocational colleges must expand new educational channels.

Upon the arrival of information epoch, Internet has been widely used in all walks of life. Young students tend to rely more on internet to pursue new knowledge, entertainment and socializing than before. Because the features of internet includes its popularity, rapid information transmission and high recognition among young students can help create an online platform for educational publicity. With the help of the new media and familiar language as well as expressive means catering to students’ psychological needs, knowledge concept, ideal and belief can be conveyed to students for better implementing the organic integration of ideological & political education and mental health education.

**Motivating Students’ Enthusiasm for Self-Education**

Robert Rosenthal Effect also known as Ygmalion Effect points out that teachers’ active expectancy of students will enable students’ academic performance to reach a higher degree. Above all, if teachers are firmly convinced that students have the capability of self-education, motivate students’ enthusiasm for self-education and offer particular help and instruction in terms of educational content and methods, students are completely capable of self-education by integrating ideological & political education and mental health education. For example, to organize advancement education among Party member students and Party activists, to organize peer psychological counselor training and consultation among backbone students so as to improve the overall qualities and influence of some excellent students. In this case they constitute the mighty reserve of carrying out educational undertakings. Young students are of similar age, share similar living and social environment, and develop quite the same level of thinking. Student Party members and backbone students can not only complete self-education, but also can imperceptibly set examples to other students so that they can fulfill the role of educating and influencing other students.

**Summary**

Jiang Zemin has ever emphasized that strengthening the organic integration of ideological & political education and mental health education is an important method and approach to promote students’ all-round development and they are an essential measure to implement quality-oriented education. Both students and students’ work have special particularities so that working mode should be innovated by all means thus to improve work effect. The organic integration of ideological & political education and mental health education will better fulfill the cultivating objective of vocational colleges.

**References**


