Research on Integration of Regional Red Culture into Ideological and Political Education Paths in Higher Vocational Colleges

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Abstract: This paper takes regional red culture as an example and applies various research methods, including literature research, survey research, and teaching practice research, to examine the importance of integrating regional red culture into the ideological and political education curriculum in higher vocational colleges. By adopting strategies such as rational inheritance, emotional resonance, atmosphere creating, platform building, and autonomous researching and learning, the study analyzes how regional red culture can be effectively integrated into the ideological and political education in higher vocational colleges, with the ultimate goal of promoting cultural confidence and nurturing individuals with a strong sense of core socialist values.

1. Introduction

General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized in the Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China the importance of carrying forward the long line of inspiring principles for the Chinese Communists that originated with the great founding spirit of the Party, putting resources related to the Party’s heritage to great use, conducting extensive public awareness activities to promote the core socialist values; enhancing commitment to patriotism, collectivism, and socialism, and fostering a new generation of young people to shoulder the mission of realizing national rejuvenation 1. Youth is considered the most active and energetic force in society, and their development is critical to the future of the nation 2. Chinese youth should love the great motherland, and the red color should remain an integral part of the national identity 3. At the national level, it is necessary to consolidate the Communist Party as the long-term governing party and cultivate influential builders, creators, and inheritors of the Chinese Dream of great national rejuvenation. At the university level, institutions can leverage their unique characteristics to develop and use red cultural resources to create teaching materials, enriching the content of ideological and political education in colleges and universities. At the student level, it is essential to enhance their ideological and moral qualities, instilling in them the importance of “loving red,” “understanding red,” “believing in red,” and “acting red.” These efforts aim to cultivate a new generation of young people who are the hope of the nation and the future of the Chinese people.

2. Research on the Utilization of Regional Red Cultural Resources in Universities

The value of utilizing regional red cultural resources in universities has been demonstrated by scholars, as emphasized by Yue (2021), who argues that such resources are an intrinsic requirement and medium for the reform and development of ideological and political education for young people. Red cultural resources play a critical role in guiding, motivating, and standardizing values in ideological and political education for young people. Concerning methods of incorporating regional red cultural resources into universities, some scholars suggest integrating them into the teaching reform of ideological and political courses through scientific research, classroom teaching, and practical instruction from the perspective of supply-side structural reform. The aim is to enhance the appeal of ideological and political courses, reinforce their practical education function, and achieve the dual values of promoting local culture and enhancing the effectiveness of ideological and political education in universities (Wang and Gao, 2018). Other scholars have conducted surveys and analyses of the current status of regional red cultural identity among higher vocational college students (Fan and Ou, 2021) and conducted systematic and comprehensive research on using red cultural resources for cultivating university students (Hu, 2021). However, there is limited research on the integration of regional red cultural resources into higher vocational education. Dong Lili (2019) explored the application of red cultural resources in ideological and political courses in higher
vocational colleges in Shaanxi, while Chen (2019) proposed the application of regional red cultural resources in ideological and political education in higher vocational colleges in Chongqing.

3. Current Significance of Integrating Regional Red Culture into Ideological And Political Education in Higher Vocational Colleges

3.1 Regional Red Cultural Can Solidify the Political Guidance of Ideological And Political Education in Higher Vocational Colleges

Regional red culture refers to a unique culture that was formed in China under the leadership of the Communist Party of China during the revolutionary struggle, industrial construction, and economic development on this vast and fertile land. It has undergone historical tests and the tempering of time, and it continues to play an essential guiding role in the ideological and political education work of higher vocational colleges. Regional red culture’s rich connotation and spirit align with the essence of ideological and political education in higher vocational colleges, which aims to cultivate students’ virtues. In today’s highly developed information age of the internet, various information and ideologies can impact the ideal beliefs of contemporary youth. The integration of regional red culture into the ideological and political education of higher vocational colleges can inspire students’ patriotism, instill in them the importance of inheriting the red bloodline, and encourage them to remain steadfast in their original aspirations as they move forward courageously.

3.2 Regional Red Cultural Can Enrich the Content of Ideological And Political Education in Higher Vocational Colleges

Regional red cultural resources are diverse and encompass a rich cultural heritage with significant impact. These resources can be categorized into various forms, including regional red spirit, literature, figures, stories, artifacts, history, and architecture. The integration of these resources into the ideological and political education of higher vocational colleges can greatly enrich its content. For instance, in Liaoning Province, the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army spirit, Lei Feng spirit, Daqing spirit (Iron Man spirit), and model worker spirit have emerged under specific historical conditions. These spirits are a continuation of the excellent traditional Chinese culture and embody the essence of socialist core values.[10]

3.3 Regional Red Culture Can Optimize the Methods of Ideological And Political Education in Higher Vocational Colleges

In recent years, higher vocational colleges across China have made efforts to incorporate regional red cultural resources into their ideological and political education curriculum, resulting in innovative and optimized teaching methods. Higher vocational colleges have adopted a blended approach that combines online and offline teaching methods by integrating red cultural education activities with ideological and political education and incorporating red cultural resources into theoretical courses. The curriculum is designed to integrate red culture into the learning process, from pre-class tasks to in-class discussions and from problem-solving to post-class self-study of red cultural content. This approach aims to inspire students to learn from red culture and make it an integral part of their ideological and political education.

3.4 Regional Red Culture Can Strengthen the Effectiveness of Ideological And Political Education in Higher Vocational Colleges

In his speech at the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized the need to educate and guide the entire party to uphold and carry forward the red tradition, inherit the red genes, and continue the spiritual bloodline of the Communist Party, with a revolutionary spirit of fearlessness in the struggle to embark on a new journey and make progress in the new era. [10] Active exploration of integrating regional red cultural resources into the path of ideological and political education in vocational colleges can guide the direction of ideological and political education, enrich its content, innovate and optimize its methods, and strengthen its effectiveness.[10]

4. Exploration of Solidly Promoting the Effective Paths for Integrating Regional Red Culture into Ideological And Political Education in Higher Vocational Colleges

When conducting ideological education for students, higher vocational colleges should capitalize on the abundant red cultural resources in Liaoning Province and integrate them into the teaching system of ideological and political courses, professional courses with “ideological and political content,” and campus culture. This approach can entail rational inheritance, emotional resonance, atmosphere creation, platform building, and independent research and learning, fully harnessing the functions of red culture to inspire, shape, and cultivate talents and pass down the red genes from generation to generation.
4.1 Rational Inheritance: Enhancing Theoretical Teaching through the Enrichment of Regional Red Culture

4.1.1 Integrating Regional Red Culture into Classroom Theoretical Teaching

Teachers play a pivotal role as leaders in both online and offline settings of theoretical teaching. Teachers should proactively acquire knowledge, comprehension, and research on the content of red culture and integrate red cultural content and teaching methods into the curriculum. For instance, when delivering lectures on the third chapter of Mao Zedong’s Thought and the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, which focuses on the theory of socialist transformation, teachers can incorporate a quote from Mao Zedong addressing the challenges in industrial manufacturing and use it as a segue to introduce a case study on the red story Red Silhouette and A Hundred-Year Memory: the First Domestically Produced Car “Dongfeng” in the New China from a concise excerpt. Alternatively, students can be encouraged to engage in independent exploration and learning before class, such as investigating the milestones and notable red figures during the period of industrialization in Liaoning Province. This approach aims to move beyond rote learning and allows students to immerse themselves in the red spirit of Liaoning and its distinguished figures during their autonomous learning process, thereby enhancing the efficacy of classroom theoretical teaching.

4.1.2 Promoting the Compilation of Textbooks and Courseware on Regional Red Culture

The integration of regional red cultural resources into higher vocational colleges’ ideological and political theory courses remains inadequate, mainly due to the lack of a comprehensive and unified database. Thus, there is a pressing need for relevant management departments to organize experts and scholars to integrate, summarize, refine, and construct a red cultural resource library that is suitable for use in higher vocational colleges. This initiative aims to promote the compilation of Liaoning’s red cultural textbooks.

4.1.3 Offering Elective Courses on Regional Red Culture

Regional higher vocational colleges must develop local red cultural resources courses in conjunction with the education of the histories of the Party, New China, the reform and opening-up, and socialist development across Chinese society, such as courses on regional red culture and red textbooks with regional characteristics. For instance, the courses should highlight outstanding representatives such as General Zhao Shangzhi who fought in the war against Japanese aggression, who emerged on this black land during the period of the New Democratic Revolution and formed the spirit of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army. Similarly, during the period of socialist revolution and construction, Liaoning people overcame numerous difficulties, created countless “firsts” in a challenging environment, and shouldered the responsibility of the “eldest son” as the backbone of China’s steel industry. Moreover, figures such as the helpful Lei Feng, whose spirit has subconsciously influenced generations of Chinese people despite dying at the age of 22, as well as reform pioneer Guo Mingyi, aviation hero Luo Yang, and Mao Fengmei with Dalishu Spirit. These people dedicated themselves to the cause of the country and the people during the period of reform and opening up and should be highlighted in the red cultural courses.[9]

4.1.4 Integrating the Regional Red Culture into the Construction of “Curriculum Ideology and Politics”

For example, the psychological health education course for college students aims to equip students with a proper understanding of mental health knowledge, not necessarily because students have mental health issues. “Curriculum Ideology and Politics” is an approach designed to be practical and effective. By sharing case studies of red characters with students, such as analyzing the case of Guan Xiangying, students can better understand the knowledge points related to self-awareness. This approach helps achieve the effect of educating through emotions and thoughts, a crucial aspect of ideological and political education.

4.2 Emotional Resonance: Expanding the Integration of Regional Red Culture into Practical Teaching

When organizing social practice activities for students, it is essential to consider their cognitive levels, emotional needs, and practical abilities, which will help to create socially-oriented practical activities that resonate with the students. Thus, red practical education bases and activities with distinct themes play a vital role in achieving the goals. Additionally, red culture can be integrated into professional course practical teaching to create a high-quality red culture teaching brand. These efforts will help students to understand and identify with their origin.

4.2.1 Creating Practical Education Bases

Schools should prioritize using red sites, memorial halls, and education bases for constructing practical teaching bases. Effective practical teaching activities should be carried out to enhance students’ theoretical understanding and emotional identification, thereby integrating knowledge and action. Schools should consider their educational philosophy, practical operation, and specific location in selecting the most suitable and unique practical teaching base. For instance, the Guan Xiangying Memorial Hall in Xiangying Street, Jinzhou District, Dalian City, serves as a national patriotism
education demonstration base and is an ideal choice for schools established in Dalian.

4.2.2 Organizing Practical Teaching Activities with Distinct Themes

School management should implement top-level design when organizing practical teaching activities. Concerning practical teaching bases, it is necessary to establish them and, at the same time, assist students in forming volunteer teams. These teams can use their weekends and holidays to conduct volunteer interpretation activities at museums, revolutionary memorial halls, and other related sites. A range of practical activities can be organized in terms of activity formats, such as studying and appreciating red literature, interviews with red characters, preaching red stories, tracing red artifacts, and visiting red sites. Regarding integration with future careers, it is possible to invite distinguished individuals, such as “Liaoning Good People” and “Liaoning Master Craftsman,” to give speeches in the school, bringing the spirit of model workers and craftsmen into the campus. Through the deep integration of theory and practice, students can gain a profound understanding of the connotation of red culture, achieving the effect of smooth nourishment.

4.2.3 Integrating the Regional Red Culture into Curriculum’s Practical Teaching

Taking the ideological and political theory course as an example, this course represents a combination of theoretical and practical teaching that fully considers students’ learning styles. Red resources are designed to be integrated into practical teaching based on students’ professional characteristics. Thus, the following practical teaching methods are employed. Firstly, experiential, practical teaching is organized through visits to revolutionary sites and memorial halls in Liaoning. Secondly, film and television appreciation practical teaching is implemented by screening classic films such as Guo Mingyi and The Battle at Lake Changjin. Thirdly, creative learning practical teaching combines students’ professional strengths and hobbies to create red songs, poetry, painting, calligraphy works, handicrafts, and other works. Finally, academic research practical teaching is conducted by producing videos for College Students Teaching Ideological and Political Courses, conducting party history knowledge competitions, thematic reports, book clubs, and other activities. The practical teaching methods are closely integrated with students’ real-life experiences, enabling them to learn by doing and practicing what they learn, resulting in a deeper understanding and action through this knowledge.

4.3 Atmosphere Creating: Creating Activities of Campus Red Culture from Point to Area

By integrating regional red cultural resources, a Red-Culture campus can be established in an attempt to exemplify the historical testimony of the Chinese Communist Party, never forgetting its original aspiration and fulfilling its founding mission. Consequently, the “Original Aspiration & Red Culture” can be used as a unified image for campus culture development.

4.3.1 Integrating the Regional Red Culture with Rich Connotation into Campus Cultural Activities

As a guiding, constraining, cohesive, and inspiring role for both teachers and students, good campus culture can drive students’ self-development, turn passive learning into conscious behavior, and replace external motivation with internal drive. Therefore, it is necessary to create a good atmosphere of campus red culture. Higher vocational colleges should actively carry out various activities with regional red culture as the theme. For instance, colleges can organize activities like inviting model workers and craftsmen to the campus to guide teachers and students to understand the model worker spirit and the power of craftsmen, which is a means to present the model worker spirit.

4.3.2 Integrating the Unique Regional Red Culture into Campus Environment Construction

Regional red cultural resources are nurtured during different historical periods with unique attractiveness. Higher vocational colleges can establish a Red Culture Corridor on campus with characteristics that can be divided into areas such as red spirit, red literature, red characters, red stories, red artifacts, red history, and red architecture. Different areas require different content carriers, and higher vocational colleges need to enrich the contents of each area based on current events and hot topics. In the Red Culture Corridor, the red gene can be passed down through generations, inspiring students to appreciate history, cherish the present, and create the future.

4.3.3 Integrating the Inspiring Regional Red Culture into Academic Activity Bases

Language is powerful. It is necessary to use language to inspire students’ minds with truths, reasons, morality, emotions, and techniques. We should establish academic platforms and utilize various forms, such as conferences, seminars, theoretical discussions, and themed lectures. We should also organize school-wide activities for paper writing, poetry, verse, and theme essay contest and use school publications, magazines, showcases, and bulletin boards for extensive publicity. Thus, language can be heard, seen, learned, felt, and implemented everywhere on campus.

4.4 Platform Building: Spreading And Promoting Regional Red Culture

Drawing on the unique characteristics of higher vocational colleges, we strive to adapt ourselves to the
times. To this end, we leverage the campus radio station and new media platforms to provide students with opportunities to showcase their talents and to create platforms that allow for the independent design of red cultural themes or learning platform websites based on students’ professional backgrounds.

4.4.1 Campus Radio Station Broadcasting Special Programs on Regional Red Culture

Some higher vocational colleges have introduced programs such as “Red Voice” on campus radio stations that broadcast content like red stories, movies, literature, music, creation, and social practices, [5]which has created a platform for communication and education on red culture for both teachers and students, guiding students to cultivate a love for the party, the country, the school, their families, life, and learning. Thus, it spreads positive energy and promotes the central theme.

4.4.2 Spreading Regional Red Culture through New Media Platforms

The ubiquity of the internet and mobile phones in our daily lives and studies has made them essential tools for communication and learning. Consequently, many higher vocational colleges have established their official WeChat accounts. Meanwhile, various majors have developed red cultural exchange platforms that align with their professional characteristics. Moreover, higher vocational colleges promote excavated and processed information to teachers and students through official red accounts, APPs, and other channels. For example, the website of Dalian Party Building launched the “Red Positions in Dalian” series, which featured activities such as the development of four new party members starting with the first village branch in Northeast China, the creation of the Hu’s Village with five colors of red, green, blue, golden, and orange by relying on the party branch, and a series of activities, including the Dalian Chinese Engineering Society Memorial Hall, the Guan Xiangying Memorial Hall, the Dalian Museum, the Dalian City Archives Theme Exhibition Hall, and the Dalian Martyrs Cemetery, which teachers and students gain through WeChat pushes.

4.5 Autonomous Researching And Learning: Enhancing the Ability to Learn Regional Red Culture

As autonomous individuals, college students can develop a keen interest in the regional red culture through self-study, which can foster a conducive environment of “loving red,” “understanding red,” “believing in red,” and “practicing red” on campus and in society.

4.5.1 Emphasize the “Red” Thread at All Times in Self-awareness

To reinforce the self-education awareness of regional red cultural resources, students should proactively explore the historical and contemporary contexts of these resources and develop an awareness of red culture in daily life. Students can uncover the rich cultural heritage behind Liaoning’s red spirit, regional red documents, figures, stories, artifacts, history, and architecture (ruins) and integrate these resources into their daily lives to establish a concept of cultural confidence and stimulate their patriotism.

4.5.2 Autonomously Organizing Social Welfare Activities with Red Themes

Higher vocational colleges host various student societies, including student unions, cultural and sports societies, volunteer service societies, and academic societies. For instance, academic societies may focus on studying Deng Xiaoping’s Theory and Marxist philosophy. To utilize the societies’ role in publicizing and serving society, students should organize or participate in voluntary service activities, comprehend revolutionary spirits in daily life and study, and consciously learn and inherit red culture.

4.5.3 Using New Media to Learn “Red” Culture Autonomously with Proficiency

Vocational college students can leverage various new media platforms, such as relevant WeChat official accounts, campus official accounts, and Douyin, to learn, understand, feel, and practice red culture resources. Students can share these resources in class QQ and WeChat groups, and actively participate in online learning, exchange, and discussion to enhance their ability to learn red culture autonomously. These activities can promote online activities and the inheritance of red cultural resources.

5. Conclusion

Regional red culture is one of the high-quality educational resources. It is crucial to incorporate it into vocational colleges’ ideological and political education, which can provide a guiding direction, [7] enrich the content, optimize the methods, and strengthen the education’s effectiveness. However, it requires joint efforts from schools, teachers, and students and a clear integration plan. The integration plan involves the organic combination of classroom learning and extracurricular activities, theory and practice, on-campus and off-campus activities, history and reality, and cultivation and morality. Throughout the entire process of integrating regional red cultural resources into the ideological and political education of vocational colleges, we can feel the unique charm of the red culture, and the red genes will be passed down from generation to generation.
Acknowledgments

This paper presents the outcomes of the research project entitled *Exploration of the Path of Integrating Regional Red Culture into the Ideological and Political Education of Vocational Colleges (ZK2022YB13)*, which was supported by the Dalian Vocational Technical College (Dalian Open University) in 2022.

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