

Original Paper

The Value and Path of Integrating the Spirit of New Era Educators into the Cultivation of Normal University Students

Fangfang Li¹

¹ School of Marxism, Shaanxi Normal University, Xi'an, 710119, Shaanxi, China

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Abstract

The spirit of educator embodies rich connotations and holds multiple dimensions of value for the cultivation of normal university students. At the individual level, it aligns with the inherent needs of normal university students' growth; at the university level, it implements the fundamental task of fostering morality and cultivating people; and at the societal level, it responds to the demands of building a strong education nation in the era. In the new era, promoting the spirit of educators should be based on theoretical teaching, strengthening normal university students' cognition of the spirit of educators; nourishing through campus culture, cultivating normal university students' emotions towards the spirit of educators; and using educational practice as a carrier, deepening normal university students' practice of the spirit of educators.

Keywords

The spirit of new era educator, Normal university students, Education

1. The Basic Connotation of Educator's Spirit

“Educator” refers to a professional who has excellent educational theory and rich practical experience, has created significant educational achievements or has promoted the cause of education. According to the common spiritual characteristics of educators, the educator spirit can be condensed, which “reflects the universal characteristics and fundamental rules of the educator”. Xi summarized the spirit of educators in a letter to representatives of outstanding teachers nationwide as “the ideal and belief of having a great heart and serving the country sincerely, the moral sentiment of both words and actions that the rule is person, the wisdom of educating according to their aptitude, the attitude of the attitude of diligent and innovative, the compassionate heart for teaching and dedication, the mind of the world to pursuit the grand way of cultural”. Taking this as a guide, explaining the scientific connotation of educator's spirit is conducive to further promoting it.

1.1 The Ideal and Belief of Having a Great Heart and Serving the Country Sincerely

The concept of “great self” as opposed to the “small self” refers to a mindset that prioritizes the nation, the nationality, and the people, rather than being confined to the isolated “small self” dictated by personal desires. “Having a great self in mind” means embracing a broad vision and lofty ideals, not only focusing on individual fortunes but also on the overall interests and future development of society, with thoughtful consideration and responsibility for the nation’s future. From the perspective of an educator’s spirit, this manifests as educators transcending their individual concerns to focus on the collective, thereby fostering a sense of responsibility for their educational work and a mission for the educational cause. “Sincerely serving the country” is the practical sublimation of “having a great self in mind,” signifying wholehearted service to the nation and its people with the utmost sincerity, dedicating oneself tirelessly to the prosperity of the nation and the happiness of the people regardless of personal gain or loss. This spirit, embodied by educators, reflects aspirations for personal growth within the context of national strength and ambition. Therefore, the ideal belief in “having a great self in mind and sincerely serving the country” emphasizes the close connection between individual lofty ideals and the interests of the nation and society, reflecting a harmonious unity between the individual and the nation, and society.

1.2 The Moral Sentiment of both Words and Actions that the Rule is Person

“Speech is the rule of scholars, behavior of the world” from the Southern Dynasty Song clan Liu Yiqing edited the new language of the world, “Chen Zhongju’s words as the rule of scholars”. This noble moral sentiment sets clear requirements for the majority of teachers to undertake the mission of education power construction, pointed out the direction of progress. China has always believed that “virtue” is the foundation of one’s character and the basis for success, emphasizing “cultivating oneself to the way, cultivating the way to benevolence”, “cultivating oneself to the peace of others”, “when one’s own character is upright, one will naturally act accordingly; when one’s own character is not upright, even orders will not be followed”. The pursuit of this spirit of exemplary virtue has run through the history of Chinese civilization for thousands of years without interruption, and in the new era, it remains the primary principle that educators must adhere to as role models. “The moral sentiment of both words and actions that the rule is person” not only requires the educator to have the ideological consciousness and spiritual realm of cultivating oneself and establishing virtue, but also requires the educator to have the behavior consciousness of “establishing virtue before teaching, and rectifying oneself before guiding others”, being able to influence, infect, and educate students through personal charm and conduct and actively assume the role of exemplar and guide for students in their pursuit of learning, handling affairs, and being a person.

1.3 The Wisdom of Educating According to their Aptitude

“Enlightenment” means inspiring wisdom, following the ancient principle of educating through inspiration, “not resenting, not lamenting; not enlightening, not inspiring.” “Nourishing the heart” means nourishing the soul, emphasizing humanistic care for students, and stimulating intrinsic

motivation by addressing their emotional needs. “Enlightening the intellect and nourishing the heart” emphasizes the all-round development of the individual, which is in accord with the educational policy of moral, intellectual, physical, American and labor, and reveals the goal principle and value purview of education. “Teaching students according to their aptitude” means that teachers should start from the actual situation of students and individual differences, and carry out differentiated teaching in a targeted way, so that each student can develop their strengths and avoid their weaknesses, so as to obtain the best development. This educational concept is the ideological essence running through the Analects of Confucius, which is reflected in the fact that Confucius can give targeted instructions and guidance to the same issues such as “asking politics”, “asking etiquette” and “asking benevolence” based on the personality and characteristics of various students. This kind of education wisdom “prompts teachers to always keep the true meaning of education and teaching and the reality of students’ development to understand and grasp, so that they can maintain a transcendent attitude of pursuing wisdom in higher education practice”, and achieve the educational goal of enlightening the mind through the educational method of teaching students according to their aptitude.

1.4 The Attitude of the Attitude of Diligent and Innovative

“Li Ji” has a saying: “the Confucians are learned and not poor, and the practice and tireless” means that although the Confucians are learned, they do not stop learning, and they practice steadily and tirelessly. This statement fully interprets the profound connotation of “diligent in learning and practicing”, that is, educators should not only have a solid knowledge quality through diligent thinking and self-cultivation, but also transform it into educating ability through practice, so as to achieve the two-way coupling of theory and practice. This kind of professional attitude is rooted in the fine quality of the Chinese nation’s unity of knowledge and practice, and is a precise and concise requirement for educators to study and teach. “Diligent study and practice” is the self-cultivation of educators, and the improvement of quality also calls for “seeking truth and innovation” to break the conventional thinking and go beyond the conventional thinking. “Seeking truth” is based on facts, exploring the truth that can truthfully reflect the objective reality, which is a deeper intrinsic level than “seeking truth”. But this does not mean sticking to the existing status quo, but also need to change and update through “innovation”. This requires educators to follow the law of students’ growth and the law of talent training, and to explore the way of education and teaching with The Times with an innovative attitude. “Diligent in learning, seeking truth and innovation” is the necessary professional attitude and professional quality of educators. This spirit can motivate educators to be models of lifelong learning, explorers of practice and truth seeking, and innovators of academic dedication.

1.5 The Compassionate Heart for Teaching and Dedication

The concept of “Joyful Teaching” refers to approaching teaching with a positive and optimistic attitude, while “Love for Students” means fully respecting, understanding, supporting, and caring for students. Only by truly loving students’ can one achieve joyful teaching, inspiring passion for the educational profession. “Willing to contribute” means to be proud of dedication, and will dedicate what we have

learned all our life to students and education work as a necessary way to realize our own value. Whether it is “happy to teach and love students” or “willing to contribute”, it is the embodiment of the benevolence of educators. Since ancient times, China has had the spiritual elements of “benevolence loves people”, “benevolence loves things” and “universal love means benevolence”, which has gradually become the cornerstone of the value supporting the Chinese nation for thousands of years, and is also the attitude of the Chinese people towards others and the outside world. In the view of Confucius, the purpose of education is to cultivate people with benevolence. Through the example of “benevolence loves people”, students are guided to become benevolent people who take on the mission of cultivation and peace. In the new era, only with benevolence, benevolence education and benevolence tradition can teachers cultivate and enrich the hearts of students and cast the noble souls of future creators and builders.

1.6 The Mind of the World to Pursuit the Grand Way of Cultural

“Mind the world” means broad-minded, mind sentient beings, not limited to narrow personal or local interests, but to think about the prosperity and progress of the whole society from a global perspective. “Educate people with literature” should be based on profound cultural accomplishment, noble moral sentiment and extensive knowledge, which also means that educators are not only knowledge imparted, but also cultural inheritors and promoters. Only with a broad vision and an inclusive mentality, with culture as the carrier, can we achieve the pursuit of great way. Confucius said in the Analects: “When a person can promote virtue, it is not virtue that promotes the person.” Confucius believed that education could “develop individuals” for the purpose of “promoting virtue”, namely, promoting the path of benevolence. In contrast, the “pursuit of the grand Way” in the new era refers to inheriting and promoting the common values of mankind, paying attention to human civilization and human welfare, and promoting the harmonious development of mankind. The educator’s spirit emphasizes the value orientation of bearing in mind the world and being a cultural person, which reflects the high hopes of the state on the education cause and teachers. In the cause of education, this pursuit of the grand way is to activate the inner power of education and preaching, and to shape the new era with a big pattern, a big mind and a big responsibility.

2. The Spirit of Educator Integrates into Normal University Students’ Cultivation Holds Contemporary Significance

Educator spirit, as an ideological concept and moral quality extracted by educators in educational practice, is the precious spiritual wealth of the Chinese nation. It is of great value to integrate the spirit of educators into the cultivation of normal university students. Specifically: From the individual dimension, it is beneficial to meet the intrinsic needs of normal university students’ growth; From the perspective of colleges and universities, it is conducive to the implementation of the fundamental task of moral education; From the social dimension, it contributes to addressing the contemporary call for building a strong education nation.

2.1 Individual Dimension: It Meets the Inner Needs of Normal University Students' Growth

Educator spirit, as the common of the collective personality of educators, is not only a symbolic symbol, but also the implementation of the professional requirements of educators. It can be summarized into three qualities: solid professional knowledge and skills, upright professional ethics and conduct, noble sense of educational mission and social responsibility. As the future educators, normal university students need to enhance the above qualities in the process of fully accepting the pre-service education of prospective teachers, which is also the internal demand of normal university students in career development. First, the spirit of educators emphasizes the attitude of dedication and the wisdom of nurturing, which fits the internal needs of normal students to cultivate solid professional knowledge and excellent professional skills. Subject knowledge and educational theory need to be unified with diligent study and practice, so as to be continuously expanded and consolidated. Furthermore, the practical and developmental nature of educational theory requires that normal students adopt an attitude of seeking practical innovation, understand the latest theories and technologies, use new teaching methods and tools, and carry out innovation and reform in teaching practice. On this basis, from the theoretical level of acquisition to the practical level of application, manifests as humanistic care for students, providing personalized education services and other professional skills to improve. Secondly, the educator's spirit emphasizes moral sentiment and benevolence, which conforms to the inner needs of normal university students to cultivate correct professional ethics and attitude. Xi once said, "Love is the soul of education, without love there is no education". Since they choose to dedicate oneself to the teaching profession, normal university students should be full of expectations and enthusiasm for educating, and transform this love into a willing dedication of action consciousness, which is the fundamental professional attitude of teachers. From the perspective of students, only under the care of benevolence, can they "love and respect their teachers" in the emotional dimension, and then "believe their way" and "emulate their actions" in the cognitive and behavioral dimension. This also requires normal university students to make clear that the teaching profession carries a strong modeling responsibility and, therefore, hold themselves to the standard of "the words set the standard for gentlemen, and the actions set the example for the world". Thirdly, the spirit of educators emphasizes ideals and beliefs and the pursuit of greatness, which is in line with the internal needs of normal university students to cultivate a lofty sense of educational mission and social responsibility. Education is the product and driving force of social development and civilization progress. Normal university students must understand the great strategic significance of education from the overall situation of national revitalization and even the overall situation of human development. The spirit of educators can provide a broad vision for them to grasp the overall situation. Specifically, it instills in them the ideal belief of selfless dedication to the nation and the mission of education, fostering a sense of responsibility and ideal pursuit to contribute to the continuity and development of human civilization.

2.2 The Dimension of Colleges and Universities: The Implementation of the Fundamental Task of Moral Education

“Zuo Zhuan” said, “there are virtues, followed by meritorious service, followed by speech, although not lost for a long time, this is called immortality.” The ancients put “morality” in the first place of “three immortals”, and also attached importance to the important role of “moral education” in cultivation. Under this guidance, the state takes “cultivating morality and nurturing talents” as the fundamental task of education and seize the essence of education. Xi stressed that education should guide students to “solidly cultivate good character and become people with great love, great virtue and great feelings.” Normal university students are the main force of basic education in the future, educating people must first educate themselves, and establishing people must first establish themselves. As the main body for the cultivation of normal university students, colleges and universities should undoubtedly assume the role of carrying out cultivating morality and nurturing talents. The spirit of educators emphasizes “standing by virtue”, which embodies the nature, purpose and distinctive character of China, highlights the subject consciousness of educators to practice moral sentiments. It serves as a vivid resource for educating normal school students to carry out the education of right and wrong, justice and benefit, honor and disgrace, and public and private views, and is the precious spiritual wealth of casting soul and educating people in the new era. This spirit emphasizes the priority of moral education, insists on cultivating healthy personality of normal students, and focuses on promoting their comprehensive development, which to a large extent provides rich nourishment to build a solid foundation of faith and supplement the calcium of spirit. When the students with upright conduct, noble aspirations, and both moral and talent take the educational post and become the realistic embodiment of the spirit of educators, they will also transform the spiritual power into the personality power, and infect more educatees with their own moral cultivation. Therefore, giving full play to the educational value contained in the spirit of educators and vigorously promoting the spirit of educators in the group of normal university students is conducive to colleges and universities to perform the basic function of moral education.

2.3 The Dimension of Society: Responds to the Demands of The Times of Building a Strong Education Nation

When education thrives, the nation prospers; when education excels, the nation strengthens. The demand of education power in the new era is to build the country into a powerful country “with a high-quality education system, a high level of education equity, and a high level of service for national development”. This needs the educator’s spiritual belief support and spiritual guidance. Specifically: First, with the spirit of educators as the ideological pointer, shaping a high-quality, professionalized teaching workforce can lay a solid foundation for building a strong education nation. A strong nation must first have strong teachers, and the quality of the teaching workforce plays a fundamental role in the construction of a strong education nation. As future members of the teaching workforce, the comprehensive quality of normal university students plays a leading role. The improvement of the

quality of teachers cannot be separated from the nourishment of the spirit of educators. To integrate the spirit of excellent educators and teachers into the cultivation of normal students is to encourage normal students to take educators as spiritual standards and action models, constantly improve their professional quality, cultivate their educational feelings, and strive to be a good teacher with superb business and noble ethics, which can provide a steady stream of high-quality talents for the high-quality education system. Secondly, taking the spirit of educators as the spiritual engine and promoting educational equity is an important strategy to meet the core demands of building a strong education nation. In the evaluation criteria for a strong education nation, educational fairness is one of the important dimensions. To be specific, eliminating the inequality and imbalance in the allocation of educational resources as the basic value pursuit of education is essential for building a strong education nation. The spirit of educators rooted in the people and committed to providing satisfactory education for the people. Integrating the educator spirit into the cultivation of normal college students can make them deeply grasp the core value of education is to serve the people. People's expectation of education is that everyone can have the right to equal access to education opportunities, fair distribution of resources, and balanced quality education, as well as fair and equal treatment and development opportunities in education. This is precisely what the spirit of educators advocates: promoting people's happiness through educational fairness. Third, with the spirit of educators as the intellectual support, to promote the transformation of education, education modernization to promote the construction of a strong education nation. One of the criteria for a strong education country is its ability and contribution to national development. "Chinese modernization is the modernization of education first", which determines the strategic supporting role of educational modernization in Chinese modernization. Educational modernization requires systematic, holistic innovation consciousness to break the shackles of traditional education concept, promote reform of the educational model, and transform the values of educational objectives. Because educators themselves are the forerunners of educational reform, the resulting spirit of educators also seeks to make innovation an important power fulcrum. Therefore, integrating the spirit of educators into the education of normal university students can arouse the innovative spirit, shape the creative ability, which is conducive to promoting the innovation of the education system in the future, and contribute to the modernization of education.

3. The Practical Path of Integrating the Educator Spirit into the Cultivation of normal University Students

Integrating the spirit of educators into the practice path of normal university student cultivation is of significant theoretical and practical importance. It should be fully integrated into the entire process of teacher candidate cultivation. To be specific, it is necessary to strengthen students' cognition of educators' spirit based on theory course teaching; Take the campus culture as nourishment, cultivate the normal university students' emotion to the educator spirit; With educational practice as the carrier, deepen the normal university students' practice of educator spirit.

3.1 Integrating the Spirit of Educators into the Teaching of Theoretical Courses

Theoretical courses, focusing on theoretical foundations, principles, and frameworks in relevant fields, are the fundamental means to deepen understanding in these areas. The theory course of normal university students includes both the subject specialty course and the education specialty course. Firstly, the spirit of educators should be integrated into the professional courses of normal university students. Subject curriculum not only carries the heavy responsibility of knowledge dissemination and ability training, but also must have the mission of value leading. In order to realize the unity of science and value, it is necessary to integrate the spirit of educators into the professional courses of normal university students from the following aspects. From the perspective of teaching subjects, teachers of specialized courses should have the consciousness of cultivating educational aspirations for normal university students, and identify the entry point of educators' spirit integration. For example, they can fully explore the academic attitude and scientific research contributions of well-known scholars and leaders in the field of the discipline, and use them as vibrant curriculum resources. This approach not only enhances the vitality of knowledge transmission but also inspires normal university students to cultivate academic pursuits and the belief in contributing to education. From the perspective of teaching strategy, it is necessary to change from a single dominant pattern to a dual-dominant pattern. Normal students are not only learners of professional knowledge, but also imparted knowledge in the future. Therefore, normal students should not only acquire knowledge from the level of "what" and "why", but also output knowledge from the level of "what to teach" and "how to teach". Therefore, it is necessary to change the teacher-led classroom to the two-way classroom led by teachers and normal students, so that normal students can take the role of educators and adapt to it. In addition to professional theoretical literacy, general education literacy is also the basic requirement for normal university students to move towards educational posts. Therefore, the education professional course is another field of educators' spirit landing. The curriculum of education majors aims to improve the teaching ability and accomplishment of normal university students, including pedagogy principles, educational research methods, educational psychology, history of Chinese and foreign education, teachers' basic skills, curriculum and teaching theory, modern technology education, etc. These specialized education courses should be guided by the spirit of educators, such as explaining the meaning and value of education from the height of ideal beliefs, emphasizing educational principles and methods that are inclusive and tailored to individual students' needs, advocating mental nourishment and humanistic care for students, and upholding the teaching attitude of endless learning and innovation.

3.2 Strengthen the Construction of Campus Culture that Respects Teachers and Emphasizes Education

Campus culture construction refers to creating a favorable campus atmosphere through a series of planned, organized and targeted activities and measures, which covers the values and spiritual outlook of the school, aiming at shaping the sound personality of students to enhance moral education effectiveness. In order to integrate the spirit of educators into the landscape and strengthen the

construction of campus culture that respects teachers and emphasizes education, we can start from the following three aspects. First of all, respect for teachers and emphasis on education is clearly incorporated into school rules and discipline. First, students should respect the teacher's personality and profession, and should not insult, provoke or maliciously slander the teacher. Second, students should abide by the teaching order and classroom discipline, arrive punctually for classes, and refrain from disruptive behavior during lessons. Third, students should communicate with teachers in a civilized manner and should not use offensive language or attitude towards teachers. At the same time, the school should formulate corresponding punishment measures to educate and manage students who violate the school rules and regulations. Through the clarity of these provisions, we can ensure the cultivation of the atmosphere of respecting teachers and emphasizing education from the system, which is the basis for educators' spirit to land on campus. Secondly, establish the evaluation mechanism of teachers' ethics. The evaluation mechanism is the guiding vector for the construction of teachers' ethics and style. School authorities should optimize the evaluation criteria for teachers, not only taking classroom teaching ability, class performance, academic guidance level and scientific research achievements as important rules, but also including professional attitude, initiative spirit and dedication into the evaluation indicators and applying the evaluation results scientifically. Additionally, a student evaluation component should be introduced and given appropriate weight, facilitating interactive communication between students and teachers. In this way, the ideological consciousness and action consciousness of teachers and normal students to pay attention to teachers' ethics and cultivate moral education ability can be promoted. Finally, strengthen the campus culture publicity. Through campus radio, campus magazine, campus cultural festival and other forms, the spirit of educators will be embedded in buildings, corridors, pavilions to publicize and promote the campus culture of respecting teachers and emphasizing education, guiding teacher candidates to establish correct teacher-student concepts and behavioral norms. The campus can publicize the deeds of advanced educators, regularly hold outstanding teacher commendation activities, encourage normal university students to learn from them, and give full play to the exemplary role of role models. We can also organize various forms of respecting teachers and valuing education theme activities, such as carrying out teachers and normal students symposium, Teachers' Day celebration activities, educational achievements exhibition, etc.

3.3 Carry out Diversified Education Practice Activities for Normal University Students

"The opportunity for normal students to practice teaching in real situations is very limited", and this realistic dilemma exists in the education of normal students in colleges and universities, which also leads to the inability of normal students to fully adapt to the requirements of teachers' quality in basic education. In order to break this gap in reality, how to carry out the practical quality and self-cultivation attitude advocated by the spirit of educators in order to strengthen the educational practice activities of normal university students is the primary consideration. Guided by the spirit of educators, it is the key to construct an all-round, progressive and autonomous educational practice system. The comprehensive requirement of educational practice is not limited to discipline teaching practice, but also includes class

management practice, class meeting chairmanship, teaching and research activities, homeroom teacher work, student academic guidance and other contents. It is necessary to enable normal university students to improve their daily management ability, emergency organization ability and other educational practical abilities in the face of many uncertain and complex educational situations. Carry out teaching and management work in all aspects. Gradualism requires changing the existing mode of “centralized” education practice. The teaching ability of normal university students is improved in the two-way coupling process of theoretical learning and practical experience. However, arranging the internship time uniformly in the junior or senior year will weaken the learning effect of theory guiding practice and practice consolidating theory to a certain extent. Colleges and universities should adapt to local conditions, introduce a consistent and daily practice model, flexibly arrange practice time, so that normal students can gradually understand the role of teachers, strengthen professional experience, and better complete the role transformation from normal students to teachers. Autonomy requires educational practice to adhere to the core concept of student growth-oriented. Education practice is not merely a process of professionalizing normal university students in the mode of product processing, but “a process of opening wisdom and consciousness, highlighting subject consciousness and life publicity”. This requires to create a space for the active development of normal students, stimulate the subject consciousness of normal students with the spirit of educators, so as to form a scientific view of education and student outlook, generate a sense of educational responsibility and self-efficacy in the shape of their own personality, and be the promoter and practitioner of the spirit of educators.

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