

Chinese Youth's Moral Values: Characteristics and Educational Enlightenment—Based on the Data Analysis of World Values Survey

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Abstract—The World Values Survey, which began in 1981, has been conducting a census of values for citizens of 108 countries around the world every 4-5 years. By drawing a world cultural map, this survey explores the current characteristics and development trends of values among citizens of different countries. As the future of the country, the youth bear the important responsibility of promoting the development of the country. Therefore, the issue of moral values is an indispensable part of the healthy development of youth groups which deserves our attention. To this end, this paper extracts the results of the survey on the moral values of the Chinese youth group in wave six of the World Values Survey and analyzes the survey results of the moral values of Chinese youth groups aged 18-30. This paper captures the characteristics of Chinese youth moral values and tries to provide some corresponding enlightenments for moral education.

Keywords—Chinese youth, moral values, characteristics, educational enlightenment

I. AN OVERVIEW OF MORAL VALUES

Moral values, as an important part of the individual's moral life in the overall value system, is an important ideological basis for people to make moral judgments and moral choices based on certain moral standards [1]. It is an individual's moral value evaluation standard system [2,3]. The data in this article is from wave six of the World Values Survey, which has been dedicated to exploring the attitudes and opinions of citizens of the world about certain values to reflect the reality and developing tendency of their values.

Professor Inglehart, as the initiator of this survey, based on the survey data, extracted representative cultural characteristics from the basic values of citizens of different countries, divided human values into four dimensions with “traditional-secular rationality” and “survival-self-expression” as axes, and drew a map of world values. The “traditional” dimension emphasizes family education, traditional etiquette, and opposes traditional concepts such as suicide, abortion, and ethics; “secular reasoning” pays more attention to the actual needs of individuals; “survival”

focuses on the most basic survival issues, focusing on economic and personal safety; “self-expression” focuses on anti-secular behaviors such as gender equality and homosexuality [4,5,6].

In the wave six, the survey of moral values was mainly conducted by asking the majority of respondents questions including “Claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled”, “Avoiding a fare on public transport”, “Stealing property”, “Cheating on taxes if you have a chance”, “Someone accepting a bribe in the course of their duties” “Homosexuality” “Prostitution” “Abortion” “Divorce” “Sex before marriage” “Suicide” “Euthanasia” “For a man to beat his wife” “Parents beating children” “Violence against other people”. Answers to these questions combined could assist us to understand the attitudes and preferences of the respondents' behaviors such as unethical behavior or moral controversy, reflecting the reality of their moral values. Therefore, the moral values analyzed in this paper are mainly the attitudes and opinions of Chinese youth groups on extreme or controversial ethical behaviors. Understanding the attitudes of young people towards these ethical behaviors could to a certain extent reflect the characteristics of the moral values of Chinese youth.

II. MEASURES

SPSS23.0 was used in all data analysis. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) used the principle components analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation reduced the dimensions of the 15 items to reflect people's attitudes towards certain moral values. Since the sample size was nearly 2000, we used a cutoff value of .35 for factor loadings [7]. Based on these factors, scale scores were calculated from raw responses for each participant. A series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were then utilized followed by multiple comparison (LSD) to assess mean differences in participants' ratings of different types of moral value categories.

III. USING FA TO ANALYZE DATA ON MORAL VALUES OF CHINESE YOUTH

A. Categories of Chinese Youth's Moral Values

This section uses factor analysis methods (FA) to

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analyze data on moral values of Chinese youth. In the end, the 15 questions on the investigation of moral values were divided into three categories. They are the attitudes and values of the three types of behaviors: “Deceptive Behavior”, “Violent Behavior”, “Sexual Morality or Extreme Behavior” (the results of the analysis are shown in the table 1), and are based on the orientation of moral values structure [8]. The structure will analyze the directional characteristics and intensity characteristics of these two types of moral values to explore the current situation and characteristics of Chinese youth moral values and grasp the realistic state of Chinese youth moral values.

TABLE I. FACTOR ANALYSIS OF CHINESE YOUTH MORAL VALUES

Types of moral values related behavior	Question
Deceptive Behavior	Claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled
	Avoiding a fare on public transport
	Stealing property
	Cheating on taxes if you have a chance
	Someone accepting a bribe in the course of their duties
Violent Behavior	For a man to beat his wife
	Parents beating children
	Violence against other people
Sexual Morality or Extreme Behavior	Homosexuality
	Prostitution
	Abortion
	Divorce
	Sex before marriage
	Suicide
	Euthanasia

B. Chinese youth’s attitudes on three categories of moral values related behaviors

The question about the moral values of Chinese youth is “Please tell me how much you can accept the following practices? The numbers in this scale range from 1 to 10, indicating that they are completely unacceptable to a fully acceptable level.” In order to facilitate the data analysis, the scale is modified to a five-level scale, that is, from the completely unacceptable to fully acceptable numbers 1 to 5, 1 means “completely unacceptable”, 2 means “unacceptable”, 3 means “Not necessarily”, 4 means “acceptable” and 5 means “completely acceptable”. Therefore, if the respondent’s score is higher, it indicates that the respondent’s acceptance of a certain behavior is higher. Conversely, a lower score indicates a lower acceptance level. Table 2 shows a general comparison of the differences between Chinese youth in accepting deception, violence, sexual ethics or extreme behavior. It also presents the average acceptance, standard deviation and sample size of Chinese youth for deceptive behavior, violent behavior, sexual ethics or extreme behavior. From the data in the table, we can see the overall attitudes and inclinations of Chinese youth towards these three types of behaviors.

1) Value Tendency of Deceptive Behavior. According to the results of the factor analysis, the deceptive behavior mainly includes the following five acts: “Claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled”, “Avoiding a fare on public transport”, “Stealing property”, “Cheating on taxes if you have a chance” and “Someone accepting a bribe in the course of their duties”. As can be seen from the data in Table 2, compared with the “violent behavior” and “sexual morality or extreme behavior”, the Chinese youth group has a low acceptance of deceptive behavior, and the overall mean level it is 1.58, between 1 and 2, indicating that its acceptance is between “completely unacceptable” and “unacceptable”. At the same time, as shown in the comparison of the mean values of Table 3 and Table 4, the “deceptive behavior” is significantly different from the mean of the other two types of behaviors, and the mean difference test passes the test with a significant level of 0.05. Therefore, it is not difficult to find that the most unacceptable for young Chinese is deceptive behavior, and most young people cannot accept this deceptive behavior. At the same time, the standard deviation of Chinese youth’s acceptance of deceptive behavior is also relatively low, indicating that the differences between the samples are small, showing that Chinese youths have a certain degree of consistency in their attitude toward such behaviors

TABLE II. CHINESE YOUTH’S DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON THE VALUE TENDENCY OF DECEPTIVE, VIOLENT, SEXUAL ETHICS OR EXTREME BEHAVIOR

Type	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard error	Confidence interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
Deceptive	1.5805	.60618	.02890	1.5237	1.6373
Violent	1.8814	.79481	.03798	1.8068	1.9561
Extreme	2.0115	.92697	.04556	1.9219	2.1011
Sum	1.8206	.80391	.02237	1.7767	1.8645

TABLE III. ONE-WAY ANOVA OF MEAN DIFFERENCES IN ACCEPTANCE IN TERMS OF DECEPTION, VIOLENCE, EXTREME BEHAVIOR

	Sum of squares	df	mean-square value	F	Statistical significance
Between groups	42.082	2	21.041	34.233	.000
Group	792.255	1289	.615		
Sum	834.337	1291			

TABLE IV. MULTIPLE COMPARISON AMONG THREE MORAL VALUE CATEGORIES

Category	Comparison category	Statistical significance	Confidence interval	
			Lower limit	Upper limit
Deceptive	Violent	.000	-.4048	-.1971
	Extreme	.000	-.5364	-.3257
Violent	Deceptive	.000	.1971	.4048
	Extreme	.016	-.2355	-.0247
Extreme	Deceptive	.000	.3257	.5364
	Violent	.016	.0247	.2355

2) *Value Tendency of Violent Behavior.* The behaviors of the violence category mainly include three behaviors: “For a man to beat his wife”, “Parents beating children” and “Violence against other people”. From the data in Table 2, it can be found that the Chinese youth group has a lower level of acceptance of violent behavior, but the overall acceptance is higher than the “deceptive behavior”. Compared with “sexual morality or extreme behavior”, the overall acceptance is relatively low. The overall mean level is 1.88, and the mean level is between 1 and 2, indicating that the acceptance level is between “completely unacceptable” and “unacceptable”. At the same time, as shown in Table 3 and Table 4, by comparing the mean values of the three categories, it is found that the mean value of the acceptance of “violent behavior” among Chinese youth is significantly different from the average of the acceptance of the other two types of behavior. The difference between the mean values was statistically significant, and the mean difference test passed a test with a significant level of 0.05. Therefore, the Chinese youth group's acceptance of violent behavior is also relatively low, but its acceptance is generally slightly higher than that of deceptive behavior, and its standard deviation is slightly higher than the former. It can be seen that compared with the acceptance degree of deceptive behavior, there is a certain difference in the acceptance level of violent behavior among Chinese youth groups.

3) *Value Tendency of Sexual Morality or Extreme Behavior.* Sexual morality or extreme behavior mainly includes seven behaviors: “Homosexuality”, “Prostitution”, “Abortion”, “Divorce”, “Sex before marriage”, “Suicide” and “Euthanasia”. From the values in Table 2, it can be found that in the Chinese youth group, although their overall acceptance of sexual ethics or extreme behavior is relatively low, the overall accepted mean level is 2.01, and the acceptance level is between “unacceptable” and “Not necessarily” at this level, and closer to the level of “unacceptable”. However, by comparing the mean levels of the three behaviors of “deception”, “violence”, “sexual morality or extreme class”, Chinese youth have significant differences between the mean level of this moral or extreme behavior and the mean level of the other two types of behavior. The difference in the mean value was statistically significant. The mean difference test passed a test with a significant level of 0.05. Therefore, it can be seen from Table 3 and Table 4 that sexual morality or extreme behavior has the highest overall mean value compared with the other two types of behavior. It shows that Chinese youth groups have the highest degree of acceptance of “sexual morality or extreme behavior”.

IV. RESULTS

To sum up, the following two results can be drawn from

the above data analysis. First, the moral values of Chinese youth are characterized by positive development. By analyzing the data from wave six of the World Values Survey, it is found that the overall attitude of Chinese youth to deceptive, violent, sexual ethics or extreme behavior is “completely unacceptable” or “unacceptable”. The overall situation is more positive, and the positive development trend of its moral values is the mainstream. Second, there are still some negative development trends that cannot be ignored in terms of moral values. Although the overall moral values of Chinese youths show the characteristics and trends of clear-cut attitudes and uplifting, there are still some negative development trends and problems that deserve attention.

For example, Chinese youth's overall acceptance of sexual morality or extreme behavior is higher than that of the other two types of behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the relatively negative development trends of Chinese youth in terms of moral values.

V. DISCUSSION: THE EDUCATIONAL ENLIGHTENMENT OF CHINESE YOUTH MORAL VALUES

According to the above data analysis, it is found that the Chinese youth group has an overall positive trend in moral values. But there are also some issues that cannot be ignored. Therefore, based on the actual characteristics of the youth groups in China, combined with the current characteristics of the youth moral values, this paper explores the countermeasures and suggestions that can effectively improve the moral level of Chinese youth, and provides corresponding enlightenment and reflection for deepening the education of youth moral values in China.

A. *Strengthening school moral education and enhancing the moral standards of youth groups*

As an important position in the construction of spiritual civilization, school education bears the fundamental task of the education of “cultivating morality”. Therefore, to ensure that the majority of young people establish correct moral values, we must start from strengthening school moral education and enhance the moral standards of youth groups. Specifically, it starts from the following three aspects.

First, cultivate the correct moral cognition. Cultivating youth groups to form correct moral cognition is the premise basis for improving the moral standards of youth groups. Starting from the connotation of moral education, it is not difficult to find that moral cognition is to transform the content and nature of moral education into the ideological cognition of the youth group according to the requirements of the society and the needs of the individual. Let the youth group grasp the basic requirements and content of moral education in a comprehensive and systematic way.

Second, enhance the sense of moral identity. After the youth group forms a correct moral cognition, it is necessary to enhance the recognition of the moral values of the youth groups through education guidance. That is to say, the

correct moral cognition is internalized into its own emotion and consciousness, and moral cognition is transformed into moral identity.

Finally, promote moral practice. As a kind of value concept and consciousness, moral values only have the externalization of individual's related ideological cognition and value identification into living habits. It is practical to implement in specific practical activities. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out practical actions on the basis of forming correct moral cognition and moral identity. Putting the results of internalization of moral values into practical activities, and highlighting the practical utility and important value of moral values.

B. Paying attention to moral education and inspiration, and creating a good moral education atmosphere

For a long time, moral education is different from other educational activities, and it is often carried out in an educational way that is subtle and touches the soul. That is to say, a kind of "smooth and silent" way. Therefore, in the process of moral education, it is often carried out in the way of moral education and inspiration. In order to educate and guide the moral values of the broad masses of young people, in addition to carrying out corresponding moral education, it is necessary to start from the background and social environment in which the majority of young people live, and to create a good moral education environment and atmosphere for the youth groups. On the one hand, we must carry out active propaganda, use positive role models to carry out moral education and inspiration, and let the youth groups establish positive moral values in a good moral education atmosphere.

On the other hand, respond to and resolve relevant social events in a timely manner. From the data analysis, it can be found that the Chinese youth group has a higher degree of acceptance of certain violations of moral standards, and even shows some negative attitudes. The reason for this phenomenon is largely due to the adverse effects of relevant

social events. Therefore, relevant departments need to respond and resolve in a timely manner with a clear attitude. Let the youth group recognize the true nature and impact of the event so that it establishes the correct moral values.

VI. CONCLUSION

In summary, in order to effectively improve the moral values of Chinese youth, it is necessary to start from the current characteristics of Chinese youth, from the two aspects of positive development of mainstream development and negative development of tributaries, and carry out targeted moral education in light of the reality. Effectively improve the moral level of the Chinese youth group, and then provide power support for the Chinese youth group's own development and moral education.

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