

# A Study on the Issue of Honest Education for College Students in the New Era

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**Abstract**—Based on the interpretation of honesty and its operating mechanism, this paper discusses the necessity and feasibility of the cultivation of honest behavior of college students from following the basic principle of "overall long-term effectiveness", establishing the cultivation goal of "multi-dimensional intersection" and constructing the content system of "dynamic generation". At the same time, it puts forward some effective strategies to form a scientific and sound credit file system, create a positive campus culture atmosphere, and build a diversified and rich platform for honest experience. This paper aims at arousing the attention of the society to the cultivation of college students' honest behavior and promoting the improvement of college students' honesty level.

**Keywords**—honesty; cultivation; strategy

## I. INTRODUCTION

"诚信" (basically referred to as honesty in this paper), as a basic moral standard, is of great significance to the improvement of college students' moral quality and the establishment of complete personality. At present, there are some credit crisis phenomena among college students, such as cheating in exams, inflated resumes, and maliciously escaping loans, which triggered heated discussion on the credit problems of college students among the whole society. However, it has been found through evaluation on college students' credit cognition level that college students have a high level of integrity awareness, but when it comes to honesty behavior, there tend to be conflicts between their honesty cognition and behavior, resulting in the lack of honesty behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on the current situation and existing problems of honesty education for college students, and explore the mechanism and effective strategies for the cultivation of honesty behavior for them on the basis of following the law of individual integrity development.

## II. OVERVIEW OF HONESTY

The word "诚信" (honesty) first appeared in *Book of Lord Shang · Jinling*. [1] *Shuo Wen Jie Zi* interprets it as "诚, 信也, 从言成声", "信, 诚也, 从人从言, 会意", meaning the Chinese character "诚 (cheng)", meaning "信 (xin)" (credit), is composed of the character "言" (word) and the character "成(cheng)"(accomplishment), and follows the pronunciation of "成"; the Chinese character "信", means "诚" (honesty), is composed of the character "人" (man) and the character "言"

(word), and belongs to ideograph. As shown in ancient books, "诚" and "信" were mostly used separately in history. "诚" emphasizes people's inner goodness and certainty from the perspective of internal ontology, "信" is more of an external interpretation of words or behavior and other aspects conforming to convention. The definition of honesty in modern Chinese is "诚, 诚实; 信, 守信", that is, "诚" refers to honesty and "信" means keeping faith. It is not difficult to see that "诚信" consists of "诚" and "信", two parts which are not only different from each other but also closely related. "诚", that is, honesty, mainly refers to the individual behavior subject can truly face the subjective and objective facts, which can be manifested as telling the truth, not lying and seeking truth from facts. "信", that is, keeping faith, mainly refers to the fact that the individual behavior subject can, on the basis of making moral judgment, make true language expression and practice according to it, which is manifested as keeping promise and doing what is said. To sum up, honesty refers to a moral standard or quality that a subject can truly express objective facts and their subjective information (subjective judgment and intention) and make corresponding commitments and practice according to his/her subjective judgment and intention. [2]

As a moral standard and quality, the occurrence and development mechanism of honesty conforms to the general law of individual moral development. From the perspective of individual vertical development, individual morality develops from heteronomy to self-discipline, and there is a stage of mutual transformation. From the perspective of the emergence and development process of honesty (诚信), its remarkable feature is the unity of self-discipline and heteronomy. "诚" is self-discipline, "信" is heteronomy, and the formation of integrity behavior is the embodiment of the consistency between knowledge and practice, as well as the perfect organic combination of self-discipline and heteronomy. From the perspective of the static map of individual moral development, the formation of individual integrity is the process of continuous development from the cognition of integrity to the behavior of integrity, and the emotion and will of integrity, as companions under certain circumstances. In this process, cognition, emotion, intention, action and situation must be coordinated to ensure the sustainable development of honest behavior. However, due to the lack of individual inner honesty emotion, the infirmness of honesty will or the specificity of honesty situation, the phenomena such as inconsistency and even

conflict between honesty awareness and practice will often occur.

### III. THE NECESSITY AND FEASIBILITY OF THE CULTIVATION OF HONESTY BEHAVIOR OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Honesty and trustworthiness are the traditional virtues that the Chinese nation must perform in interpersonal communication. [3] Confucius said in the chapter *Xue Er* on learning of *The Analects*, "One should keep his word when communicating with friends." A person's integrity, honesty and trustworthiness are the basic signs of his moral standards in life. Despite the increasing complexity of modern life, there is an increasing need for simple ethics of honesty and trustworthiness. The cultivation of honesty behavior of college students is conducive to the improvement of individual moral quality and the harmonious and sustainable development of society. Therefore, it is urgent to rethink the problems and deficiencies in the current honesty education for college students, and discuss the effective ways to cultivate honesty behavior for college students from a natural and person-based perspective.

To conduct college students' honesty education, it is necessary to follow the general rules and operation mechanism of the development of individual integrity; in view of the honesty problems of college students at present, in the development chain of honesty knowledge and practice, pay attention to the important role of honesty emotion, honesty will and environmental factors; pay attention of the slow formation process of good faith behavior, so that the conflict between honesty knowledge and practice can be solved and the honesty level of college students can be improved.

#### A. *Following the Basic Principle of "Overall Long-term Effectiveness"*

1) *The principle of overall instead of partial cultivation:* The cognition, emotion, will, behavior, environment and other factors in the operating mechanism of honesty determine that the cultivation of honesty behavior is not the result of a single factor, but the result of the overall coordinated development. This requires the cultivation of honest behavior not only to pay attention to the improvement of the level of honesty cognition, but also to pay attention to the deep stimulation of honesty emotion, long-term cultivation of honesty will and the optimization and integration of the environment in the process of the development from cognition to behavior, so as to avoid the conflict between awareness and practice and ensure the effective cultivation of honest behavior.

2) *The principle of long-term instead of instant cultivation:* The principle of long-term effectiveness of honesty behavior cultivation emphasizes that the process should follow the law of individual moral development; pay long-term attention to the effect of the cultivation of individual integrity behavior from the perspective of time; make targeted adjustment timely; starting from the details

and grasp the direction and quality of the cultivation of individual honesty behavior. In this way ineffective or adverse results produced by formalism and immediacy intervention can be avoided.

#### B. *Establishing the Goal of "Multi-dimensional Intersection"*

At the level of individual development, according to Kohlberg's law of three stages and six levels of individual moral development, an objective and fair evaluation should be made to establish the corresponding overall goal and stage goal of integrity behavior cultivation, and the stage goal should be consistent with the overall goal. And the goal of integrity behavior needs to be matched with the overall goal of individual physical and mental development, so as to achieve the coordination of goals and mutual integration of development. At the social level, the goal and development direction of the cultivation of individual integrity behavior should be comprehensively considered, and positive guidance and influence should be given in social environment, culture and public opinion.

At the level of individual and social cohesion, the goal of the cultivation of integrity behavior of college students should serve the process of individual socialization, which is consistent with the mainstream values and integrity goals under the social environment. This requires that the goal setting for the cultivation of honesty behavior of college students should not only focus on individual college students, but also consider the connection and guidance function of goal setting in the socialization process of college students, so that college students can obtain the benign cultivation of honesty behavior under the guidance of "multi-dimensional intersection".

#### C. *Constructing the Content System of "Dynamic Generation"*

The content system of honesty education for college students is not constant. With the growth of individuals, individual differences and the complexity of the environment need to be taken into account, and the corresponding content system is also changing. The purpose of constructing the content system of "dynamic generation" is that the content should change with the change of the implementation object and form targeted dynamic generation content in the constant process of "adjustment — implementation — adjustment". According to different fields, the content system can be divided into the macroscopic content framework of "men and men, men and themselves, and men and nature" for the cultivation of honesty behavior. Appropriate themes and specific contents can be selected and designed to carry out the cultivation of honesty behavior.

#### IV. EXPLORING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR THE CULTIVATION OF HONESTY BEHAVIOR OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

##### A. *Gradually Forming a Scientific and Sound Credit File System*

The establishment of the credit file system of Chinese citizens is in the initial stage, but the public pay more attention and recognize to the establishment of credit files. Integrity file system should run through the whole life, from birth to the fall of life. It is the most precious and important quality of an individual in social life. It records the following of social rules or internalizing social responsibility and the improvement of moral quality of individuals in the process of their social interaction. It is also the standard and important basis for moral punishment.

Then, the establishment of college students' credit files should be carried out on the basis of middle school and primary school records, ended periodically and handed over to next social organization for further record and evaluation. This requires effective and orderly cooperation among various departments of family, school and society, so as to gradually build a multi-dimensional integrity filing system with consistent standards and more pertinence. The methods of college students' credit files include self-record, instructor record and school record and its content can be used for specific application design according to the dimensions of academic integrity, test integrity, communication integrity, economic integrity, environmental integrity and son on. In addition, the school should improve relevant rules and regulations, strictly require students to do things according to school rules and regulations, establish a code of integrity, and promote the implementation of the relevant disciplinary mechanism for dishonesty. People will be accompanied by their student integrity records since first day at school. The school establishes the honesty supervision system, hold lifetime collect of individuals' information in respect of credit. Therefore very dishonest behavior will be recorded, and any dishonest record will bring serious obstacles to students' future work and life. The gradual establishment and scientific perfection of credit files play a good role in restraining students' credit behavior and creating a good credit environment, and provide a long-term supervision mechanism for the cultivation of college students' credit behavior.

##### B. *Carefully Creating a Positive Campus Cultural Atmosphere*

The construction of campus cultural atmosphere should pay attention to details, pay attention to the two-way effective communication of emotion and positive guidance of thinking. There should be university spirit in every university. The construction of the cultural atmosphere of the university campus should more reflect the socialist core values so that college students can achieve spiritual self-realization and achieve the harmony of the soul under the guidance of university spirit and the influence of the social mainstream values.

From the perspective of the operating mechanism of integrity, a good campus cultural environment plays a role as a binder. It provides the space for the stimulation and feedback of honest emotion, the soil for the long-term cultivation of honest will, and the possibility for the perfect link of the chain of honest cognition and action. The purpose of moral education is to become education of self-discipline. And the explanation of self-discipline and objectivity depends on the theory of justice. If a person who believes that the principle of utility will be recognized by people, he or she will think that only doing according to the principle of utility can show self-discipline, then self-discipline may lead to a collision between self-righteous will, while objectivity may lead to a consistent but individualistic system. But when honesty is combined with the proper conception of justice, that is, the conception of justice which enables us to correctly understand self-discipline and objectivity, they become virtue itself. [4] The cultivation of honesty behavior of college students requires the existence of regularity, and it is necessary to make college students understand that in the process of individual socialization, when people enter the social state from the natural state, they will experience a great change: In their actions, justice takes the place of instinct, thus giving their actions a moral character that they did not have before. [5] The construction of the campus cultural atmosphere is exactly the deep moral emotion generated by the soul, which naturally generates the normative moral behavior, and that is, from being supervised to being unsupervised, they will achieve the state of "being prudent when alone". In this way students can be made to understand the rules of social operation in a positive atmosphere, so as to promote their social development, improve their moral quality and cultivate their integrity behavior.

##### C. *Establishing a Diversified and Rich Experience Platform for Independent Integrity*

The former Soviet Union educator Sukhomlinsky once said: "It should be clear that, the moral principles, only when pursued by students themselves to obtain personal experience, and only when they become the independent personal beliefs of students, can they really become the spiritual wealth of students." [6] Therefore, it is necessary to link the school education goals and students' daily study with their real life, guide students to participate in practice through various activities, so that students can get self-training in participating in practice, and in this way can students get experience in practice, improve their self-confidence, and feel the importance of integrity education. [7] The establishment of independent honest experience platform should be divided into two parts: reality and network. In reality, the honesty experience platform can carry out a series of self-regulated honesty experience activities with distinct themes. In this way, students can be investigated whether they can "be prudent when alone" in the unsupervised situation, and targeted in-depth experience activity plans based on test results can be developed to effectively carry out the integrity experience activities.

## V. CONCLUSION

In a word, the integrity education of college students cannot be completed overnight. More attention should be paid to the important influence of emotion, will and environmental factors, pay attention to the integrity and long-term effect of the improvement of individual integrity level, and do a good job in the cultivation of honesty behavior of college students in a creative way to make it develop in a benign and sustainable direction.

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