



Research on Ideological and Political Education for Students in Art Institutions via Educational Drama

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Abstract. Educational drama, with its various theatrical features such as moral guidance embedded in scripts, empathy from character embodiment, and emotional contagion from atmospheric setting, can serve as a carrier for moral education. This paper focuses on the implementation of "red-themed" ideological and political education via educational drama in art institutions. The aim is to unveil the strengths of thematic education in drama, providing insights into the delivery of ideological and political education activities, especially red-themed education, in art institutions, and ultimately enhance the effectiveness of ideological and political education.

Keywords: Ideological and Political Education, Art Institutions, University Students, Thematic Education

1 Introduction

The reinforcement of ideological and political education among university students is a systematic^[1], long-term task with significant strategic implications. It not only assists in shaping correct worldviews, life views, and values, but also cultivates patriotism and national spirit, providing qualified talents for national development. Currently, due to external influences, some contemporary students exhibit traits of selfishness, vanity, and utilitarianism. Therefore, moral education is particularly important^[2]. As an essential means of moral education, educational drama is an effective way to carry out ideological and political education in universities.

2 The Necessity of Red-Themed Education for Art Institution Students

Art major students often have a strong commitment to their fields, paying great attention to professional learning while showing weaker belief in their ideals. However, for art students, who are future disseminators of "beauty," it is especially crucial to hold strong idealistic beliefs and correct political ideologies.

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2.1 An Effective Approach to Reinforce Students' Ideals

Ideal belief is the political soul of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Without it or with a wavering belief, one may suffer from "soft bone disease". To establish the ideal belief of art institution students, it is essential to firmly grasp the historical development thread of the CPC, merge personal artistic aspirations with the grand dream of the Chinese nation's rejuvenation. Specifically, for drama major students, integrating beliefs and values embodied in the CPC's history of development and struggle can strengthen their ideal beliefs. It will help them fuse their youthful campus dreams with national and ethnic development and strive unremittingly for them.

2.2 The Need to Shape Students' Correct "Three Outlooks"

Only with a correct worldview, outlook on life, and value orientation can students establish clear goals for their development and overcome various difficulties and obstacles on the path of growth^[3]. Red-themed education during the centennial history of the CPC can help them establish correct "three outlooks," base personal learning and choices on societal, national, and public needs, and devote their intelligence to lofty and grand goals, thereby creating greater value for personal realization and national rejuvenation.

2.3 A Platform for Inspiring Students' Spirit of Hard Work

At present, art institution students generally enjoy decent living conditions, hence lack a deep understanding of the hard conditions the CPC faced in its early days. Implementing red-themed education provides an opportunity to review and learn from the CPC's history, helps students understand the challenging path the CPC has traveled more comprehensively and profoundly, fostering a spirit of hard work, frugality, and a positive life attitude, and motivates them to advance bravely towards the great goal of the Chinese nation's rejuvenation.

2.4 The Optimal Timing for Cultivating Students' Patriotism

Patriotism is deeply rooted in every CPC member and Chinese citizen, and it is a crucial driving force for the continuous development and growth of the Chinese nation. The development path of the Chinese nation is paved by numerous individuals whose love for the motherland urged them to make heroic sacrifices. Current global instability, foreign disturbances, and attempts to incite reactionary forces have resonated with college students and every Chinese citizen. Implementing red-themed education can further enhance students' patriotism. This is particularly applicable to art institution students, who are intellectually active and exposed to various information, especially from the internet. Against this backdrop, thematic education can deepen their patriotic sentiments.

3 The Moral Education Function of Educational Drama

3.1 Facilitating University Students' Self-recognition

Martin Esslin argued that drama is the laboratory of various human relationships and situations. Through role-playing and scenario simulation, drama provides students with the opportunity to reflect on others and introspect themselves. It enables students to clarify moral behavior norms and social coexistence rules, guiding them to love truth, goodness, and beauty, develop and perfect self-cognition, self-regulation ability, and foster a good personality. Among various art categories, drama, which is closely related to human life and survival, can be regarded as the most genuine. The core of students' education lies in achieving self-recognition, mental health, and self-improvement. Educational drama can provide a good approach to this end. By relying on dramatic art, it plays out the unique educational function of drama, promoting the comprehensive development of students' ideological and moral qualities. For example, "[4]In Silence," one of China's red-themed drama works, directly eulogizes people's longing for a beautiful life. The story content presented in the drama can help university students better mirror reality and self-inspect, examine themselves and the fake, ugly, and evil elements around them, guide themselves with the correct ideological values, clarify right from wrong, avoid being influenced by wrong thoughts, always remind themselves to criticize and self-criticize, thereby improving their comprehensive and correct understanding of themselves, promoting the continuous healthy growth of their physical and mental state.

3.2 Shaping Ideal Personality of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

Educational drama's educational nature is its most critical and inherent characteristic. Truth, goodness, and beauty are vital functions in the moral education of educational drama. First, from the perspective of truth, it is about enabling university students to acquire knowledge through educational drama. Through rich dramatic stories and cultural knowledge content, it develops the wisdom of learners, helps them understand social reality, and continuously strives to be a genuine self. Educational drama is a combination of real life and art, letting students step into roles with their personal experiences, fusing self and roles.^[5] In this merging process, resonance is generated between both parties, eliminating the distance between the self and the dramatic work, thus making the acceptance of knowledge more profound. Particularly, the character archetypes in Chinese Communist Party's red-themed drama works allow students to understand history more devotedly, experience "real" scenarios back then, and hence get closer to the present reality. Secondly, educational drama can guide people towards goodness. Drama reflects nature and humanity like a mirror, yet it filters out a great deal of life details, akin to the spotlight filter, intensely portraying typical characters in typical environments, making life appear vividly. In acting and gaming classes, students have to play various roles, must comprehensively feel their thoughts and emotional experiences, put themselves in others' positions, choose character perspectives, break through self-centeredness, achieve "empathetic thinking." Such experiences teach them

to understand people kindly and tolerate others' shortcomings and mistakes. In addition, educational drama can enhance art students' aesthetic appreciation at colleges and universities, which is an essential quality for art major university students. In educational drama, participants project their thoughts and emotions into the performance, blending rich aesthetic experiences, achieving spiritual growth. Simultaneously, this teaching method combining learning with performance, creation, and fun-filled activities enlivens the dull teaching process, making it lively and interesting, indirectly enhancing aesthetic sentiments.

4 Red-themed education for students in art colleges with a focus on educational drama

4.1 Establish student teams to promote student communication

Given the current reality of art college students, most of them are only children and some issues exist in their communication with others. Some students tend to be solitary, which is not only a defect in their own personality growth, but also hinders political education, especially red-themed education. Club building is a common pathway for student learning and development in current university campuses. In the political education of art college students, the importance of team building should also be emphasized. On the one hand, team building can gather student power, make red-themed education more cohesive, and reflect the importance of unity, which is an intangible education for students. ^[6]On the other hand, team building can attract more students to participate, and in the process of team operation, it requires constant communication, friction, and collision among students. This not only can deepen students' understanding of the elements of red-themed education, but also can expand the theme education activities, increase the influence of theme education, create a strong learning atmosphere, and thereby enhance the value of theme education from top to bottom. For this reason, art colleges should focus on team building, recruit university students with the same hobbies to join the club, and build a team organization with a good charter and a reasonable structure. This includes not only specific performers but also different structures such as publicity and promotion, activity planning, prop management, and venue communication. They should continuously communicate and learn with each other towards the same goal. Especially around the performance of some dramatic works in the early days of the Communist Party of China that are somewhat distanced from the current life of college students, they need to fully communicate and promote each other in order to jointly create a situation that is more closely related to reality, play their own roles well, interpret good drama works, and truly play the role of drama education.

4.2 Play situational roles to carry out self-cognition

Educational drama is a type of situational experiential learning. By experiencing the role-playing of specific stories in specific situations, a change in psychology, emotion, and cognition is obtained. This cognition is not only a change in self-emotion, but also

a self-thinking generated after collision with the role. In the red-themed education of art college students with educational drama as the focus, this feature of educational drama can be fully utilized to allow students to perform drama works. By rehearsing drama works based on the outstanding deeds of the Communist Party of China, and fully devoting oneself to the specified situation as the second self of the role, understanding what is "true, good and beautiful" through a mode of role reversal thinking, effective self-reflection and cognition can be carried out. For example, in order to strengthen art college students' understanding of the Communist Party of China, and understand the story of the heroic sacrifice of the Communist Party members in the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China, students can perform red drama works such as "Sister Jiang", "Red Detachment of Women", and "Shajiang". The story of not fearing enemy torture and resolutely defending the interests of the Communist Party, through the setting of specific situations, through words and deeds, allows college students to fully immerse themselves in it in order to better understand the character of Communist Party members.^[7] In the process of interpretation, students can only present a successful drama work if they have a comprehensive understanding of the story background and a deep understanding of the character's psychological emotions. This is the essence of drama education. It should be noted that after the successful interpretation of the drama work, students should reflect on it. They should not only think about the good and bad of character shaping, but also more importantly, carry out a self-examination in conjunction with self and current circumstances, discover their own shortcomings, and thereby improve themselves, truly realizing the educational value of performing related red-themed drama works in red-themed education.

4.3 Cultivate Team Awareness, Enhance Student Literacy

The current generation of university students, who are mostly only children, often lack team collaboration skills - a reality that cannot be overlooked. In both real life and study, whether it is the completion of a drama work, the conquering of a team project, or future work, all cannot be separated from the support of team cooperation. Thus, cultivating the awareness of team cooperation among art college students is of utmost importance. Any play performance cannot be separated from the collaboration of everyone, both on and off the stage. Through rehearsal, students enhance their language organization, communication, and personal moral cultivation. Most drama works are carried out under the cooperation of a team of two or more people. Different roles interact with each other, different performers explore and learn from each other, and together they discuss the best way to perform, in order to achieve the desired performance effect. ^[8]This process not only improves the language expression ability of university students but also cultivates moral character. In ideological and political education centered on drama performance, different students have different understandings and viewpoints about the same thing, work, or role. Differences in opinions will inevitably occur, and even conceptual conflicts that neither side will give in to. In such cases, how to better handle contradictions and resolve problems is not only a reflection of a person's EQ and IQ but also a demonstration and improvement of a person's moral cultivation. Therefore, in the ideological and political education of college students focusing on

educational drama, teachers should also focus on cultivating students' team consciousness and enhancing their comprehensive literacy.

5 Conclusion

Educational drama contains rich moral education values. Exploring its moral education function helps to enhance students' moral cognition, cultivate moral emotions, and form moral behavior. The moral education value of educational drama lies in internalizing the education theme to the individual through interactive performances, so that learners are unconsciously emotionally cultivated and developed in terms of life outlook, world outlook, and values. The situationality, problem-orientation, and empathy characteristics of educational drama effectively contribute to the development of learners' moral cognition, the cultivation of moral emotions, and the demonstration of moral behavior. Art colleges should fully utilize the advantages of drama education, through organizing drama teams, rehearsing red-themed drama works, organizing drama performances and viewing activities, and in a subtle way, enhance students' awareness of teamwork, improve students' ideological and moral level, and promote the continuous improvement of university students' comprehensive literacy, making them talents needed by the country. The exploration of the educational role of drama, especially the integration with ideological and political education, is of great significance.^[9]By allowing students to participate in the creation and performance of drama, we can give full play to the educational function of drama, combine theoretical learning with practical application, enrich teaching methods, and effectively improve the effectiveness of ideological and political education. This will also be of great help to promote students' comprehensive development, improve their humanistic quality, and cultivate their innovative and practical abilities. Therefore, it is necessary to attach importance to and actively promote the application of drama in ideological and political education. The use of drama in ideological and political education should be a trend in the development of contemporary education, which will surely promote the reform and development of ideological and political education in China.

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