

# **The Use of Positive Psychology Idea and Method to Optimize the Ideological and Political Education of College Students**

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**Abstract:** Positive psychology is new territory of psychology study, which focuses on the positive force and virtue of human. The emergence and development of positive psychology provide directions and guidance for ideological and political education of college students. Based on the author's teaching experience for many years, this paper analyzes and points out problems in ideological and political education from the perspective of positive psychology. Then, this article discusses the reference significance of positive psychology in ideological and political education. Finally, it proposes implementation strategies in ideological and political education of college students from the view of positive psychology.

## **Introduction**

Positive psychology is new study territory rising from the United States in the late 20th century, which takes positive qualities and positive force as the study core and commits to making individuals and society towards prosperity. Positive psychology plays a driving role in the improvement and innovation of traditional concepts. At present, the whole country is studying and implementing the spirit of the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC, strengthening and improving ideological and political work, paying attention to humanistic concern and psychological counseling, and fostering self-esteem, rational, peaceful and positive social mentality. The combination of the positive psychology theories and achievements with ideological and political education of college students has strong reference significance. It will construct active implementation approaches to the ideological and political education of college students, promote the modernization of traditional ideological and political education concepts, and drive the innovative development of the ideological and political education.

## **Problems in Ideological and Political Education from the Perspective of Positive Psychology**

### **Inadequate understanding of positive qualities in the ideological and political education.**

Educational philosophy dominates the direction of education, and to a certain extent, determines the success or failure of education. For a long time, a lot of educators in the ideological and political education have hysteretic educational ideas and ignore the acceleration of positive qualities in the ideological and political education. Some educators mainly take traditional ideological and political education to prevent common moral problems of students and expect to achieve goals through criticism, warning, punishment and other means. These passive approaches will lead to negative mentality and dissatisfaction of college students. It is difficult to achieve the goal of preventing problems only relying on external coercive power. Creating conditions will make positive qualities and inherent potential of students developed, which will arm them with positive and voluntary prevention capacity. This is the most fundamental and effective solution.

**Insufficient practice in the ideological and political education.** The lack of vitality in

educational practice results in that college student cannot understand, accept and practice ideological and political education completely. First, they focus on socialization and ignore individuation. Traditional educators tend to carry out ideological and political education of college students with a unified and standardized model and neglect the individual differences in need and acceptance, so that students in the education process cannot experience positive emotions and have little interest and initiative in participating activities. Secondly, college students are out of touch with reality. The content of traditional ideological and political education is too theoretical and abstract, which ignores the emotional needs of the students. Therefore, it leads to a lack of sense of identity of college students in ideological and political education and a perfunctory attitude towards related educational activities in school.

**Inadequate participation of subjectivity in ideological and political education.** Teachers and students are in unequal positions in traditional ideological and political education process, where teachers determine the content and strategies and students can only passively accept and obey all. This, to some extent, strangles students' self-awareness of accepting, judging, practicing ideological and political education. The lack of subjectivity results in low degree of recognition of the ideological and political education and students will have a passive attitude towards it. Subjectivity deficiency makes ideological and political education impractical, so they cannot achieve the goal of enhancing students' ideological and political qualities and moral.

**Severe challenges in ideological and political education of college students.** The effectiveness of any ideological and political education is bound to their corresponding environment. Negative factors in society, school, family and other environments pose rigorous challenges in ideological and political education to varying degrees. First, the spread of money worship, individualism and other negative phenomena in society bring great challenges in the ideological and political education. The unethical, illegal and criminal acts of all levels of society have a passive impact on the formation of good moral characters, and establishment of correct outlook on life and values of college students. Secondly, utilitarian of material environment and negativity of cultural environment in campus will lead to credit crisis among college students. At the same time, it will induce Students to have psychological fickleness, utilitarianism and other problems, and even format wrong consumption view and values.

### **Reference significance of positive psychology in ideological and political education**

**Similarities in essence.** Modern ideological education adheres to the people-centered philosophy, respects the personality values and dignity of college students, and guides students to pursue the realization of the value of life. Its educational goal is to promote the comprehensive development and social progress by enhancing their own qualities. Therefore, both positive psychology and ideological and political education advocate people-oriented policies, concern about human values and pursue comprehensive development of human, so they are same in essence. Therefore, it is possible that the theories and main study content of positive psychology can be applied to ideological and political education.

**Feasibility of reference.** Positive psychology advocates to treating human potential in a more open and appreciative way and emphasis on the individual experience of positive emotions and the shape of positive qualities. Currently, the research achievements of positive psychology are mainly applied to education, business management and social support systems, such as the wide use of positive psychology in adolescent mental health education, the application of positive personality theory to business management, and cultivation of staff happiness experience. Therefore, the concepts and achievements of positive psychology not only provide a strong intellectual impetus in

the ideological and political education, but also improve feasible and new ways in the ideological and political education, such as a positive emotional experience and positive personality training.

**Acceptance of college students.** Positive emotions and personality involved in positive psychology emphasis on individuality and individual experience, and promote subjective well-being. This is consistent with the psychological characteristics of college students at present, and it is easily accepted by them. Positive psychology pays attention to the psychological and emotional factors in working methods and it concerns the importance of emotional need. Experiencing joy, optimism and other emotions through analysis of daily life events and various scenarios will arouse 90s students emotional resonance. Positive psychology tends to guide students in a hortative and incentive way which is more likely to be accepted by college students.

### **Implementation Strategies of Ideological and Political Education from the Perspective of Positive Psychology**

**Establish positive education concepts and enrich the connotation of ideological and political education.** Ideological and political educators bear the responsibility and mission of educating people, whose educational philosophy points out the direction of education, determines educational methods and acts as a guide and direction in improving students' ideological consciousness and establishing correct values. First, educators can use the ideas of positive psychology to build a new model of ideological and political education and foster positive educational concepts; second, they should respect the personality of college students, attach importance to personal initiative motivation of college students and stimulate their potential and creativity. Third, it is important to treat every student with an open and appreciative vision, and strengthen positive and appreciative educational philosophy in ideological and political education. Fourth, educators should firmly believe that there are inherent power and potential of self-growth in every student, and have a positive view to interpret students' growth problems. Finally, they are supposed to enrich connotation of ideological and political education, and explore positive qualities of college students to eliminate problems and shortcomings.

**Cultivate and develop positive energy of college students, and improve effectiveness of ideological and political education.** In the process of ideological and political education, to enhance students' positive emotional experience generated by positive psychology concepts will make them accessible to ideological and political education. Therefore, students will make full use of their own resources to improve their ideological and political qualities. This will make school education and students self-education unified. First, develop a positive way of thinking. Educators should change students' low self-esteem and other negative ways of thinking, and help them build self-confidence and enhance positive emotional experience in ideological and political education. Second, teach ways of emotional regulation and guide them to cultivate positive emotional experience. Teachers should impart some targeted ways of emotion regulation, such as vent, relaxation, empathy and so on, which will improve students' ability to regulate emotion, and make them maintain a healthy and active emotional state and have right ways to regulate emotion when faced problems. Third, guide students to have positive experience to treat the past and enhance the positive experiences in the past life. Educators should make students frankly face reality, get a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, enhance expectations for the future, and greet all challenges optimistically.

**Give full play to the subjectivity of students and consolidate long-term effect of ideological and political education.** In order to make ideological and political education accepted and internalized by students, we must recognize and respect the dominant position of students, and give

full play to their subjectivity. The stronger the subjectivity is, the higher consciousness of participation in the ideological and political education they will have, and they will be more likely to give full play to and release their own virtues and advantages in ideological and political education. First, stimulate the consciousness of students. Educators should consciously put students in the dominant position in ideological and political education, improve the traditional teacher-student relationship, give up superior feeling as teachers, offer students with respect, democratic communication and equal social status, and help them establish consciousness. Second, give full play to subjectivity of students to mobilize them to participate in education. It is personal initiative motivation that makes the external ideas internalized into your mind. We should improve students' participation system in ideological and political education, and guide students to actively carry out self-education, self-management and self-service exercise. Moreover, teachers are supposed to analyze the prominent features of today's college students in the light of development. At the same time, educators ought to use some typical examples to achieve breakthroughs in the education and promote work in all areas by drawing upon experiences gained on major points that are based on ideological actual situation and the content they care about. This will create a harmonious atmosphere of teaching, learning and entertaining, so that students will feel sufficiently charisma of educators and have enthusiasm and initiative in ideological and political education.

**Construct positive ideological and political education environment system and ensure the effectiveness of ideological and political education.** Positive environment system lays a solid material foundation of ideological and political education, promotes a positive interaction between ideological and political education and the environment, and provides impetus for the development of ideological and political education. In order to build a sound system of ideological and political education environment, we should optimize the social, campus and family environment, with school in the dominant position, and integrate society, school and family together. First, create a positive social environment. In the first place, purify social atmosphere and create a harmonious and healthy social atmosphere. It is significant to enhance students' ability to identify and resist bad stuff, improve socialist morality and ideological and moral cultivation, and carry forward Chinese traditional virtues, such as to serve the people, to be ready to help others, to respect the old and cherish the young and to serve society. Next, purify the social information resources and strengthen the guiding role of positive messages: to have a good supervision to network environment, to filter out gray information that is not conducive to students' growth and to establish green sites giving positive education for college students. All kinds of mass media should conduct positive propaganda that highlights the patriotism, socialist core value system, socialist ethics and the concept of collectivism, which will give full scope to the theme of the times and grasp the correct direction. Second, strengthen the construction of campus culture: to carry out various forms of healthy and beneficial cultural activities on campus with the high grade, high quality and high efficiency as the goal, and ideology, culture, academy, technology, entertainment as basic content. We should highlight campus spirit education with the culturally characteristic school badge and motto. Furthermore, we should create a good cultural atmosphere, cultivate noble sentiments of students, enhance students' positive emotional experience, and to cultivate a positive ideological and moral qualities.

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