

On How to Improve Cultural Education Ability of Instructors

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Abstract

Instructors need to enhance their ability of educating people with culture in order to cultivate young innovative talents, revolutionize instructors' work and achieve long-term professional development. Cultural education consists of ideological and political education. It also consists with the duty of instructors. This makes possible instructors' cultural education. Improving instructors' ability of educating people with culture depends on a clear understanding of its connotation, characteristics and structure as well as on an exploration of practical strategies in terms of how to inspire new ideas, nurture good qualities and set up platforms.

Key words: Instructors; Cultural education; Ability of educating people with culture

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INTRODUCTION

Instructors are in face of a new wave of opportunities and challenges with the implementation of “large-scale self-employment and innovation” strategy and the increasing impact of untraditional media. In such a context, the

question of our time turns out to be: in what way should instructors cultivate students? In essence, cultural education serves the same function with ideological and political education, which requires instructors to make the best use of various cultural resources and enhance the ability to foster students. Therefore, it's crucially important and quite urgent to analyze the possibility and feasibility of instructors' cultural education and figure out the deep meaning of and effective ways to enhance instructors' related ability.

1. LOGIC BEHIND INSTRUCTORS' ABILITY OF EDUCATING PEOPLE WITH CULTURE

What are the necessities and possibilities for instructors to practice cultural education? The answer to the question is the key to improve their ability of educating people with culture.

1.1 Necessity

1.1.1 Necessary to Nurture Innovative Talents

In the economic new normal, a national strategy which encourages massive self-employment and innovation is put forward to boost the country's development, especially employment, with these two driving forces while maintaining a stable and healthy economic growth. This adds new items to the agenda of universities in China. In his address at the 100th anniversary of Tsinghua University, President Hu Jintao pointed out that a higher education with better quality cannot be achieved without promotion of cultural transmission and innovation or practice of cultural education. Universities are expected to aggressively develop cultural resources and fully explore how to cultivate top creative elites while promoting cultural transmission and innovation to ensure its unique contribution to innovation and self-

employment. A solid cultural foundation, a set of good values and a healthy personality are the soil of creative thinking. Without them, it's very likely that a creative mind will be choked by utilitarianism and prejudices. Thus, to cultivate well-educated talents with innovative spirit, universities must practice cultural education. Moreover, cultural education is necessary to fight against cultural invasion. Values are at the core of a culture and cultures distinguish from each other with different values. The key to resist invasion of western cultures is to guide students properly and build a safety net which protects them from negative cultural impact. The net is mainly made of the socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, especially university campus cultures.

1.1.2 Necessary to Revolutionize Instructors' Work

Rapid development of modern information technology, especially the wide use of multi-media, new media and self-media, has greatly extended instructors' work. Traditional means of instruction are declining. There are less "office hours", "dorm visits" or "personal talks". In fact, the frontline of instruction has shifted from offices, classrooms and dormitories to the cyberspace. Offline education is usually carried out through regulations, conversations and argumentations. Online educational platform, however, requires new forms of instruction. Equal communication between instructors and students takes place of instructors-dominated infusion and preaching. Instructors cannot expect to know the feeling and thinking of students unless they are able to initiate equal and in-depth communication with students after establishing attractive platforms such as microblog and Wechat. Instructors must learn to remain attractive enough to keep up with the fast-changing online environment and students' mindset. Therefore, the cultural taste of instructors needs to be lifted and empty slogans in preaching need to be abandoned so that cultural resources will gradually influence students and spread good values.

1.1.3 Necessary to Professional Development

Cultural education is urgently needed for instructors to enhance their competence, identify value of their work and approximate professionalism. On the one hand, cultural education is necessary to realize the value of instructors' work. At present instructors are in charge of most administrative affairs, which often causes the negligence of instructors' important role in education. An increasing number of instructors are developing job burnout for want of social recognition and self-recognition. Instructors should be encouraged to practice cultural education, give ideological and political education by using rich cultural resources and let go traditional instruction and management such as infusion and preaching. Only by doing so can they expect to receive the respect they deserve and highlight the contribution of their job. Only by doing so can they gain happiness and sense of

achievement and finally better achieve self-actualization. On the other hand, cultural education is the best choice to develop professionalism. With the goal of education, the duty of instructors is to use cultural resources as teaching content and method and exert influence on students. Comparatively speaking, the ability of educating people with culture is more comprehensive and is in the leading position in the system of an instructors' ability. Better humanity, morality and personality pave the way for instructors' professionalism.

1.2 Possibility

1.2.1 Consistency Between Cultural Education and Ideological and Political Education

Cultural education is interrelated with ideological and political education. On the one hand, ideological and political education, with culture working as a vehicle, aims to nurture good virtues and healthy personalities. In fact, this is a process where people are influenced and cultivated by a culture in accordance with ideology, political ideas, ethics of certain society and class. The process is realized through transmission, spread and practice of certain cultural heritage, which reveals the relationship between culture and ideological and political education. Meanwhile, ideological and political education is a cultural phenomenon, which reflects the law of its development and explains its function of cultural education. On the other hand, culture, as a concept with rich content, consists of different factors among which ethics is always significant. Social cultural activities and cultural products is the reflection of ideology, values and morality of certain society and class. The fact that cultural education is consistent with ideological and political education enables instructors to cultivate talents with the help of cultural resources.

1.2.2 Consistency Between Functions of Cultural Education and Ideological and Political Education

The function of cultural education and ideological and political education is highly congruent. For one thing, culture entails the content of ideological and political education. The culture itself contains information about Ideological and Political Education. "Cultural education is one important way of ideological and political education since culture is the vehicle of thinking." (Yuan, 2002) For another, ideological and political education bears a marked brand of culture. "It is a process and an activity that certain class or group shape people with selected values. It connects and interacts with culture." (Zhao, 2015). This process indeed is a process which spread ethics and morality. "The Chinese Communist Party attaches great importance to culture construction and combines it with ideological and political education of party members and the masses." (Chen, 2002). Instructors, as the main actor of ideological and political education of university students, must take into consideration the political and

educational function. Instructors are expected to give ideological and political education with more human touch when dealing with questions or inquiries concerning value rationality.

1.2.3 Correspondence to Instructors' Work

Instructors are the pillars of ideological and political education on university students. Their work covers education, management and service, with education at the core. Cultural education corresponds to the responsibility of instructors. That's why it is highly emphasized. For one thing, instructors can base their work on cultural resources. Because of some historic restrictions, instructors tend to adopt the administrative model, leaving disciplining an important way of instruction. As time goes by, instructors' work becomes more complicated, requiring instructors to make the best use of cultural resources and add more art to their work. For another, cultural competence is one of the qualifications an instructor must have. An instructor is an educator, a manager and a lighthouse for university students. In order to increase efficiency, it would be better to lift instructors' taste for culture, satisfy their spiritual needs and strengthen their ability to educating people with culture.

2. THEORETICAL INTERPRETATION OF CULTURAL EDUCATION ABILITY OF INSTRUCTORS

The necessity and possibility of cultural education in instructor's work make it necessary to study the cultural education ability, which requires a thorough understanding of the connotation, characteristics and structure of cultural education ability of instructors.

2.1 The Connotation of Cultural Education Ability of Instructors

Ability, an important category in psychological research, means the psychological traits necessary for a person to complete some activity. Ability is shown in various kinds of activities and can be developed during activities. Based on psychological understanding of ability, we can define cultural education ability of instructors as follows: the cultural education ability of instructors means cultural consciousness and individual psychological traits of merging cultural elements into practical work which instructors must equip themselves with in educational activities like educational management, service, and guidance. Furthermore, the cultural education ability requires instructors to work freely and consciously under the guidance of socialist core value, derive cultural resources rationally, change the way they work, make efforts to merge cultural elements into education and to perform the educational function of culture, thus completing the fundamental task of high

moral values establishment and people cultivation in a subtle and unnoticed way.

2.2 The Characteristics of Cultural Education Ability of Instructors

2.2.1 The Implicitness of Cultural Education Ability of Instructors

The cultural education ability of instructors is implicit and is revealed in many other abilities. It is difficult to observe and to measure, and it can play its function in a subtle way only when it is combined with specific education, management, service, and guidance and permeates carriers like management of social organization and campus culture activities. The performance of cultural educational ability of instructors needs help from explicit abilities such as communication skills and written communication ability.

2.2.2 The Ruling Position of Cultural Education Ability of Instructors

The cultural education ability of instructors is implicit and dependent, but this dependence is based on the premise of its ruling position among instructors' many abilities. Because of its ruling position, it has to run through every aspect of people cultivation. To realize its all missions, a university is required to play an important role of culture by permeating university culture through each aspect of quality-oriented education as well as the whole course of daily management. In this sense, the cultural education ability occupies the ruling position.

2.2.3 The Empirical Trait of Cultural Education Ability of Instructors

The cultural education ability of instructors is empirical, because this kind of ability comes from individual awareness and consciousness of instructors. It is difficult to measure and there is no way to measure. It has the nature of individual experience and is the practical wisdom of each instructor. Instructors play its function in practical work by combining culture with people cultivation and then gain work experience and wisdom.

2.2.4 The Dynamics of Cultural Education Ability of Instructors

The dynamics of cultural education ability of instructors refer to the fact that this kind of ability can be developed. It means that instructors can improve themselves continuously in people cultivation, realize self-exceeding and move towards a better self. Cultural education ability is not a static combination of knowledge and skills but in a dynamic presentation of instructors' occupational activities. Instructors need to improve and perfect this ability constantly in their career.

2.3 The Structure of Cultural Education Ability of Instructors

The instructor's ability of educating people with culture can be divided into culture selection ability, culture merging ability and cultural atmosphere creation ability and cultural reflection ability, based on instructors'

participation in college students' ideological and political education activities and their specific work in merging culture into people cultivation.

2.3.1 Ability of Selecting Culture

Cultural education ability of Instructors first contains the ability to select different cultures. When selecting the cultures, instructors are mainly politics-oriented, make decisions under the guidance of consciousness and based on understanding. First, instructors must be politics-oriented. On multi-cultural background, traditional culture and foreign culture, advanced civilization and backward civilization, socialist core value and western values gather in the college campus and cyberspace. Different cultures interact with each other, so instructors need to practice the socialist core value in their work by bringing students advanced culture which is in accordance with the socialist direction and lead students to develop right cultural resources. Second, instructors should have culture consciousness. They can identify different cultural elements from diversified cultures with their own ideology and choose right cultural resources for students based on students' ideology. Third, understanding is the basis. Under this multi-cultural backdrop, instructors should have a deep understanding of differences between divergent cultures. They must first know clearly about the positive and negative influence of different cultural resources, and then they can choose positive elements to cultivate students and meanwhile evade negative cultural elements.

2.3.2 Ability of Integrating Culture

Cultivating people with culture means merging culture with education which covers exploits, designs, disseminates, permeates, develops and builds culture. Therefore, instructors' cultural education ability includes the ability to merge cultural resources and elements in specific work of people cultivation and this kind of ability is the important aspect of instructors' cultural education ability. Instructors should consciously incorporate ideological and political education of college students into the vision of cultural studies and get well-prepared for improving cultural elements in people cultivation. They are supposed to combine culture with people cultivation in practical work and equip themselves with the ability to create and design cultural activities, the ability to disseminate and permeate culture and the ability to develop and build culture.

2.3.3 Ability of Creating Cultural Atmosphere

In fact, cultivating people with culture is to give full play to cultural infiltration by making people in some cultural atmosphere consciously or unconsciously accept cultural concepts and receive the education. The theory behind it is the so-called Kimchi cylinder theory. The culture atmosphere creation ability of instructors means that they can create an appropriate cultural atmosphere for students in all fields like learning, daily life, and

entertainment. For example, instructors can create a quite and positive atmosphere for studying, a harmonious and warm atmosphere in dormitory, a sincere and caring atmosphere during students' intercourse. The culture atmosphere creation ability is the key for instructors to permeate rich cultural resources in educational management. Only with this ability, can they better cultivate people with culture.

2.3.4 Ability of Reflecting on Culture

In the course of cultural education, instructors should regard themselves as the object of consciousness and work as the reflection area. They should actively examine, assess, and reflect upon the specific work in developing cultural resources and in utilizing culture to conduct educational management, summarize experiences and learn from lessons. How instructors respond to, adjust this cultural education work shows their culture reflection ability. Instructors should conduct self-assessment, reflect upon gains and losses, sum up experiences and realize self-improvement in the course of cultural education. Only in this way can they consciously embed culture in activities, play the role of cultivating people through culture, assess and summarize their work and constantly improve themselves.

3. PRAGMATIC STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTORS' ABILITY IN CULTURAL EDUCATION

In order to improve the quality of education towards university students' political awareness, it is necessary to enhance the cultural contents of instructors' education and to develop their ability to carry out educational work by using cultural resources. Thus, awareness cultivation, quality development and system building effectively constitute a pragmatic strategy.

3.1 To Develop Instructors' Awareness of Cultural Education

3.1.1 To Confirm the Major Role of Instructors in the Cultural Education

Instructors should consciously extend their influence as the major part in the cultural education and proactively combine culture with education. Under the current international working environment of instructors, they are required to adapt themselves to the international context and the behavior mode. "According to the Marxism, internationalization is an objective social and historical phenomenon and, on the other hand, a unique thinking pattern. Through this international perspective, the subjective thinking method built in the course of team development of instructors is a pattern that insists on the Marxism and sets country, profession and individual at its center." Subjective self-awareness and conscious cultural

behavior are considered as premise to enhance instructors' ability of cultural education. Thus, to develop the subjective thinking and stimulate the subjective activeness has become an urgent mission.

3.1.2 To Arouse Instructors' Conscious Awareness of Cultural Education

Awareness is the precursor of behavior so that instructors should have a clear awareness of the importance of enhancing the ability of cultural education, strengthening their consciousness and changing their opinion. Cultural education is regarded not only a common education method but also a firm belief that is promoted and conducted. How is the combination between culture and education and how is the result of instructors' works? All are closely connected with the awareness of cultural education. However, the change of opinion and the cultivation of awareness cannot be achieved in one day. Thus, instructors' work and practice, through the constant cognition, understanding and internalization, will eventually be transformed into conscious awareness.

3.1.3 To Actively Develop the Culture in the Team of Instructors

The culture in the team of instructors is formed in the long-term process of cultivating university students' political awareness, which is based on the social values including moral norm, behavioral principle, thinking pattern, spiritual outlook and organization system. This is a distinctive behavioral culture changed and improved with the development of society and history. To improve the ability of instructors is one of the tasks in the development of the culture in the team of instructors and one of the requirements of extending the influence at a maximum level and promoting the educational quality of training talents. With the development of the culture in the instructor group, forming common values in this team such as spiritual beliefs, behavioral norms and conduct codes, can aggregate consensus and improve enthusiasm. So it is important to enhance the attractiveness, cohesion and centripetal force of the culture in the instructor group through the development of spiritual culture, behavioral culture and institutional culture.

3.2 To Improve the Qualities of Cultural Education

3.2.1 To Enrich and Accumulate Instructors' Knowledge

Knowledge is the base of culture. The abilities that individuals acquire through learning and working are, generally speaking, formed on the basis of knowledge. In order to enhance the cultural education, instructors are required to strengthen their studies under the socialist core values, to learn traditional Chinese culture and take the essence from foreign culture, to develop both of the local and the university culture, and become the communicator of them. What's more, instructors are demanded to enhance their culture consciousness not only towards the traditional Chinese culture but also towards that from

other countries, and finally improve their consciousness towards cultural education.

3.2.2 To Conduct Academic Researches and Improve Professional Quality

Instructors are supposed to relentlessly think and summarize what they have got from their studies and work, which is important for instructors to improve their ability to educate students. Instructors' professionalization requires their individual, professional development. It means that instructors are not only educational manager for students but a qualified researcher capable of launching dependent academic research. Therefore, instructors need to lay a solid theoretical foundation through pursuing studies and conducting scientific researches. Besides, instructors also need to be an active participator in scientific researches so as to command scientific way of thinking and improve the professional quality. By doing so, instructors can be in a better position to improve its work in ideological and political work for college students, form scientific and systematic capability to educate students culturally.

3.2.3 To Strengthen the Training for Instructors

Chinese Ministry of Education has issued a program introducing the training plans for instructors. This program has clearly set instructors' training course at one part of cadre training and teacher training. With the help of instructors' training bases, we need to strengthen more targeted training for instructors' ability to educate students culturally. What's more, all universities have been asked to conduct training and interaction within campus and all schools are encouraged to have writing contests and discussion forum to identity responsibilities, build concept of cultural education and improve the ability to educate students culturally.

3.3 To Build a Platform for Cultural Education

3.3.1 Exploration of Carriers

"Since culture is not isolated, culturally education should not be separated from other forms of education." (Liu, 2013) Cultural education needs a carrier, the same as the ability of cultural education. In order to improve instructors' ability to educate students culturally, we are supposed to find something which could be combined with culture from various activities such as training for job hunting, providing financial support for poor students, ideological education and psychological consultation. Through such combination, instructors' ability to educate students culturally could be better promoted.

3.3.2 Involvement of Media

In order to promote their ability in cultural education, instructors are not only supposed to stick to traditional forms of ideological and political education, but exploit sources of new media. By doing so, they could make the most use of ways to educate students culturally online and offline. Besides, it is necessary for us to make a

combination between college culture and new media, which will expand the tunnel of cultural dissemination. What's more, it is important for them to dig out the Internet source to employ the function of the Internet in college ideological and political education. Instructors are encouraged to interact with students through microblog and Wechat, which is helpful to pass information, increase attractiveness and employ the implicit function of culture.

3.3.3 Upgrading of Projects

Occupational education has shown that the best way to improve professional ability is to practice what you have learnt through projects. The improvement of instructors' ability of culture education requires not only the theoretical knowledge but the training in practice. Only through practice, can we accumulate experiences and skills. Training can solve the problem of knowledge dissemination, but not the improvement of ability to deal with problems. If we want to transform our knowledge to ability, practice in projects is the only way. There are various campus culture activities in universities and colleges. As the head of activities, instructors take lessons by planning, conducting and summarizing activities so as to realize the goal of promoting ability of practicing cultural education.

CONCLUSION

"Education through culture" is closely related to the university's mission, "instructors' ability of educating students with culture" is the key to implement high-quality talent education in the university, strengthen the ability of the cultural education of university instructors, play the enculturation function of education, give full play to the implicit function of ideological and political education in the new era, and improve the actual effect of ideological and political education.

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