

Exploring Educational Models of Integrity Culture Among University Students in the New Era

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ABSTRACT

Universities shoulder the vital mission of cultivating talent for the country and society, serving as the cradle for the growth of young students. However, under the impact of diverse values in modern society, university students are prone to issues such as vague ideals and beliefs, and a weak sense of integrity. Against this research backdrop, this study integrates the concept of integrity culture with the ideology of the "Grand Ideological and Political Course" to comprehensively explore new educational models of integrity culture that transcend classrooms, cultures, and media platforms. On this basis, emerging media technologies are leveraged to achieve precise dissemination and broad coverage of integrity culture education. Furthermore, the educational content and approaches are tailored to the generational and developmental characteristics of university students. This aims to ensure that students are emotionally engaged, intellectually stimulated, and morally enlightened through the educational process.

KEYWORDS

integrity cultur; Grand Ideological and Political Course; university students

From the strategic perspective of the "two overall situations" and at a new historical juncture characterized by "profound changes unseen in a century," the concept of the "Grand Ideological and Political Course" was explicitly put forward. This concept advocates a holistic vision and systematic thinking, integrating ideological and political education into the entire educational process and all stages of student development, thereby providing ideological guidance for cultivating a new generation capable of shouldering the great task of national rejuvenation. One of the key roles of the "Grand Ideological and Political Course" lies in promoting collaboration among schools, society, and families to help adolescents establish correct outlooks on life, values, and the world during their critical developmental stages, effectively fastening the "first button" in life. As an essential component of university campus culture, integrity culture aligns closely with the educational objectives of the "Grand Ideological and Political Course." Integrity culture education, by promoting the value of self-discipline and establishing normative moral constraints, plays an indispensable role in cultivating students' core competencies. The organic integration of the two not only enhances students' moral and ideological qualities but also provides critical support for nurturing well-rounded, high-caliber talents for the nation.

At present, strengthening integrity culture education in universities and promoting its integration with the "Grand Ideological and Political Course" is both an intrinsic requirement for deepening ideological and political education reform and a vital embodiment of universities' fundamental mission to foster virtue and character. On one hand, embedding the concept of integrity culture into the ideological and political curriculum can further strengthen students' sense of responsibility, honesty, and integrity, guiding them to develop sound values and ethical perspectives through learning and practice. On the other hand, integrity culture education also enriches campus culture, fostering an atmosphere that values integrity and frugality, and helps internalize integrity as a value pursuit and behavioral habit among students. This provides assurance for cultivating high-quality professionals who not only possess strong expertise but also uphold integrity as a core personal trait.

1 Current Status and Challenges of Integrity Culture Education under the Perspective of the Grand Ideological and Political Course

1.1 Common Problems and Limiting Factors in the Current State of Integrity Culture Education in Universities

First, the issue of formalism in integrity culture education is particularly prominent. Many universities emphasize fulfilling formal requirements when implementing integrity education, while neglecting deeper educational content. Studies show that the main forms of integrity culture education in universities include anti-corruption lectures, thematic exhibitions, and class meetings. Although the formats are diverse, the content is often monotonous and disconnected from reality, making it difficult to stimulate students' interest and participation. This "task-oriented" approach not only weakens students' sense of identification with integrity culture but also diminishes the actual effectiveness of the

education.

Second, there is a disconnect between the content of integrity culture education and the actual needs of students. Contemporary college students grow up in a diversified environment shaped by informatization and globalization, and are deeply influenced by the internet and various social ideologies, leading to increasingly diversified values. In some universities, integrity education tends to focus on theoretical indoctrination and lacks in-depth analysis tailored to the cognitive and ideological characteristics of college students, making it difficult to resonate with them. For example, the study by Li Honggang and Chen Yue indicates that although the content of integrity education includes theories of integrity, laws and regulations, and moral values, there is still considerable room for improvement in terms of relevance and vividness, with relatively low levels of student attention and acceptance.

Third, the problems of insufficient resources and weak faculty capacity are widespread. Integrity culture education requires professional curriculum design and continuous resource investment, yet many universities face significant shortcomings in resource allocation. For instance, research by Deng Xiaoming and Liao Yonglin reveals that some universities lack dedicated faculty teams for integrity education, relying instead on ideological and political education instructors to take on additional responsibilities. Under such circumstances, the depth and systematic nature of integrity education cannot be effectively ensured. Moreover, due to the absence of a long-term and stable support mechanism, the sustainability of integrity culture education activities in universities is also limited.

1.2 Research on the Integration of Integrity Culture and Ideological-Political Education in Universities in the New Era

Integrity culture education and ideological-political education have an inherent alignment in their goals and functions, and their organic integration represents a key direction for innovation in ideological and political work in universities. In recent years, scholars have conducted multi-faceted research on the relationship between integrity culture and ideological-political education.

Firstly, ideological and political theory courses serve as an important carrier for integrity culture education. Na Juhua and Zhou Lu argue that, as the primary channel of ideological and political work in universities, these courses should integrate integrity culture content into teaching objectives and curricula to achieve comprehensive coverage of integrity education through classroom instruction.

Secondly, the integration of integrity culture education into ideological-political courses has a solid theoretical and practical foundation. Wang Chunyang systematically elaborates the path for deep integration of integrity culture and ideological-political education from four dimensions: historical logic, theoretical logic, value logic, and practical logic. He believes that integrity culture education can not only enrich the content of ideological and political courses but also impart deeper value guidance and practical significance to the curriculum.

Although research on integrity culture education in domestic universities has achieved certain theoretical results, the following deficiencies remain:

- (1) lack of systematic research content: existing studies often focus on specific areas, lacking in-depth exploration of the overall system of integrity culture education in universities;
- (2) unclear practical pathways: research on models of integrity culture education tends to be theoretical, with a lack of concrete practical plans and operational guidance;
- (3) limited personalized research: there is a scarcity of studies addressing different types of universities and student groups, and the targeting of educational content and methods needs improvement.

2 Research Significance and Innovations of the Study

This study is guided by the concept of the "Great Ideological and Political Course," focusing on the integration pathways of integrity culture education within ideological and political education in universities. It innovatively proposes a systematic and personalized education model, aiming to establish a scalable integrity culture education system in higher education institutions. The main innovations of this study include:

- (1) integrating the "Great Ideological and Political Course" concept to explore a novel integrity culture education model that spans classrooms, cultures, and media platforms;
- (2) leveraging new media technologies to achieve precise dissemination and wide coverage of integrity culture education;
- (3) focusing on the characteristics of students in the respective universities to develop differentiated educational content and methods, thereby enhancing the targeting and effectiveness of the education. Through these innovations, the study aims to provide highly operable solutions for integrity culture education in universities and offer both theoretical and practical support for the reform of ideological and political education in the new era.

3 Integrity Culture Education Pathways from the Perspective of the Great Ideological and Political Course

3.1 Exploring Integrity Elements in Ideological and Political Courses

As a distinctive feature of socialist education in universities, the "Great Ideological and Political Course" undertakes the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education and plays a crucial role in cultivating talent for socialist modernization. During a symposium with university ideological and political theory teachers, it was emphasized that "the role of ideological and political courses is irreplaceable, and the responsibilities of the teaching faculty are significant." As a key component of ideological and political education, the integration of integrity culture education into ideological and political courses is an essential practical approach to achieving the educational goals of the "Great Ideological and Political Course."

University students in the new era are in a critical stage of value formation; their development and success require not only a solid foundation of theoretical knowledge, but also the ability to keep pace with contemporary developments, with a clear understanding of social realities and a deep appreciation of integrity-related values. Therefore, identifying and integrating integrity education elements into ideological and political courses is not only a key measure for fulfilling the objectives of ideological and political education, but also a vital means of enhancing the effectiveness of education.

3.1.1 Systematically Integrating the Content of Integrity Culture Education

On the basis of existing courses, emphasis should be placed on systematically integrating the content of integrity culture education, so that it is no longer limited to fragmented theoretical explanations but becomes a logically coherent and structurally organized teaching system. For example, in the course Ideological and Moral Cultivation and Legal Basis, a modular design can be adopted to structure lessons around topics such as "the historical development and value connotations of integrity culture," "integrity culture and the core values of socialism with Chinese characteristics," and "the practical significance of integrity culture." Theoretical knowledge can also be integrated with concrete case studies, such as classic stories of ancient upright officials (e.g., Bao Zheng, Hai Rui) and exemplary figures in the new era (e.g., Jiao Yulu, Kong Fansen), enabling students to gain a profound understanding of the value of integrity through comparison.

Furthermore, the cultivation of an integrity-oriented culture can be systematically incorporated into ideological and political theory courses. For instance, when examining national development frameworks and policy orientations, the integration of integrity-related content can enhance students' understanding of its relevance to effective governance and the cultivation of a sound civic ethos. Likewise, in the context of exploring ethical values and moral reasoning, integrity may be emphasized as a foundational principle underpinning both social equity and individual ethical conduct.

3.1.2 Deepening Course Content in Line with Contemporary Contexts

Under the context of the new era, ideological and political courses must stay abreast of current events and pay attention to both domestic and international developments, while also deeply exploring the connections between integrity culture and contemporary social issues. For instance, discussions can focus on recent anti-corruption initiatives, advancements in organizational ethics and clean governance, as well as notable integrity-related cases in science, healthcare, and education. Topics such as "the contemporary significance of anti-corruption efforts" and "the role of integrity culture in supporting the modernization of national governance" can help students gain a deeper understanding of integrity culture through practical and real-world analysis.

In addition, incorporating historical insights into contemporary educational contexts significantly enhances students' ability to critically engage with real-world issues. A comprehensive examination of the historical trajectory of integrity-based governance, framed by enduring ethical traditions and reinforced by modern institutional frameworks for self-discipline, allows students to recognize the sustained relevance of integrity. This understanding contributes to the cultivation of civic responsibility and supports the advancement of transparent, accountable, and ethically grounded political and social systems. Moreover, students can be encouraged to internalize the concept of integrity culture as a personal code of conduct, enabling them to practice integrity and self-discipline throughout their future careers.

3.2 Innovating Approaches and Methods for Integrity Education

In the process of integrating integrity culture into ideological and political education, traditional pedagogical methods have largely relied on theoretical explanations and top-down instruction. Such approaches often fail to resonate with contemporary college students, making it difficult to cultivate genuine identification with and internal motivation for integrity values. Therefore, innovation in educational methods has become essential for achieving a deeper fusion between integrity education and ideological-political curricula. Universities must incorporate modern information

technologies and adapt to the evolving social context, employing diversified and flexible teaching strategies. This shift aims to move integrity culture education from passive theoretical transmission toward immersive experiential learning, ultimately transforming it from an externally imposed requirement into an internally driven personal commitment.

3.2.1 Integrating Online and Offline Educational Models

With the rapid advancement of information technology, universities can adopt a hybrid model that integrates online and offline approaches to free integrity education from the spatial and temporal limitations of traditional classrooms, thus expanding its reach and enhancing student participation.

(1) Developing an Online Learning Platform for Integrity Culture

Universities should leverage smart campus resources and existing online education systems to create dedicated platforms for integrity learning. These platforms can include comprehensive digital libraries featuring historical materials, case studies, and anti-corruption policy documents; interactive modules such as discussion forums and Q&A centers; and assessment systems offering quizzes and personalized feedback. Personalized recommendation systems may further tailor content delivery to individual learning preferences, improving engagement and efficiency.

(2) MOOCs-Based Instruction

Integrity-focused Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) should be developed to address diverse learner needs. By facilitating cross-institutional collaboration, such courses can be made available to a wider audience. Course formats may include scenario-based instruction, real-time interactive sessions, and detailed case studies, incorporating both domestic and international examples to help students build a global outlook on integrity and governance.

(3) Self-Media Teaching Approach

Utilizing popular platforms such as TikTok, WeChat, and Weibo, universities can engage students with integrity-themed short videos, gamified knowledge quizzes, and live-streamed classes. The convenience and interactivity of these platforms embed integrity education into students' daily routines while also amplifying dissemination through shares and likes.

(4) Organic Integration of Online and Offline Activities

A seamless blend of digital and physical learning enhances educational experience. For example, universities can host short video competitions allowing students to creatively express their views on integrity, with top entries publicly showcased. Upon completion of online theory courses, institutions may organize offline seminars and fieldwork activities to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, helping students internalize integrity as a personal and societal value.

3.2.2 Introducing Scenario Simulation and Role-Playing

Scenario simulation and role-playing are experiential learning approaches that help students intuitively grasp the significance of integrity culture through active participation, thereby strengthening their sense of integrity.

(1) Designing Realistic Scenario Cases

Cases reflecting real-life contexts from campus and society should be constructed to provide relevant learning experiences. For instance, mock trials can be organized around anti-corruption cases, with students role-playing as judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys to explore the intersection of law and ethics. Another example is simulating corporate bidding processes, where scenarios involving corruption allow students to understand the consequences of unethical decision-making. Through these activities, students not only realize the damaging effects of corruption on social fairness but also appreciate the constructive influence of integrity on societal development.

(2) Innovating Gamified Teaching Formats

Educators can develop gamified classroom activities focused on integrity. For example, decision-making simulation games can challenge students to choose between personal gain and ethical behavior, offering different consequences based on their decisions to reinforce the value of integrity. Students may also write and perform integrity-themed skits that depict either heroic figures or typical anti-corruption cases, deepening engagement through storytelling. A critical component of these activities is guided reflection: instructors should encourage students to reflect on their actions and outcomes, perhaps through reflective journals or classroom discussions, helping them internalize integrity as a guiding principle in their personal behavior.

(3) Strengthening Case Analysis and Discussion

Case analysis and discussion are problem-based teaching approaches that encourage students to deepen their understanding of integrity culture through critical examination of real-world examples from multiple perspectives.

Careful selection of integrity and corruption cases is essential. Educational content should include representative cases from both domestic and international contexts, offering a balanced perspective by integrating both positive and negative examples. Positive cases may feature upright figures such as Bao Zheng's commitment to justice, Jiao Yulu's selfless

dedication, and Kong Fansen's integrity in public service. Negative cases may involve real instances of senior officials being dismissed for corruption, with in-depth analysis of their societal impact and personal consequences.

Multi-dimensional analysis is key to fostering critical insight. Educators should guide students in exploring each case from moral, legal, and social perspectives—for example, by discussing how corruption undermines economic development and social equity, or by analyzing the role of integrity in fostering organizational trust and social harmony.

Student-led discussions can enhance engagement and thinking depth. Open discussions and classroom debates—such as exploring the tension between personal interest and public responsibility—can stimulate independent thought, critical reasoning, and public speaking skills.

Integrating emotional education into case teaching is equally important. Teachers may incorporate emotionally resonant materials, such as confession videos from corrupt officials or inspiring stories of honest and dedicated public servants, to evoke students' empathy and emotional connection. This approach makes integrity education more impactful and helps internalize its values.

3.2.3 Building an Interdisciplinary Collaborative Education Model

Innovative integrity education requires interdisciplinary collaboration to expand both the breadth and depth of the curriculum. Integrate disciplines such as management and law: for example, analyze the impact of integrity culture on administrative efficiency in public administration courses; explore anti-corruption laws and regulations in legal studies. Integrate traditional Chinese culture: explore integrity-related ideas embedded in classical traditions, such as the Confucian concept of “cultivating oneself, managing the family, governing the state, and bringing peace to the world,” in order to enhance students' identification with integrity through cultural inheritance.

From the perspective of the “Big Ideological and Political Education” framework, the implementation of integrity culture education in universities is a vital practice to fulfill the fundamental mission of fostering virtue through education, and a key step in promoting innovation in ideological and political education. Through this research, we aim to provide strong ideological guidance for nurturing well-rounded young talents in the new era, and to contribute both theoretical and practical support to the high-quality development of higher education.

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