

Study on the Ideas and Measures for Improving Undergraduate's Humanistic Literacy--Take Chifeng University as an Example

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Abstract: This paper starts with the discussion on the importance of humanistic literacy in the work report of the Third CPC Congress of Chifeng University, researches on the status quo of undergraduates' lack of humanistic literacy, and analyzes the reasons raising such phenomenon. It puts forward the ideas and suggestions on how to improve the humanistic literacy of undergraduates according to the reality of the education and teaching practice in this school.

Introduction

The work report of the Third CPC Congress of Chifeng University clearly indicated that: "carrying out the policy of strengthening moral education and cultivating people", "striving to create an all-around development system of moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetics and labor education, according to the requirements of the new era", "sticking on aesthetic education, hereby to enhance the students' aesthetic sentiment and humanistic literacy", "actively exploring a talent cultivation system integrated by scientific foundation, practical ability and humanistic literacy". The report of Chifeng University's third CPC Congress is highly consistent with the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, emphasizing the importance of moral education, all-round development and humanistic literacy of undergraduates. The humanistic literacy is an important standard to decide whether an undergraduate has achieved all-round development or not, humanistic literacy is the external presentation of an undergraduate's inner cultivation, and also reflects the undergraduate's morality, volitional character, cultural cultivation, psychological quality, values, aesthetics, ambition, thinking mode, behavior habit and adaptability, etc.. In the process of improving the undergraduate's quality and the undergraduate teaching system, humanistic literacy is an indispensable part. Therefore, the research on how to improve the humanistic literacy of undergraduates is of great significance and value in the process of learning, propagating and implementing the spirit of the third party congress of Chifeng University.

Chuang-tzu, an ideologist of ancient China, had said: "what is useless is of great use. Today, employment rate is taken as a key criteria to assess a university" and utilitarian is increasingly prominent in education field, the humanistic literacy cannot be ignored in the talent cultivation process. Humanistic literacy includes knowledge, cultivation and behavior. Humanistic knowledge is the premise and foundation of humanistic literacy, as well as an external tool and means that can be quantified. When humanistic knowledge really penetrates into individual thoughts and behaviors, it can be called humanistic literacy. Ultimately, literacy should be externalized into behavior. [1]Humanistic literacy is an important issue that is unavoidable in the cultivation of undergraduates and an important part of cultivating "harmonious people" with all-round development. The importance of humanistic literacy has been frequently mentioned and emphasized in the policies raging from the major national educational policies to the universities' policies on cultivating students and then to the teaching of front-line teachers. While, due to various reasons, there are still many deficiencies in the humanistic literacy of undergraduates.

1. The Status Quo of Undergraduates' Lack of Humanistic Literacy

First, humanistic knowledge is insufficient. In more than five years of teaching practice of optional courses named *College Chinese* and *The Traditional Chinese Culture*, the author has found that there is a lack of humanistic knowledge among undergraduates, and their desire and passion for humanistic knowledge could also be found. Through interaction during teaching, after-class composition, process assessment, examination and other teaching methods, the author found that some undergraduates' ability of applying Chinese is worrying, problems like wrong reading and writing of commonly used words, wrong sentence structures and digression can be found very frequently, and even their compositions are lack of true feeling. Further, few undergraduates can write Chinese characters neatly and aesthetically, and the ability to read, think and express is often disappointed.

Second, human cultivation is insufficient. Some students behave rudely, do not respect their teachers, and break up class discipline like disturbing class order, playing cell phone in class. They have no great ambition and are lack of ability of self-discipline and the spirit of self-improvement, they cheated the examination. The aesthetic ability to appreciate literary works and literary classic is obviously missing. They can't properly handle interpersonal relationships. Their spiritual world is empty, the state of mind is impetuous, and so they cannot concentrate on study. All these serious problems worry us.

Third, the values are not correct. Some students tend to be utilitarian on the view of life, world and values. They pay too much attention to their own interests; ignore the personality quality, patriotism, and the sense of social responsibility, as well as teamwork and the sense of national identity. They don't care about the ultimate meaning of life, has no reasonable plan on the study and life of university, only focus on the present entertainment.

2. The Reasons Leading To the Insufficiency of the Undergraduates' Humanistic Literacy

At present, universities in China pay more and more attention to the education of humanistic literacy ideologically, but there is still a lack of strong measures to ensure the carrying out of humanistic literacy education, so the goal of "all-round development" has not been achieved.

Firstly, exam-oriented education in primary and secondary schools affects students' passion for literature and other knowledge. The lack of humanistic knowledge is not built in a day. The exam-oriented education and assessment model in primary and secondary schools play a certain negative role in students' learning of literature, history, philosophy and other courses. A large number of passive recitation of the knowledge and rigid teaching model make students fail to experience the charm of the humanities in the process of learning humanistic knowledge. On the contrary, many students focus on preparing for exams and improving their scores, and even a few choose to give up and performs bad on learning. Therefore the afore-mentioned low-level problems appear when they enter into the universities.

Secondly, universities' curriculum system restricts the cultivation of humanistic literacy. At present, the curriculum in universities is mainly oriented to social needs and students' employment, and humanities subjects have not received due attention. In 2013, Renmin University of China implemented the reform of college Chinese curriculum and listed it as an optional course, which caused an intense debate in the education field. Chinese course, regarded as the "fundamental study", was ignored and faced the reality of marginalization. [2]In the process of teaching, the author deeply realized that students have different attitudes towards specialized courses, compulsory courses and optional courses. Even though the teachers tried their best to make the course wonderful, vivid and attractive, and have won the recognition of most students, there were still some students divided the course into different classes, only taking optional courses as a way to get credits.

Thirdly, some teachers' teaching methods are improper, teaching goal is not clear. In actual teaching, some teachers still adopt traditional teaching methods, focusing on the analysis of the article's central theme, the understanding and translation of words, especially ancient Chinese, and focusing on passive recitation, while ignoring the narration, transmission and inspiration of humanistic connotation and ideology of the articles. To some extent, some students will lose their

interest in learning humanity-related courses, so that the teaching activities neither reach the expected effect, nor meet students' needs for learning humanistic knowledge and improving humanistic literacy.

Fourthly, the insufficiency of family education, bad social morals and low self-requirement and some other factors lead to the difficult for cultivating humanistic literacy. Parents are the first teacher of their children, therefore, if parents ignore and despise the study of humanistic knowledge and the cultivation of humanistic literacy, children will surely be influenced by what they hear and see. Today, with the popularization of the Internet, the diversified values, and all kinds of information that is not strictly audited constantly impact on the thoughts, values and even morality of undergraduates, all these are not conducive to the improvement of humanistic literacy. In addition, some undergraduates do not have strict requirements on themselves, and have no great ambition, so there is no space for the cultivation of humanistic literacy to develop.

3. The Ideas and Measures for Improving the Undergraduate's Humanistic Literacy

"Humanistic literacy runs through students' lifelong development and affects their social participation and practice."^[3] The cultivation of humanistic literacy is of great significance for the all-round development of undergraduates and adults. According to the actual situation of our university, the following ideas for improving humanistic literacy of undergraduates are proposed and relevant measures are suggested.

Firstly, improve the present situation of the *College Chinese* and *Traditional Chinese Culture* being marginalized, set core courses among all optional humanistic courses, and set the top courses as compulsory courses, assisted by related optional courses, thereby construct a more scientific and effective humanistic education system. A conclusion drawn by Yang Quanyan in his paper *The Influence of Literary Education on Cultivation of the Undergraduates' Humanistic Literacy*, which is based on questionnaire, is that the more adequate literature education means the higher humanistic literacy. [4]Therefore, it can be seen that literature education is of great importance and value in improving undergraduates' humanistic literacy. Literature is the study of human beings. The study of literature knowledge and the influence of culture carried by it are the magic medicine to improve college students' humanistic literacy. The thoughts of "self-cultivation" and "benevolence" advocated by Confucianism have positive enlightenment for undergraduates to build independent personality and realize their lofty ambition. [5]Confucian personality ideal and value pursuit also play an important role in inspiring undergraduates' sense of social responsibility and mission.

Secondly, reform the traditional teaching model and teaching method of humanistic subjects, change the role of traditional class from a 'tool' into spreading ideas, more focus will be given to enlightenment and the explanation of humanistic connotation, focuses inspiring students' interest and enthusiasm for humanistic knowledge, helping and guiding students to internalize the learned cultural knowledge as humanistic literacy, and externalizing as behavior. In addition, teachers should constantly improve their humanistic knowledge reserve, humanistic literacy and the degree of emphasis on humanistic literacy.

Thirdly, improve the assessment model by focusing on the process of assessment, and interactive assessment. The assessment of college students' humanistic courses should be in forms that are different from the forms of reading, translation and composition in middle school. Especially for the assessment of optional courses, the author adopts four forms of assessment, including class attendance assessment, class performance assessment, ordinary assignments assessment and final exam. Among these forms, ordinary assignments are in flexible forms like writing, reciting classics, or even creating a play with the learned content, or make a presentation of the course, etc.. The purpose pf assessing class performance is to improve the students' learning efficiency.

Fourthly, make the best use of the positive role of the Internet." The 21st century is an era of Internet, so we should take the impact of the Internet in a correct way, explore positive energy and improve our humanistic literacy."^[6] In recent years, governments at all levels and universities have been strictly controlling the network, continuously improving the network governance ability,

purified the network, made full use of the network to spread the policies of the Party and governments, and played a key role in building the ideology of our society and universities.

Fifthly, further strengthen the campus construction by improving the campus facilities and software, thereby to create a stronger cultural and academic atmosphere. There's a saying goes: "The grass grows in the cannabis field, without support, is naturally straight. The fine white sand gets black when it is mixed in the black soil." The influence of the environment on people can never be ignored and underestimated. One of the advantages of old famous schools for cultivating talents is that these universities have built a campus culture atmosphere of noble spirit, civilized behavior and beautiful environment, and an intense atmosphere of academics and learning in the long process of cultural accumulation.

As Einstein said: "The goal of schools should always be: young people should leave school as a harmonious person, not as an expert." Undergraduates cultivated by universities should not only have gain in the knowledge and skills of natural sciences, but also should have a personality of sound humanistic literacy. [7] The purpose of science is seeking truth, and the purpose of humanity is seeking benevolence, the two are mutually dependent. Strengthening morality shall prevail when we say "Strengthening moral education and cultivating people"; and cultivating people shall prevail when we say "teaching and cultivating people".

In a word, in the process of cultivating undergraduates, the function of education for cultivating humanistic literacy can't be ignored as we focus on the application and social functions of education.

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