

Research on the Ideological and Political Work of Nursing Students in the New Era under the Strategy of Healthy China

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Abstract

Nursing students have uniqueness within the general university student population as they are among the primary practitioners of the “Healthy China Strategy 2030” and guardians of people’s health. Innovating and strengthening ideological and political education for nursing students, enhancing their skills in serving the people, is a significant political task for medical universities. Against the backdrop of the “Healthy China Strategy,” how to effectively improve nursing students’ professional competencies, integrate life education, medical humanities education, and general ideological and political education, and utilize life education to construct a more suitable ideological and political education system for nursing students, in order to better establish correct worldviews, values, and professional outlooks, are urgent practical issues that need to be addressed in ideological and political education in medical universities. This article takes life education as an entry point and focuses on integrating it with the internalization and unification of ideological and political education courses, aiming to explore the possibilities and new pathways for integrating life education into the ideological and political education of nursing students in the new era.

Keywords

Healthy China Strategy, Nursing Students, Ideological and Political Work, Life Education

1. The Background of Ideological and Political Work for Nursing Students in the New Era

As the medical system and mechanism continue to reform in depth, the construction of “Healthy China” has entered an important stage. President Xi Jin-

ping pointed out, “Advancing the construction of a healthy China is our party’s solemn commitment to the people. All levels of party committees and governments should put this major people-oriented project on their important agendas, strengthen their sense of responsibility, and vigorously promote its implementation.” Against this backdrop, it is of great significance to explore the ideological and political work in universities that meets the basic national conditions at this stage.

General Secretary Xi Jinping attaches great importance to ideological and political education in universities, stating that the mission of universities is to cultivate qualified builders and successors of the socialist cause with Chinese characteristics [1]. Nursing students hold a unique status within the college student population. They serve as the backbone and fresh force of health human resources at all levels and categories in the future, serving as direct providers of health services and powerful promoters of the “Healthy China” strategy. In his speech at the National Education Conference, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of educating and guiding nursing students to “solidly cultivate moral character and become people with great love, virtue, and sentiment.” The “Opinions on Strengthening the Coordination of Medical Education to Implement the Excellent Nurse Education and Training Program 2.0” emphasizes the comprehensive strengthening of the quality and ability training of nursing students in both morality and medicine [2]. Medical colleges and universities should fully utilize the current situation to integrate ideological and political education and moral education throughout the entire process of education and teaching, promoting the improvement of nursing students’ humanities and medical ethics and guiding them to become outstanding medical talents who love the party and the country and possess great love.

2. The Importance and Uniqueness of Ideological and Political Work for Nursing Students in the New Era

2.1. The Vital Role of Ideological and Political Work in Achieving the Fundamental Goal of Educating People with Morality and Ability

At the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities held in December 2016, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that “ideological and political work in colleges and universities is crucial to determining what kind of people universities cultivate, how they cultivate them, and for whom they cultivate them.” [3] He pointed out that “only by adhering to the fundamental task of educating people with morality and ability and integrating ideological and political work into the entire process of education and teaching can we truly cultivate generations of useful talents who support the leadership of the Communist Party of China and our socialist system and are committed to fighting for socialism with Chinese characteristics throughout their lives [4].” In August 2020, General Secretary Xi Jinping clearly stated, “The most important aspect of educating young people is to teach them the correct

ideology and guide them to take the right path. Ideological and political courses are the key to achieving the fundamental task of educating people with morality and ability, and their role is irreplaceable. The teachers responsible for these courses bear significant responsibility [5].” It is evident that ideological and political work for college students, including nursing students, is an important part of our party’s ideological work, and its importance cannot be overstated.

2.2. The Uniqueness of Ideological and Political Work for Nursing Students in the Strategy of Healthy China

Among college students, nursing students have certain uniqueness due to their relatively concentrated employment channels and relatively fixed future career directions. Comrade Xi Jinping pointed out in his report to the 20th National Congress that we should promote the construction of a healthy China, put people’s health at the priority of development, establish a policy system for supporting childbirth, implement the national strategy of actively responding to population aging, promote the inheritance and innovative development of traditional Chinese medicine, improve the public health system, strengthen the construction of major epidemic prevention and control and emergency response capabilities, and effectively contain the spread of major infectious diseases [6]. The ideological, political, and moral qualities of nursing students not only reflect the medical ethics of nurses but also objectively present the overall health level of the entire nation. From the perspective of the “Healthy China Strategy”, medical colleges and universities in the new era can only truly contribute to the achievement of the goal of the “Healthy China Strategy 2030” and fulfill the historical mission entrusted to them by the party and the country by cultivating nursing students with high political literacy and good medical ethics, providing a “double insurance” for their development.

3. The Reality Challenges of Ideological and Political Work for Nursing Students in the New Era

In recent years, a few nurses have been increasingly influenced by the over-specialization, technicalization, and commercialization of medical culture and paradigms, leading to a decrease in humanistic care for patients. The advancement of the Healthy China Strategy has been severely impacted by the dark sides of the medical industry and the rigidity of doctor-patient relationships, which is closely related to the inadequate ideological education for nursing students provided by medical colleges. A qualified medical worker must possess good ideological and political literacy and professional ethics. In the context of Healthy China, there are still some deficiencies in the ideological and political education work for nursing students in the new era, as follows:

3.1. General Ideological and Political Work for Nursing Students Needs to Be Strengthened

Current medical education has emphasized professionalism while neglecting

politics and humanities. Nursing students have a large number of professional courses with a significant proportion, which are viewed as tools for future career development. Coupled with the extensive content and strong practical nature of these courses, students are under significant academic pressure. Consequently, most nursing students have no interest in learning ideological and political theory courses, do not pay enough attention to national conditions, and lack political sensitivity and enthusiasm for political participation. This makes it difficult for them to deeply understand and identify with Healthy China, thus limiting their contributions to its implementation [7].

3.2. Lack of Life Education and Humanistic Spirit Education for Nursing Students

From the perspective of medical education itself, clinical medicine teaches students by deconstructing the human body. It treats people as non-living matter, dividing them into various parts and organs for educational purposes, thus lacking in humanistic spirit and overall life education. The human body is constantly intervened and manipulated by medicine and medical technology, with its rich sensory experience treated solely from a biological perspective. The body, as the foundation of “self,” is regarded as an object of communication between nurses and technology. The living body is objectified as a research tool for medical science and technological advancement, leading to an increasingly prominent tendency of “de-subjectification” and “de-humanization” in medical scientific research.

4. Exploring Innovative Pathways to Integrate Life Education into the Ideological and Political Work of Nursing Students in the New Era

4.1. Advocating the Return of the “Human” Element

Medical humanities education is undergoing a transformation from a biomedical model to a biopsychosocial model. During this process, there has been a conscious neglect of the essence and connotation of the “human” element in students’ education. The contemporary value of medical humanities care lies in promoting the Healthy China strategy, enhancing social relations, particularly doctor-patient relations, and fostering a sense of care value among nursing students [8]. Therefore, it is essential to emphasize the return of the “human” element in medical humanities education, unifying life education with ideological and political education to respect human life, dignity, and rights, bringing the “human” back into medicine..

4.2. Continuing China’s Excellent Traditional Culture

President Xi Jinping clearly stated at the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China: “The future belongs to the young, and hope is pinned on them. A hundred years ago, a group of new youth

raised the torch of Marxist thought and diligently explored the future of national rejuvenation in a bleak China. Over the past century, under the banner of the Communist Party of China, generations of Chinese youth have integrated their youthful strivings into the cause of the party and the people, becoming the vanguard force for realizing national rejuvenation. The Chinese youth of the new era should take it as their mission to realize national rejuvenation, enhancing their pride, backbone, and confidence as Chinese people.” To deeply and solidly carry out ideological and political work among nursing students, it is imperative to correctly guide them in inheriting the aspirations of their predecessors and carrying on China’s excellent traditional culture.

4.3. Building a Teacher’s Team for Life Education among Nursing Students

On the one hand, many educators have a misunderstanding of life education, equating it solely with life-and-death education. On the other hand, schools, as the primary implementers of life education, bear significant responsibility. Teachers’ understanding of the connotation of life education and the interest of their teaching methods directly impact teaching effectiveness. To successfully carry out humanistic and life education, it is crucial to cultivate a highly qualified and professional teacher’s team [9].

Life education, an approach that delves into the essence, meaning, and value of life, aims to guide nursing students in recognizing the preciousness of life, understanding its diversity and complexity, and fostering attitudes and habits that respect, care for, and cherish life. Integrating life education into the nursing curriculum can be achieved through various methods.

For instance, ethics courses in nursing can incorporate content on bioethics, encouraging students to engage in discussions and reflections on moral issues and ethical decision-making surrounding life. Through case studies and role-playing, students learn to respect patients’ rights to life, autonomy, and privacy, and make informed choices in complex ethical situations.

Moreover, life education can be seamlessly woven into nursing practice courses. During internships or clinical experiences, students are guided to observe and understand patients’ life states and processes, fostering a profound appreciation for the fragility and preciousness of life. By participating in patient care and psychological support, they learn to treat patients with compassion and humanity, providing warmth and care to help them navigate life’s challenges. This integration not only enhances students’ reverence for life while mastering nursing skills, but also cultivates their empathy and humanitarian spirit, shaping them into compassionate and caring nursing professionals.

4.4. Integrating Stand-Alone Life Education Courses with Infiltrative Teaching Methods

Mere theoretical research and linguistic transmission are insufficient to make life education win support from the hearts of the people. Only by enhancing stu-

dents' practical experiences can they truly appreciate life and deepen their reflections. Hospitals, as both practical teaching venues and employment places for nursing students, possess significant practical teaching resources. The ideological and political education of nursing students requires contextual integration. Ideological and political education is gradually formed and developed on the basis of practice, and these phenomena and their laws, in terms of their value appeals to nursing students, exist in the vivid practical fields of hospitals [10]. Junior students can understand the origin and end of life by visiting hospitals' delivery rooms, operating rooms, and morgues. Students with a certain medical literacy can increase their contact with patients by observing surgeries, thus enhancing their sense of responsibility for life. To alleviate the current doctor-patient relationship, medical colleges and universities should fully utilize the existing resources of affiliated hospitals to carry out life education practical work, cultivating nursing students' humanities and professional ethics. Integrating life education into the nursing curriculum poses several potential challenges and obstacles. Firstly, the already dense nursing program makes it crucial to effectively incorporate life education without compromising existing content. Additionally, teachers' comprehension and application of life education directly impact its integration, and some may lack the necessary training and educational background.

To overcome these challenges, we can adopt strategic approaches. Firstly, restructure and optimize the nursing curriculum to organically integrate life education content with existing courses. For instance, introducing aspects of bioethics and the meaning of life into ethics and introductory nursing courses can encourage students to delve deeper into the significance and value of life while learning professional knowledge.

Secondly, enhance teachers' training and academic exchanges in life education to improve their understanding and application skills. Organize workshops and seminars, inviting experts in related fields to deliver lectures and guidance, assisting teachers in grasping the core concepts and teaching methods of life education.

Lastly, leverage modern educational technology, such as online courses and multimedia resources, to provide students with a richer and more diverse learning experience. Teaching methods like case studies, group discussions, and role-playing can prompt students to actively engage and better grasp the essence of life education.

4.5. Creating a Volunteer Service Brand Activity Combining Life Education and Ideological and Political Education

On the campus of higher education institutions, it is essential to establish a brand activity that combines life education and ideological and political education under the leadership of the party. This will enhance students' humanistic spirit and political literacy. By participating in poverty alleviation and medical charity activities, nursing students can activate and mobilize their medical con-

science and passion, making them profoundly aware of the medical essence of “revering life and healing the sick.” Among them, Wenzhou Medical University has established the “Good Deeds for the World” medical charity project, which includes medical charity projects such as the “Bright Eyes Project,” “Life-Saving Bone Marrow Donation,” “Happy Smiles,” and “Special Olympics Services.” These projects provide important cultural infiltration and practical training platforms for medical humanities education. In addition, schools and their affiliated hospitals have established a series of volunteer service activity platforms for medical students, such as hospital guidance, palliative care, and rehabilitation treatment. These also serve as a systematic training for nursing students’ medical ethics and cultivation, enhancing their sense of professional belonging and deeply implanting cultural genes in their hearts.

5. Conclusion

In summary, nursing students bear the natural responsibility of cherishing life, protecting life, and saving lives. If nursing students lack humanistic care and disregard the existence and value of the whole life, they will be unable to undertake the responsibility of curing diseases and saving lives, and unable to carry on the great strategy of “Healthy China”. Therefore, the ideological and political work of nursing students in universities has its special significance. The realization of the goal of “Healthy China 2030” is closely related to the humanistic quality and ideological and political level of nursing students cultivated by medical colleges and universities. Medical colleges and universities should fully understand the spirit of the “eight unifications” proposed by General Secretary Xi Jinping and fully implement the fundamental task of cultivating people by virtue. Firstly, it is necessary to unify medical humanities and life education into the whole process of ideological and political education for nursing students; secondly, it is necessary to improve the affinity, attraction and persuasiveness of ideological and political education through the internal unity and innovative practice of ideological and political education work and life education; thirdly, it is necessary to guide nursing students to consciously practice the core socialist values, cultivate patriotism, and enable them to have good professional ethics, professional attitude and values, and grow into outstanding medical talents with great love and life-saving spirit, to escort the smooth implementation of “Healthy China”.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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