

# *Implications of the Social Subject Research Method for the Implementation of Ecological Civilization Education in Primary and Secondary Schools*

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**Abstract:** From the social discipline research approach, there are some problems in ecological civilization education in primary and secondary schools: unclear human-centered education concept; decentralized implementation of ecological civilization education; major reversal of ecological civilization education process; and urgent need to strengthen teachers' ecological civilization quality. The inspiration of the social discipline research method of ecological civilization education in primary and secondary schools mainly lies in adhering to the public historical view and developing students' subjective activities; mobilizing teachers and students with a human-centered approach; mobilizing students and guiding them to participate in ecological civilization practices; and improving teachers' quality to achieve effective integration of education and ecological civilization. From the perspective of social discipline research methods, ecological civilization education in primary and secondary schools should focus on improving students' personality and moral cultivation, combining personal goals with social practice, combining personal growth with social development, and cultivating moral and intellectual talents of the new era.

## **1. Definition of relevant concepts**

### **1.1. Research methods of social subjects**

The research approach of the social discipline is the starting point for the study of social history. There are two internal views: one is to consider man as the subject of social and historical development. The shortcoming of the previous materialism was the understanding of things, which was based on the understanding and comprehension of the intuitive form of things. In the process of knowledge and deep knowledge, the subjective mode of thinking and practice has neither sensory understanding nor material development. On this basis, we should understand social development and the individual as an individual form. Moreover, it should be noted that in order to understand society in depth, we must center on people. The process of people's actual activity is the process of social and historical development. Concrete and real people are individuals who live in concrete and

real social relations. Finally, historical research should take "real people" as the starting point. The so-called real existence, that is, the starting point of human beings, is the subject of activity in the historical process, is an important cornerstone for the creation of material production activities to stimulate historical development, is the basic measure of the scale of social development. Secondly, the approach to the study of social disciplines adheres to the perspective of popular history. The role of the people in social history is manifested in the following ways: first, the people are the creators of material wealth in society [1]. The cessation of labor leads to the cessation of development. The continuous exploration and progress of workers in the production process may lead to the development of productivity and social progress. Second, the people are the creators of the spiritual wealth of society. Spirituality and materiality are closely linked and difficult to separate, providing a solid foundation for spiritual wealth. Moreover, all the achievements of our civilization originate from the practical activities of people. Most people know that practice produces true knowledge. Practice also creates wealth and culture, and changes in history undoubtedly occur in practice. [2]

## **1.2. Primary and secondary schools**

Primary and secondary education refers to primary education and secondary education, which is a combined term. Primary education is the school where primary education is implemented from the first to the sixth grade. Elementary school is the school where the masses of people receive formal primary education and is an extremely important component of basic education. With the development of society, kindergartens came into being. Generally speaking, the school that children attend between the ages of six and twelve is elementary school. Primary education is generally six years, but in some other regions, primary education is five years, followed by four years of junior high school education. Secondary education can be divided into middle school and high school. Lower secondary education generally refers to the nine-year compulsory secondary education, and upper secondary education refers to the non-compulsory upper secondary education. Secondary education, i.e., three-year junior high school education and three-year senior high school education, is implemented in general secondary schools.

## **1.3. Ecological civilization education**

Ecological civilization education evolved from the environmental education born at the first national environmental education conference held in Beijing in 1973, adhering to the basic guidelines of resource conservation, environmental protection, green development and lifestyle. Students are uncut li jade, and they are highly malleable during the critical period of establishing a correct ecological civilization outlook. Strengthening the construction of ecological civilization, implementing ecological civilization education, and improving the quality of ecological civilization are inevitable requirements for building ecological civilization. Promoting daily education and teaching in elementary school is of great significance in ecological civilization education, which is a specific initiative of Lido people. Among cognition, emotion, will and behavior, cognition is the basis for the generation of emotion and the development of will, and plays a mediating and coordinating role. Emotion and will are the driving force for the implementation of behavior, and behavior is the outward expression of cognition, emotion and will. On this basis, in ecological civilization education, cognition is established, ecological civilization cognition is internalized into personal ecological emotional values, will is developed, and then the acquired ecological civilization knowledge is applied in daily practice. Thus, we begin to build an ecological knowledge system, establish correct eco-emotional values, enhance the will to promote ecological civilization, and cultivate good civilized behavior.

## **2. Problems in ecological civilization education in primary and secondary schools under the perspective of social subject research method**

### **2.1. Vague human-centered education concept**

Due to the influence of traditional teaching methods and the large population of China, the education reform system still needs to be improved. Currently, ecological civilization education is mainly taught orally, but traditional teaching methods for teachers and students are still common. Some schools do not pay enough attention to it, teaching staff are older and less capable of operating it, and indifference in some schools leads students and teachers to see ecological civilization education as a free course. The older the teachers are, the more teaching methods and the more outdated the teaching concepts become, and they do not want to spend too much time learning new teaching methods. Students are unique people, independent, with unique ideas. By receiving higher education, they develop the right values, outlook on life and the world. They have their own views on what is happening around them or in society, and they have their own hobbies and pursuits. However, some universities have a vague view of human-centered education and do not consider students as the main subjects of education.

### **2.2. Fragmented implementation and development of ecological civilization education**

Fragmented ecological civilization education cannot effectively establish students' ecological behavior, let alone fundamentally evoke students' ecological awareness and sense of responsibility. It makes ecological civilization education not produce good results [3]. According to the survey: 3% of students think they have ecological knowledge, but 56% of them do not know about ecological knowledge. As for the source of knowledge, most students think that they do not study ecological knowledge systematically. [4]. Ecological civilization knowledge is fragmentarily integrated into the teaching content, and although ecological knowledge is popularized to a certain extent, it does not have a substantial educational effect on students' ecological civilization values and ecological civilization knowledge system, and it is not relevant, and students cannot obtain specific and systematic ecological civilization knowledge. Schools are the main way and carrier of ecological civilization education, and because they do not integrate specific knowledge of ecological civilization education in their daily education and teaching in a targeted manner, they cannot construct a systematic ecological knowledge system and cannot effectively improve students' ecological civilization literacy.

### **2.3. Reversal of priorities in the process of ecological civilization education**

The ecological civilization education curriculum in primary and secondary schools is a teaching mode in which teachers teach and students practice. Teachers become the main subjects and students become secondary school students. Teachers talk about many things. They don't know whether students really learn the movements, key movement skills, and students' physical fitness and learning ability are not greatly improved. This reverse teaching method can basically accomplish the teaching task, but it cannot achieve the teaching purpose. Students' physical fitness has not improved significantly, and the importance of lifelong physical education has not been emphasized.

### **2.4. The ecological civilization quality of the teaching team needs to be strengthened**

Currently, most teachers in elementary school are trained in the traditional education system and

do not receive systematic ecological civilization education. Teachers learn the term "ecological civilization" mainly through studies and news [3], not to mention the application of relevant knowledge and theories to help students. Since higher education institutions, such as teacher training schools, have not previously incorporated ecological civilization education into their training systems, and now have no supervisory bodies, there are few opportunities for teachers to continue learning. As a result, teachers rarely receive relevant theoretical training after taking office. The relatively low status of ecological civilization education in higher education and its interference by the rules of operation of the market economy have greatly weakened the overall expansion of the ecological civilization focus in higher education [4], because most colleges and universities do not have a special ecological civilization curriculum and the vast majority of teachers have not developed a complete ecological civilization knowledge system. As a result, teachers avoid difficulties in their daily teaching and neglect ecological or civilizational education, which has a great impact on improving the ecological literacy of our citizens. Therefore, we must supplement and improve the ecological literacy of teachers in a timely manner.

### **3. The inspiration of social subject research method for ecological civilization education in primary and secondary schools**

#### **3.1. Adhere to the historical view of the masses and give full play to students' subjective initiative**

Social subject theory believes that society must adhere to the historical view of the masses in order to give full play to the power of people. As future national talents, primary and secondary school students can create spiritual and material wealth. Ecological civilization education, as a form of education, can equip students with qualities such as perseverance, fighting spirit, loyalty, and justice. The most basic function is to protect the environment so that people who are regularly involved in environmental protection can acquire healthy bodies. In the teaching process, all teaching programs must be aimed at preparing students to become useful members of society. Teaching is a dynamic process that stimulates students' creativity and inventiveness. Secondary school students are active thinkers. During the teaching process, it is important to pay attention to the students' independent practice and the teacher's supervision and assistance. After the lecture, the teacher must leave some time for students to explore on their own.

#### **3.2. People-oriented, mobilize teachers and students' enthusiasm**

People refers to real people and emotional people. The essence of the social subject is the subject of production relations, and the subject of ecological civilization teaching is the student. We must insist on putting people first and putting students first. As part of the research methods of social subjects, our teaching is also undergoing reform and has begun to develop a human-centered teaching concept, which is combined with practical teaching and innovative teaching methods to achieve teaching goals. The essence of human-centered ecological civilization education is based on the overall development of students. The all-round development of students is the ultimate goal of human-centeredness. It enables students to give full play to and liberate their individuality while respecting discipline. The teaching process is a two-way interaction between teachers and students. Communication in the teaching process is a kind of emotional communication in learning skills. It can explore students' talents and build a good teacher-student relationship. Teachers should pay attention to communication with students to understand their needs and the physical and mental differences among them. The information obtained through communication helps teachers choose teaching methods and teaching tools according to the person and arrange teaching contents

reasonably.

### **3.3. The integration of ecological civilization education must be relevant and coherent**

Systematic integration of elementary school ecological civilization education, teaching content and teaching methods in a variety of forms, vivid content, logical and close links between the various links, highlighting the characteristics and focus of each stage of the curriculum. On the one hand, the content of the curriculum at each stage should be relevant, and at different stages of growth, students must meet different educational goals, content, methods, approaches and requirements. [5] For example, students in the lower elementary stage are in the enlightenment stage, with perception education, from the students' immediate environment, such as the school campus, living environment and surrounding areas, with the aim of popularizing environmental knowledge, cultivating awareness of the harmony between humans and nature, and developing civilized environmental habits. The upper elementary school level is based on cognitive understanding, helping students to understand their surroundings with a broader perspective, to be able to use their knowledge to analyze ecological problems around them [6], to focus on developing students' practical skills, to recognize the complexity of ecological and environmental problems, to cultivate a high sense of responsibility for ecological protection, and to establish the concept of respecting nature, conforming to nature, and protecting nature. On the other hand, the ecological civilization education curriculum at each stage should be articulated, and the principles and methods of system theory [7] should be used to organically integrate ecological civilization education with the curriculum contents of other disciplines, to construct the ecological civilization education content system in elementary school as a whole, and to ensure the backward and forward articulation of the ecological civilization education curriculum.

### **3.4. Mobilizing students' enthusiasm and guiding them to participate in ecological civilization education practices**

Influenced by traditional education, ecological civilization education is still conducted in China mainly in the form of single classroom teaching, focusing on theoretical knowledge, while ignoring the enhancement of students' ecological civilization emotions by environmental protection practical activities [8]. To integrate ecological civilization education into daily teaching, attention should be paid to mobilizing students' enthusiasm, respecting them, and combining various teaching methods such as game method, role play, field observation method, problem inquiry method, activity participation method, and scenario participation method according to students' physical and mental development stages. The famous educator Makarenko once said, "There is a small chasm between the student's thoughts and behavior, which needs to be filled in with practice." [9] illustrates the importance of practice. Let students get out of the classroom and into the natural environment to intimately feel the impact of human behavior on the natural environment and the impact of changes in the natural environment on people. Schools can make use of holidays, comprehensive practical activities, volunteer services and other carriers, and rely on campuses, zoos, botanical gardens, museums, ecological civilization education practice bases and other places to actively organize students to participate in ecological civilization education practice activities with rich contents and various forms to promote students to gain practical cognitive experience from personal experience and improve ecological civilization quality, including ecological civilization knowledge, ecological civilization emotion, ecological civilization knowledge, ecological civilization emotion, ecological civilization will, ecological civilization behavior, etc.

### 3.5. Improve the quality of teachers and realize the effective integration of ecological civilization education

School education is the main position of ecological civilization education. The quality of teachers directly affects the effect of ecological civilization education. At present, the ability of a large number of elementary school teachers to master ecological knowledge is still low, and their own ecological quality needs to be further improved [10]. Effective initiatives should be used to improve the ecological literacy of teachers and to guarantee the effective integration of ecological civilization education in the daily education and teaching of elementary school. First, the access system of teachers should be improved, and ecological quality should be incorporated into the assessment criteria in the employment of teachers, which ensures the overall quality of teachers from the root. Then, strengthening teacher training is the key. Conduct training to improve teachers' theoretical knowledge and overall quality of ecological civilization. At the same time, provide teachers with more opportunities and ways to further their education, and add ecological civilization-related content to their training to help them build a more complete ecological civilization knowledge structure system, and thus improve their ability to integrate ecological civilization education in their daily education and teaching. Finally, a sharing platform for ecological civilization education should be established to strengthen communication and contact between elementary school teachers and educational researchers, and to broaden the channels for teachers to acquire ecological civilization knowledge, so that teachers from different schools, stages and subjects can share their teaching experiences and improve the effectiveness of ecological civilization education in education and teaching.

## 4. Conclusion

People are paying more and more attention to ecological environment, and more and more people are aware of the benefits of scientific ecological civilization education for human health. From the perspective of research methods in social disciplines, ecological civilization education in primary and secondary schools should focus on the enhancement of students' personality and moral cultivation, combine personal goals with social practice, combine personal growth with social development, and cultivate new-age talents who are both moral and intellectual.

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