

Investigation on the Social Morality of College Students-from the Perspective of Memetics

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ABSTRACT. Based on the core values of socialism, this paper compiled a questionnaire on the quality of college students' social ethics to explore the current situation of college students' social morality. Together with the investigation, observation of college students' virtual behavior was also put forward to test whether college students can combine theory with practice. Results show that college students generally have a good understanding of social morality, but fail to integrate what they know with what they do. Therefore, the construction of social morality education system should focus on how to promote the "unity of knowledge and action" of social morality in colleges and the evaluation mechanism of college students' social morality behavior from the perspective of memetics.

KEYWORDS: Social morality, Questionnaire, Observation, The unity of knowing and doing

1. Introduction

At the 19th CPC national congress, general secretary Xi Jinping proposed to "integrate the core socialist values into all aspects of social development and turn them into people's emotional identity and behavior habits" [1]. College is the last special stage of education for students before they step into the society. College education should seize this good opportunity to educate college students on social ethics based on socialist core values, and train them into qualified talents with high quality. However, to understand the current situation of college students' social morality is the prerequisite to construct a college students' social morality education system.

2. Research Purpose

According to the research, research team designed the questionnaire, a survey of college students' social morality since there is no questionnaire available for the same research purpose. Based on the core values of socialism, the questionnaire focused on exploring students' understanding of social morality from national, social and citizenship aspects. By compiling the questionnaire on the quality of college students' social ethics with good reliability and validity, we can better understand the current situation of college students' understanding of social ethics, so as to provide a basis for constructing the education system of college students' social ethics from the perspective of memetics.

3. Questionnaire Design

Based on the related studies of socialist core values and relevant questionnaires, we formed the preliminary questionnaire of 52 items after consulting relevant experts. The basic information of respondents is mainly set up by single-choice from the aspects of age, grade, major and so on. The questionnaire of college students' social morality are mainly analyzed from national, social and citizenship levels. We use Likert 5 Scale method for each item, from one point for strongly disagree to five points for strongly agree. The preliminary survey was mainly conducted online. Teachers who distributed the questionnaires all adopted the unified instruction and a total of 79 valid questionnaires were collected.

4. Reliability and Validity Test of the Preliminary Questionnaire.

Firstly, exploratory factor analysis was used to test the structural validity of the data. The analysis results showed that the KMO value of three levels was all greater than 0.8, with 0.882 at the national level, 0.849 at the social level and

0.848 at the citizen level, and the P value was all less than 0.05, indicating that the items in the three scales were significantly correlated, which was very suitable for exploratory factor analysis.

Secondly, principal component analysis was used to select the factor with the characteristic root greater than 1. Results showed that the structural validity of some items in the three scales was not satisfactory. After removing the unsatisfactory cross factor, there were still 8 items left in the national scale, 9 items in the social scale and 10 items in the citizenship scale.

Thirdly, confirmatory factor analysis and reliability test were performed for the remaining items by AMOS20.0. The fitting test results of confirmatory factor analysis showed that the χ^2/df , RMSEA, CFI, GFI, NFI and RMR of the three scales were basically within the ideal range. Therefore, CFA fitting results were relatively ideal (see table 1 for the results).

Table 1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Fitted Test Results

Index	χ^2	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	CFI	NFI	RMR
National level	20.271	1.067	0.029	0.941	0.998	0.965	0.011
Social level	13.056	1.632	0.090	0.943	0.970	0.929	0.032
Citizenship level	24.501	1.361	0.068	0.935	0.988	0.957	0.016

Finally, by using second-order confirmatory factor analysis (standardized factor load values were all greater than 0.6, and there was no significant correlation between the residuals of each question, in line with the independence hypothesis), the final questionnaire contained 22 questions : 8 questions at the national level, 6 questions at the social level and 8 questions at the citizen level. The combined reliability (CR value) of each dimension was above 0.6, the average extraction variance (AVE) was above 0.36, and the reliability coefficient was basically above 0.7, indicating that the scale has good structural validity and credibility (see table 2 for the results).

Table 2 Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Components	(CR)	(AVE)	(Cronbach α)
National level	0.967	0.937	0.870
Social level	0.966	0.935	0.848
Citizenship level	0.931	0.871	0.942

5. Formal Data Collection

The final questionnaire was conducted among college students in different universities, and a total of 923 questionnaires were distributed. After eliminating invalid questionnaires, a total of 834 valid questionnaires were collected, with the recovery rate of 90.35%. Among valid questionnaires 772(92.6%) were from undergraduate students and 62(7.4%) were from vocational students; 371(44.5%) respondents were male and 463(55.5%) were female students; 564 (55.5%) students majored in liberal arts 52(6.2%) in science and 218(26.1%) in engineering; 586 (70.3%) were freshmen and 248 (29.7%) were sophomores or above.

6. Data Analysis

To ensure the quality of the questionnaire, this paper firstly used the spherical test and the factor to test the reliability and validity of the above questionnaire again, and eliminated question 6 in the second part of the questionnaire according to the results, and finally retained 21 questions: 1,2,3,4,5,7 questions were about the national level, 8 to 13 questions the social level, and 14 to 22 questions the citizen level. The KMO value of the questionnaire was 0.947, the Cronbach Alpha was 0.929, and the half-fold reliability coefficient was 0.860.

The average score of college students' overall social morality was 4.5622, with 4.7020 at national level, 4.6082 at citizenship level and 4.3535 at social level, indicating that the understanding of social morality at the social level still needs to be improved. In terms of the approval rate, 16 questions were above 90% (questions 1,2,3,4,5,7,8,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22) ; 3 questions (questions 11,12,13) were among 80~90% ,only 2 questions (questions 9,10) were below 80%. The overall data showed that college students' understanding of social morality was generally good. However, Questions 9 and 10, which examined whether students had the consciousness of "thinking of others", had the lowest approval rates (both below 80%), higher neutrality rates (both above 20%) and higher

disapproval rates (3.48% and 4.68%, respectively) and indicated that the consciousness of altruism among college students was vague and needed to be aroused.

(1) Results of the t-test show that there is no significant difference in the overall social morality of college students of different school systems. In terms of majors, the results of variance analysis show that although there was no significant difference in social morality among college students of different majors ($p=0.239, >.05$), there is significant difference at the national level ($p=0.040, <.05$). Through later comparison, it can be known that specific differences exist between students of liberal arts and science, with higher scores in liberal arts ($M=4.7178$).

(2). Results of gender differences in T test show that there is no significant gender difference in social morality. However, on the citizenship level, the average score of female students is significantly higher than that of male students ($p=0.047, <.05$), indicating that females have a more acute understanding of social morality.

7. Conclusion of the Data Analysis

Based on the results of the 834 valid questionnaires, the total average score of college students' recognition of social morality quality is 4.5622, higher than the medium critical value (3 points). Among the three components, the national level of social morality ranks the first, followed by the citizenship level and social level, ranging from 4.348 to 4.686. Given the average score of each factor, conclusion can be drawn that college students basically have an acute awareness of social morality quality, but their understanding in the social level needs to be further improved.

As far as major is concerned, it is found that the difference of major affects students' perception of social morality from the national perspective. Furthermore, although gender difference is not significant, on the civic level, females' understanding, like "Do you agree that it is the employee's responsibility to do his or her best at work?", "Will you definitely return the lost property to the owner or lost and found office?" is much better than males'.

8. Observation on Social Morality Behavior

Through observing college students' behavior of social morality, we can better understand their practice of social morality, and found out whether they can integrate knowledge with action, so as to make a clear path for constructing college students' social morality education system from the perspective of memetics. Therefore, we chose the campus, like classrooms, dining hall, elevator and the like as our observation sites.

Of the 73 subjects in two classrooms, no one volunteered to clean the blackboards before or after class, 31% subjects failed to take away their garbage after class and 90% subjects failed to arrange chairs neatly after class, compared with 80% approval rate of "thinking of others" in the questionnaire. In the dining halls, subjects consciously queued up to serve the meal, but only 13% thanked the workers. During the peak time, books or other supplies were used to take seat. After the meal, 50-60% subjects put their tablewares to the recycling place. But about 50-60% subjects used disposable cutlery and the canteens were noisy. In the elevator, subjects offered courtesy when they met familiar teachers and would crowd into the elevator at peak hours; occasionally they would repeatedly press the door closing button.

Based on our behavior observation records, it is found that college students still have the following problems in their social ethics: Although the results of the questionnaire show that contemporary college students have a good understanding of social morality, their daily behaviors actually are not unified with their understanding, that is, they fail to internalize what they know with what they do. Efforts should be down to guide them put the social morality into the details of specific behaviors. The observation results show that most students cannot take the initiative to do things consistent with social ethics. Many students ignore some seemingly trivial matters that are actually closely related to social morality quality, resulting in the failure to develop good behaviors in daily life.

9. Suggestions

The results of the study show that college students in China have a strong sense of identification with the values of social morality, which proves that the educational mechanism and educational philosophy in China have a significant effect in the implementation of social morality education. However, observation records find that college students have not reach the same level in their actual behavior as in their understanding of social morality.

Fan hailin, deputy director of the higher education department of the ministry of education, said: "China has built the largest higher education system in the world, with the gross enrollment rate of higher education reaching 48.1%. and is about to enter the stage of popularization in higher education" [5]. Such a large group of college students will no doubt play a leading and dominant role in the future society, we must strengthen their social ethics awareness and

promote their practice of social responsibility. To achieve the above goals, we can try to start from the following three aspects: first, advocate the integration of social ethics education into all disciplines, especially in optional course curriculum, and construct the social ethics education system from the perspective of memetics. Based on the heredity, variability and selectivity of the replicators, firstly choose the social morality memes, then through the four stages of memes' assimilation, memory, expression and communication, combined with imitation, mutation and association, to explore the path of improving social morality and construct the model of college students' social morality education system. Second, construct college students' social moral behavior evaluation mechanism to put social moral behavior into the comprehensive assessment systems. In the process of teaching, teachers make formative evaluation on students' understanding of social morality. The school department supervises students' social morality behavior. The employer evaluates and gives feedback on the students' behavior of social morality; Schools and relevant social departments can also establish students' social ethics files. Through the in time supervision, evaluation and feedback on social morality, the system of college students' social morality education can be further improved. Thirdly, pay attention to the influence of public opinion. Public opinion, as a spiritual environment, has a "universal, hidden and mandatory power" [8] on people's thought and behavior. It is also a double-edged sword. On one hand, we need to optimize its positive side to help students to learn social virtues from each other; on the other hand, students must distinguish right from wrong and supervise each other in correcting wrong ideas or deeds.

Acknowledgement

This paper is a phased research result of the "Research on college students' social morality education system from the perspective of memetics", a project funded by the humanities and social sciences research program of the ministry of education in 2018 (18YJAZH007).

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