

# On the Cultivation of Cultural Self-confidence and Tolerance for Chinese College Students in the New Era

**Rui Zhong**

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hongkong, China

**Abstract:** Xi Jinping's cultural thought highlights the significance of culture for national development and international mutual understanding. In the new era, as a young generation, Chinese college students should be more proactive in learning their own culture and foreign cultures, understand the differences between cultures and establish a correct cultural outlook of cultural self-confidence and cultural tolerance so as to contribute to the cultural renaissance of the Chinese nation and the friendly exchanges of international cultures. Specifically, there are four aspects considered, including institutional leadership at the national level, media management at the social level, educational advocacy at the university level, and self-awareness at the student level so as to contribute some insight to promoting national cultural revival and international cultural integration.

**Keywords:** Xi Jinping's Cultural Thought, Cultivation of Cultural Self-confidence and Tolerance, Chinese College Students

## 1. Introduction

Xi Jinping's cultural thought points out that the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation needs to be conditioned by the prosperity of Chinese culture. Firming cultural self-confidence is a major issue concerning the rise and fall of the nation, cultural security, and the spiritual independence of the nation. At the same time, Xi Jinping's cultural thought stresses that cultures are not superior or inferior, but only distinctive and regional and each culture is rooted in the soil of its own existence with its own value of existence. At a time when the future and destiny of all countries are closely intertwined, the tolerance and coexistence of different cultures, as well as exchanges and mutual understanding, play an irreplaceable role in promoting the modernization process of human society and the prosperity of the world's cultural garden. In this context, as a young generation, Chinese college students should fully implement Xi Jinping's cultural thought and establish a correct cultural outlook of cultural self-confidence and cultural tolerance, so as to contribute to the cultural renaissance of the Chinese nation and the friendly exchanges of international cultures. In the following, promoting a three-stage gradualism from awareness as a beginning of the recognition of a particular cultural identity, knowledge as a further learning of elements of cultures to skills based on practice to apply the symbols of cultures finally,<sup>[1]</sup> suggestions will be provided for the cultivation of cultural self-confidence and cultural tolerance for students from four aspects: institutional leadership at the national level, media management at the social level, educational advocacy at the university level, and self-awareness at the student level.

## 2. National Policy

In the third volume of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China, the topic of improving and developing China's national institutions and governance system is set up as an important exposition on institution building by President Xi in his leadership to promote the practice of governance in the new era, which emphasizes the need to give more prominence to institution building and to turn the advantages of China's institutions into the effectiveness of national governance, providing a solid foundation for the construction of national soft power.

### 2.1 Adhere to the Leadership of Socialist Core Values

Socialist core values are the centralized embodiment of the Chinese spirit and have a crucial role in uniting people's hearts and stimulating vitality. Adhering to the leadership of socialist core values is of great significance in enhancing the cultural self-confidence of Chinese college students. Since the new era, China has actively explored how to rely on the construction of a reasonable system and the strengthening of social governance to promote the construction of core values. With a rigid institutional mechanism to integrate the core values, which have the roles of political orientation and spiritual power source, into the social development and the daily life of the people, China can carry out the important strategic guideline of building a cultural power.

China should focus on the three major goals of building a modern country with prosperity, democracy, civility, and harmony, constructing a modern society with freedom, equality, justice, and rule of law, and cultivating modern citizens with patriotism, dedication, integrity, and friendship as depicted in the socialist core values and carefully consider the Chinese characteristics and essential requirements of building a cultural power, so as to devise a systematic mechanism for realizing the integration of socialist core values and a cultural power.<sup>[2]</sup> For example, when dealing with the relationship between national development and individual interests, the collectivism of giving priority to collective interests and realizing the common development of collective and individual interests should be carried out in the formulation of policies and work regulations, so as to avoid the collective supremacy of ignoring or jeopardizing the legitimate interests of individuals under the pretext of concentrating on major issues, and egoism that harms the interests of the collective under the excuse of safeguarding of individual interests. In the process of implementing the mechanism, cultural self-confidence can be gradually developed.

### 2.2 Promote the Concept of a Community with a Shared Future

There is only one Earth for mankind, and all countries live together in one world. The cultural construction of the concept of a community with a shared future is mainly manifested in cultural coexistence, cultural exchanges, cultural understanding, and cultural integration. In this process, the equal interaction among various cultures is conducive to the consensus-building among all peoples in the world in mutual understanding and seeking common ground while reserving differences, paying more attention to the tolerance of cultural forms with distinctive regional and ethnic characteristics. Promoting the construction of a community with a shared future can have a far-reaching impact on cultivating cultural tolerance among Chinese college students.

The basic premise of China's promotion of the concept is to forge a consensus of values, that is, an agreement among the nations of the globe on the common values that lie behind them, based on mutual recognition and respect for differences. Mutual recognition among members of society is a prerequisite for the legitimacy of the community, and this mutual recognition is linked to the expectations of members of society, who form an ideal community by moving towards a common goal that they envision. Embodying value consensus in the design and implementation of institutions and policies is of great significance in accelerating the construction of a community of a shared future. At present, one of China's great practices is to promote the high-quality development of the Belt and Road. Under the framework of the Belt and Road cooperation mechanism, China has signed agreements on mutual recognition of higher education degrees with 45 countries and regions and documents on cooperation in the fields of culture and tourism with 144 countries. Besides, China has set up government scholarships for the Silk Road and created a number of cooperation brands with great development potential such as the Lu Ban Workshop and the Walk of Light. In the future, China should actively explore and expand opportunities and space for cooperation in related fields in order to improve cultural interconnection and deepen the

concept of cultural tolerance and mutual trust in people's hearts.

### **3. Social Media**

In today's digital era, the dream of information sharing has been realized. Based on the Internet, people can know the world, communicate with the world, and change the world. Social media, as the main channel for the interactive dissemination of information occupying an important place in the Internet world, enables citizens from different countries and nationalities to realize remote communication and mutual learning of ideas. In China, social media such as WeChat, QQ, Weibo, and Tik Tok have become the main communication channels for people in their daily life. All kinds of good and bad information contained therein are explosively spreading.

For a society, in order to keep the cultural high ground, it is necessary to keep the high ground of discourse. The network information high ground of social media is one of the important contents of the high ground of discourse. Compared with other functional platforms based on the Internet such as search engines and shopping websites, social media have a greater impact on the formation and dissemination of cultural public opinion because of its mode of timely and rapid information communication and its mechanism of stable and constant information sharing. In other words, information management and information security in social media play an indispensable role in cultivating correct cultural values among Chinese college students.

In March 2023, the Information Office of the State Council released a white paper on "China's Law-based Cyberspace Governance in the New Era", emphasizing the significance of global Internet governance and digital security. For social media platforms, in addition to externally imposed institutional constraints, it is more important to self-supervise and self-innovate through emphasizing the role of network information in the construction of cultural values, strengthening the integrated management of network resources, and assuming due social responsibility.

Social media can mainly start from the following two points in order to achieve self-restraint and optimization. First, improve the information screening mechanism. Social platforms should make use of the existing technology to strictly control the release, comment, and reproduction of network information, and prohibit the bad information, wrong information and violent words, in order to present the most genuine news and data to students. For the emergence of many self-media, network platforms should examine their qualifications to decide whether to allow them to enter. Secondly, promote information technology innovation. On the basis of utilizing the existing model, the social platform should actively carry out technological innovation, give full play to the productivity of science and technology, and strive to make technological innovation in the front of information governance, so that the platform can occupy a proactive position, thus leading the development of network information towards and avoiding the alienation and deterioration of the network cultural ecology. In a clean and orderly online cultural environment, the cultural influence on Chinese college students is positive. Through the understanding of high quality and reliable domestic and international knowledge, Chinese college students can gradually develop correct cultural values.

### **4. Higher Education**

The report of the Twentieth National Congress of the Communist Party of China points out that what people to train, how to train people, and for whom to train people is the fundamental question of education. Education is the foundation of a country's development, and the foundational task of universities is to cultivate moral character. The educational orientation of universities plays an irreplaceable role in the formation

#### **4.1 Promote the Construction of the Teaching Force**

The quality of teachers directly determines the education level of the university. Mei Yiqi, the former president of Tsinghua University, once famously said, "Universities are great because of their outstanding teachers rather than their grand buildings". Teachers bear the historical mission of spreading ideas and the responsibility of shaping souls. Universities should improve the theoretical level and cultural literacy of teachers and play the role of teachers as role models. Under the theoretical framework that an accomplished disciple owes his accomplishment to his great teacher, the influence and orientation of teachers' excellent cultural values should be implemented on the cultivation of students' values. It is worth noting that the positive promotion of cultural values is not just a requirement for teachers in charge of

ideological and political theory courses, but for all teaching and staff members, including teachers of professional courses and counselors. University education is not only reflected in the physical classroom, but also in the daily life of school life. Of course, for different roles of cultural responsibility in the university, the specific requirements are different.

For teachers of ideological and political theory courses, the key requirement is to have a profound theoretical background about culture because of the fact that students understand the cultural knowledge mainly through these courses in the process of receiving university education.<sup>[3]</sup> Specifically, the teachers should deepen their understanding and research of cultural content, cultural structure, and cultural function, and constantly make summaries to integrate the concepts of cultural self-confidence and cultural tolerance into education organically and profoundly. For teachers of specialized courses, they should play the potential guiding role of their teaching. The teachers should strengthen their research on Chinese and foreign cultures and explore the ideological concepts and humanistic spirit contained therein. In the process of teaching, cultural values can be appropriately integrated into them to subconsciously promote the enhancement of students' cultural literacy. For counselors, they should maximize their daily influence of cultural values since they are the spiritual mentors of students and have the most contact with the students with much knowledge of their daily life. Counselors need to combine the cultivation of students' cultural values with students' daily management and to inspire them to consider culture well in the process of contacting students.<sup>[4]</sup>

## **4.2 Strengthen Students' Ability to Tell Chinese Stories Well in Foreign Languages**

Telling Chinese stories well in foreign languages is both a manifestation of cultural self-confidence and a reflection of cultural tolerance. For Chinese college students, four competencies are needed, including the ability to understand Chinese stories connected with the quality of the communication, foreign language proficiency related to whether the audience can directly understand the content of the communication, intercultural communication skills affecting whether the audience can accept the content of the communication and international communication capacity leading to the scope of the communication.<sup>[5]</sup> These four competencies interact with each other and are key factors in telling Chinese stories well abroad.

The cultivation of the ability to tell Chinese stories well in foreign languages should be implemented in the talent cultivation program of universities as the Constitution of higher education. Through the reform of ideological and political courses, universities should enable students to understand what Chinese stories are and how to tell them well. Through the improvement of foreign language courses, universities should strengthen students' practical ability of language output, and at the same time pay attention to the cultivation of cross-cultural awareness. Through the development of international exchange programs, universities should actively establish a variety of cooperation mechanisms with other higher educational institutions around the world to promote the going-out of Chinese students and the bringing-in of foreign students, so as to cultivate future global leaders promoting mutual understanding and learning of different cultures.

## **4.3 Self-awareness for Students**

President Xi points out that every young person should cherish this great era and be a striver in the new era. For Chinese college students, the support of external forces alone is not enough to truly achieve cultural self-confidence and cultural tolerance. In contrast, endogenous self-awareness is crucial. Just like eating, it is useless to eat without digesting, and it is also useless to digest without absorbing. Based on the positive output of the country, society, and university, students need to have an input process to transform it into something of their own.

Specifically, two aspects can be considered. First, Chinese college students need to strengthen their cultural independent learning and have a deep realization of their national responsibility and the mission of the times as key roles. Students should realize the significance of cultural self-confidence and cultural tolerance for national development and international cooperation, so that they can take the initiative to learn cultural knowledge to expand their cultural horizons. Through a variety of learning methods, such as reading Chinese and foreign cultural classics and participating in various cultural knowledge lectures, students can enhance their cultural literacy and understand the diversity of cultures.

Secondly, Chinese college students should consciously practice cultural values. Cultural practice is the purpose and destination of cultural cognition. All knowledge must be practiced in order to be transformed into competence. For students,

they should not only master rich cultural knowledge, but also vigorously participate in cultural construction. There are many ways to practice, and there is plenty of room to do so. For example, in terms of cultural self-confidence, the study and publicity of intangible cultural crafts can pass on traditional Chinese culture, volunteer lectures at the Revolutionary Martyrs' Memorial Hall can promote Chinese red culture, and the activities of popularization of law can consolidate the advanced socialist culture. In terms of cultural tolerance, students should make more foreign friends, learn what they think, and put themselves in their shoes; in foreign countries, they should take the initiative to explain Chinese culture and values, and at the same time welcome comparisons and borrowings from different cultures, and so on. Only when Chinese college students are able to unite knowledge and action can they realize the successful shaping of cultural values.

## **Conclusion**

Xi Jinping's cultural thought emphasizes that cultural construction, as an important aspect of national soft power construction, is an endogenous driving force for national development and international cooperation. As an important part of cultural construction, the cultivation of cultural self-confidence and cultural tolerance should not be neglected, requiring the nation, society, universities, and students themselves to take their respective responsibility. With all the forces working together, the future prospect of realizing cultural self-confidence and tolerance will be brighter, and the inner beliefs and openness of Chinese college students can be truly developed.

## **References**

- [1] Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, Michael Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 2010, p. 419-420.
- [2] Ziyan Xu, The Belief Establishment and Cultivation Mechanism of Socialist Core Values embedded in Chinese-style Modernization, *Nanjing Journal of Social Sciences*, 2023, No.11, p.38.
- [3] Ting Jiang, The Practical Pathways of Integrating Cultural Confidence into College Ideological Course Teaching, *Western China Quality Education*, 2023, No.19, p.15-16.
- [4] Yue Meng, Research on the Problems and Solutions of Cultural Confidence among New Era College Students, Master's Thesis, Liaoning Normal University, 2023, p.28.
- [5] Min Shi, Haiying Cheng, Research on the Cultivation of Ability of College Students to Tell Chinese Stories Well in Foreign Languages, *Journal of Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University*, 2022, No.5, p.95.