

Analysis of the Impact of Cultural Heritage Education in Primary Schools on Students' Cultural Identity

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Abstract: Cultural identity is the core of national cohesion, and the primary school stage is a critical period for the formation of values and cultural cognition. Taking cultural heritage education in primary schools as the research subject, this paper employs literature review and case analysis to explore its impact on students' cultural identity at the cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels. It analyzes existing problems in current education, such as fragmented content and singular forms. Strategies like optimizing the curriculum system and innovating teaching models are proposed to provide practical references for the implementation of cultural heritage education in primary schools and the enhancement of students' cultural identity, thereby contributing to the inheritance and development of China's excellent traditional culture.

Keywords: Primary Education; Cultural Heritage Education; Cultural Identity; Traditional Cultural Inheritance; Teaching Optimization

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Introduction

Cultural heritage is a vital carrier of the Chinese cultural lineage, bearing the nation's historical memory and spiritual core. With the advancement of the cultural confidence strategy, cultural heritage education has been incorporated into the primary and secondary school education system. As a crucial front for cultural enlightenment, the quality of cultural heritage education in primary schools directly relates to students' cognition and identification with local culture. Currently, issues such as marginalization and superficiality exist in some primary schools' cultural heritage education, making it difficult to effectively stimulate students' cultural affection. Based on this, this paper analyzes the impact of cultural heritage education in primary schools on students' cultural identity to provide a basis for improving its pathways.

1. Definition of Related Concepts

1.1 Cultural Heritage Education in Primary Schools

Cultural heritage education in primary schools refers to educational activities tailored to the physical and mental development characteristics of primary school students. Through systematic curriculum design and diverse teaching activities, it imparts knowledge of material cultural heritage (e.g., ancient architecture, artifacts) and intangible cultural heritage (e.g., traditional skills, folklore). It guides students to recognize the value of cultural heritage and cultivates their awareness and capacity for inheritance and preservation. Its core objective is not mere knowledge transmission but fostering emotional resonance and forming cultural identity through immersive and experiential learning. Compared to cultural heritage education in middle schools, the primary stage emphasizes more on interest and foundational knowledge. Teaching content needs to align with students' life experiences, and teaching forms should prioritize direct experience, avoiding theoretical and abstract explanations. For example, activities like handicraft making and folk custom experiences allow students to closely appreciate the charm of cultural heritage, laying the groundwork for deepening cultural cognition later.

1.2 Cultural Identity

Cultural identity refers to an individual's psychological process of recognizing, accepting, loving, and practicing the culture of their own nation or region. It encompasses three levels: cognitive identity, affective identity, and

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behavioral identity. Cognitive identity involves understanding cultural knowledge and historical origins; affective identity refers to the sense of belonging and pride generated on the basis of cognition; behavioral identity manifests as proactive actions to inherit and protect the culture. The cultural identity of primary school students is characterized by strong plasticity and susceptibility to environmental influences. The cultural identity formed during primary school affects students' subsequent cultural cognition and value judgments, holding profound significance for the cultivation of their lifelong cultural literacy. Therefore, strengthening students' cultural identity through cultural heritage education is one of the important missions of primary education.

2.The Mechanism of Impact of Cultural Heritage Education in Primary Schools on Students' Cultural Identity

2.1 Cognitive Level: Constructing a Cultural Knowledge Framework, Solidifying the Foundation for Identity

Cultural heritage education in primary schools helps students build a cognitive framework for local culture and eliminate blind spots in cultural understanding through the systematic teaching of cultural heritage knowledge. In classroom teaching, teachers combine textbook content to explain knowledge about local ancient architecture, traditional folklore, intangible heritage skills, etc., enabling students to understand the historical background, cultural connotations, and inheritance value of cultural heritage. For instance, when explaining the Forbidden City, it conveys not only architectural structures but also the construction wisdom and sentiments of home and country of ancient people; when introducing paper-cutting skills, it incorporates folk custom contexts to help students understand the auspicious meanings they carry. Furthermore, activities like field trips and museum research allow students to directly experience the true face of cultural heritage, deepening their memory of the knowledge. Through accumulation at the cognitive level, students' understanding of local culture transitions from vague to clear, from fragmented to systematic, laying a solid foundation for the germination of cultural affection and the formation of behavioral identity.

2.2 Affective Level: Stimulating Cultural Resonance, Strengthening the Sense of Belonging

The core of cultural identity is affective identity. Cultural heritage education in primary schools stimulates students' love and sense of belonging towards local culture through diverse teaching forms. During the teaching process, teachers combine stories behind cultural heritage to convey national spirit and values, eliciting students' emotional resonance. For example, narrating the construction history of the Great Wall allows students to appreciate the perseverance of ancient laborers; explaining the origins of traditional festivals lets students feel the cultural traditions of family reunion and respecting the elderly and cherishing the young. Simultaneously, participatory teaching activities can further strengthen emotional connections. Organizing students to participate in traditional festival celebrations, intangible heritage skill experiences, and cultural heritage protection publicity activities allows them to feel the vitality of cultural heritage in practice, generating a sense of belonging and pride that "this is our culture." This emotional resonance transforms into an internal driving force for cultural identity, enabling students to accept and love local culture from within, resist negative impacts of foreign cultures, and form a stable cultural-affective cognition.

2.3 Behavioral Level: Promoting Cultural Practice, Realizing the Implementation of Identity

Behavioral identity is the ultimate manifestation of cultural identity. Cultural heritage education in primary schools promotes the transformation of cultural identity from the psychological level to practical action by cultivating students' awareness of inheritance and protection capabilities. In teaching, teachers guide students to recognize the importance of cultural heritage preservation, impart basic protection methods, and foster a sense of responsibility. For example, educating students to cherish ancient buildings and artifacts, not to arbitrarily damage the inheritance environment of intangible heritage; encouraging students to proactively introduce local cultural heritage to others, becoming little ambassadors for cultural dissemination. Additionally, by carrying out creative practical activities related to cultural heritage, such as handicraft creation combining intangible heritage skills or

adapting traditional stories, students inherit culture through innovation. In practice, students not only deepen their understanding of cultural heritage but also actively participate in cultural inheritance and protection, realizing the grounding of cultural identity. This practice at the behavioral level, in turn, reinforces cognitive and affective identity, forming a virtuous cycle of "cognition-affection-behavior".

3.Current Status and Problems of Cultural Heritage Education in Primary Schools

3.1 Current Status

As the concept of cultural confidence takes root, primary school cultural heritage education has gradually gained attention in the education sector. Some schools have integrated such content into daily teaching, laying a preliminary practical foundation. Guided by policies, local education departments encourage schools to explore local cultural heritage resources and carry out characteristic activities, such as inviting intangible cultural heritage inheritors to campus and organizing site visits. Moreover, the popularization of modern teaching technologies has expanded teaching approaches—some schools use multimedia and virtual reality to enrich forms and boost student participation. Additionally, a preliminary home-school-community collaboration model has emerged, with study tours co-hosted by schools, museums and communities extending the education's reach.

3.2 Existing Problems

3.2.1 Imperfect Curriculum System and Fragmented Content Presentation

At present, most primary schools have not established independent and systematic cultural heritage courses. Relevant content is mostly embedded sporadically in Chinese, fine arts, history and other subjects, lacking overall planning and connection. Teaching content mainly focuses on common cultural heritages, with insufficient exploration of local characteristic cultural heritages. Moreover, the depth of the content is not well-matched with the age characteristics of students, making it difficult to meet the cognitive needs of students in different grades and fail to help them construct a complete cultural knowledge system.

3.2.2 Single Teaching Form and Insufficient Experience

Some schools still rely mainly on traditional classroom lectures, transmitting knowledge through textbooks and courseware, and lack immersive and experiential teaching designs. Practical activities are mostly superficial, such as simple handicrafts and short visits to heritage sites, lacking targeted interactive tasks and in-depth guidance. This fails to enable students to truly perceive the connotation and vitality of cultural heritages, and it is difficult to arouse their emotional resonance and enthusiasm for participation.

3.2.3 Weak Teaching Staff and Insufficient Professional Literacy

Most primary school teachers lack systematic training in cultural heritage knowledge, have an inadequate understanding of the historical origins and cultural connotations of local cultural heritages, and are deficient in specialized teaching methods and curriculum design capabilities for cultural heritage education. Meanwhile, the teaching staff structure is unitary, lacking the regular participation of professional forces such as intangible cultural heritage inheritors and cultural scholars, which makes it difficult to support high-quality cultural heritage teaching activities.

3.2.4 Imperfect Evaluation Mechanism and Insufficient Support

Existing evaluations mostly focus on result-oriented assessment such as knowledge testing, ignoring the comprehensive consideration of students' participation process, emotional attitudes and practical behaviors, and thus failing to fully reflect the improvement of students' cultural identity. In addition, schools have limited financial investment in cultural heritage education, lack special teaching resources and stable practice bases, and the home-school-community collaborative education mechanism is incomplete. This makes it difficult to form an educational synergy and restricts the sustainable advancement of cultural heritage education.

4.Current Status and Problems in the Implementation of Cultural Heritage Education in Primary Schools

4.1 Establishing a Systematic Curriculum System and Enriching Teaching Content

4.1.1 Integrated Implementation of Core Curriculum.

Schools establish interdisciplinary teaching teams composed of teachers from various subjects. Over one semester, they sort and integrate cultural heritage-related content across subjects, such as selecting texts in Chinese, organizing knowledge points in history, and integrating traditional content in art. They compile Primary School Cultural Heritage Basic Teaching Guidelines, clarifying teaching arrangements for each grade, ensuring no less than 8 class hours per semester. Knowledge point lists are distributed before class, and practical tasks are assigned after class.

4.1.2 Implementation of School-based Curriculum Development.

Form a research and development team consisting of in-school teachers, intangible heritage inheritors, and cultural scholars. Conduct two-month investigations into local cultural heritage resources, excavating resources related to folklore, skills, architecture, diet, etc. Develop school-based textbooks according to students' ages, using picture books for lower grades and adding analytical guidance content for middle and upper grades. Offer one school-based course every two weeks for each grade level, inviting intangible heritage inheritors for hands-on teaching.

4.1.3 Implementation of Tiered Teaching

For lower grades, focus on interesting and visual knowledge dissemination using methods like animation viewing and picture book reading, setting up interactive mini-games. For middle grades, emphasize systematic learning and simple experiences, carrying out activities like folklore sharing and skill experiences, organizing local short-distance visits each semester. For upper grades, focus on connotation interpretation and practical ability cultivation, conducting tasks like research and analysis, organizing cross-regional research trips each semester and requiring report writing.

4.2 Innovating Teaching Models to Strengthen Experience and Interaction

4.2.1 Innovation in Classroom Teaching Implementation

Utilize at least one modern teaching technology per class, such as multimedia courseware, virtual reality equipment. For example, when explaining the Forbidden City, use VR to let students "enter" it, directly experience its architectural layout and decorative details; when explaining traditional opera, play clips and display costumes/props to let students feel its charm. Conduct interactive activities like group discussions, story sharing, and role-playing. For instance, when learning about traditional festivals, have groups share their family customs or enact related stories. Set up a "Cultural Heritage Sharing Corner" in each class where students can share at any time collected materials, pictures, handicrafts, etc.

4.2.2 Implementation of Practical Teaching

Establish long-term cooperation agreements with local museums, cultural heritage sites, and intangible heritage workshops to build teaching practice bases, clarifying the organization of at least one student field research activity per month. Before each activity, teachers and base staff jointly design the plan, including objectives, routes, explanation content, interactive tasks. For example, in workshop research, arrange for students to learn basic skills from inheritors and complete simple works; at heritage sites, set up "Cultural Heritage Detective" tasks for students to find specific architectural elements or historical traces. Invite intangible heritage inheritors and cultural scholars to campus monthly for lectures, skill demonstrations, hands-on teaching. For example, invite a paper-cutting inheritor for a teaching session; invite a scholar to tell historical stories of local heritage.

4.2.3 Implementation of Creative Practical Activities

Hold one campus Cultural Heritage Creative Competition per semester, with categories like handicraft creation (e.g., making accessories using intangible heritage skills), artistic performance (e.g., adapting traditional stories for drama, singing opera excerpts), and creative design (e.g., designing promotional posters, cultural creative products). It is open to all students. Form a jury of professional teachers and inheritors to recognize excellent works and display them on campus. Hold an annual Campus Cultural Heritage Festival for one week, featuring a series of activities like knowledge quizzes, traditional skill experiences, folk performances, thematic exhibitions. Invite parents and community residents to participate, expanding the influence of cultural heritage education.

4.3 Strengthening Teacher Development and Enhancing Professional Competence

4.3.1 Implementation of Teacher Training

Formulate an annual teacher training plan, organizing no less than two thematic training sessions on cultural heritage per semester. Invite experts, scholars, and inheritors to teach, covering content like cultural heritage knowledge, teaching methods, curriculum design. For example, invite scholars to explain the historical origins and connotations of local heritage; invite inheritors to impart traditional skills and teaching techniques. Organize annual cross-school research exchange activities for teachers to visit other schools, learn advanced experiences, and conduct teaching reflections. Encourage teachers to participate in research projects, teaching competitions related to cultural heritage, and recognize those who achieve results.

4.3.2 Optimization of Teacher Structure Implementation

Hire at least three local intangible heritage inheritors or cultural volunteers as external instructors, clarifying their duties, such as conducting no less than four classroom teaching or practical guidance sessions per semester. Establish a collaborative teaching team of "in-school teachers + external experts," regularly conducting teaching research activities to jointly design teaching plans and develop resources. Select interested/skilled in-school teachers to form a core team for cultural heritage education, playing a demonstrative and leading role to enhance the overall teaching capability.

4.3.3 Implementation of Teacher Incentives

Incorporate cultural heritage education into the teacher ethics evaluation and assessment system, clarifying indicators like completion of teaching hours, quality of teaching plans, student feedback. Give preference in awards and performance appraisal to teachers who excel in this area. Establish a special reward fund for cultural heritage education, providing material and spiritual recognition to teachers with outstanding achievements in curriculum development, teaching innovation, or research.

4.4 Improving Evaluation Mechanisms and Strengthening Support Measures

4.4.1 Implementation of Student Evaluation Mechanism

Construct a student evaluation system combining "process evaluation + outcome evaluation." Process evaluation accounts for 60%, covering performance in class/practical activities, data collection/sharing, etc., evaluated jointly by teachers, peers, and parents through various means. Outcome evaluation accounts for 40%, including knowledge tests, creative work presentation, quality of research reports. Evaluation results are included in students' comprehensive quality evaluation files as a reference for awards.

4.4.2 Implementation of Teacher Evaluation Mechanism

Establish a teaching assessment system for cultural heritage education teachers. Assessment content includes achievement of teaching objectives, quality of plan design, activity organization, effectiveness, and results in curriculum development/research. Use a combination of self-assessment, peer review, student/parent feedback, and school evaluation. Results are categorized as excellent, qualified, or unqualified. Assessment results are linked to performance appraisal, awards, and promotion. Excellent teachers are recognized; unqualified ones receive training

guidance.

4.4.3 Implementation of Support Measures

Increase funding, allocating 5%-8% of the school's annual budget as a special fund for cultural heritage education, used for teaching resources, research activities, teacher training, etc. Improve teaching resources and research base construction: equip dedicated classrooms, purchase materials/tools, cooperate with social institutions to expand bases. Strengthen home-school collaboration: publicize importance to parents through various channels, invite them to activities, encourage guiding children in cultural heritage inheritance at home.

5. Conclusion

Cultural heritage education in primary schools is a vital pathway for cultivating students' cultural identity and inheriting China's excellent traditional culture, holding profound significance for student growth and the continuity of national culture. Although current efforts have made some progress, problems remain in curriculum, teaching staff, evaluation, etc. Future improvements require measures like building a systematic curriculum, innovating teaching models, strengthening teacher development, and improving support mechanisms to enhance education quality. It is hoped that cultural heritage education in primary schools can be carried out routinely and standardly, allowing students to strengthen their cultural identity through immersive learning, grow into steadfast inheritors and promoters of excellent traditional Chinese culture, and inject enduring momentum into the building of cultural confidence.

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