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# Pharmacological Theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Course Reform of Experimental Teaching under the Background of Courses on the Ideological and Political Dimension

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**Abstract** Pharmacology of traditional Chinese medicine is a bridge course linking traditional medicine and modern medicine. In the past, the teaching often focused on the cultivation of basic theories and skills, but did not integrate into the systematic design of ideological and political education. According to the characteristics of the course, this paper combines professional courses with ideological and political education from the aspects of teaching objectives, teaching contents, teaching methods, teaching resources and professional teachers' quality, so as to enhance students' recognition of Chinese excellent culture.

**Key words** Courses on the ideological and political dimension, Pharmacology of traditional Chinese medicine, Teaching course

## 1 Introduction

Pharmacology of traditional Chinese medicine is a required course for the specialty of traditional Chinese medicine, and it is a cross-course interrelated with pharmacology, physiology and traditional Chinese medicine. Education and teaching practice in the past often focused on the cultivation of students' professional knowledge, but lacked systematic design integrated into ideological and political education. "Courses on the ideological and political dimension" means that the knowledge system of the course embodies ideological and political moral education elements, teaching activities should shoulder the function of fostering character and civic virtue, and teachers should assume the responsibility of fostering character and civic virtue<sup>[1]</sup>. General secretary Xi Jinping's important speech at the 2016 National College Ideological and Political Work Conference emphasized that to make good use of the main channel of classroom teaching, all courses should guard a good channel and plant a good responsibility field, so that all kinds of courses and ideological and political theory courses are in the same direction, forming a synergistic effect<sup>[2–4]</sup>. On May 28, 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the *Guiding Outline for Ideological and Political Construction of College Courses* (hereinafter referred to as *Outline*), providing feasible guiding routes for ideological and political construction of college courses in the new era<sup>[5]</sup>. However, how to carry out the

*Outline* to combine professional curriculum with ideological and political education better and to give full play to the educational function of professional courses more effectively are the problems that need to be considered under the current situation.

In the system of "courses on the ideological and political dimension", the pharmacology courses of traditional Chinese medicine should not only have its own characteristics, but also establish ideological and political education content and method system with characteristics of traditional Chinese medicine specialty by taking education as the core goal, so as to integrate fostering character and civic virtue into all aspects and links of education and teaching. We tried to make a preliminary exploration from the following aspects.

## 2 Integrating ideological and political dimension into teaching objectives

As the foundation of colleges and universities, the idea of "fostering character and civic virtue" is the core of courses on the ideological and political dimension. In order to embody the educational function of pharmacology courses of traditional Chinese medicine, it is necessary to make clear the ideological education and value guiding content it undertakes, and formulate a clear syllabus and teaching guide based on the characteristics of traditional Chinese medicine specialty and the orientation of "courses on the ideological and political dimension". The course nature in the course standard of *Pharmacology of Traditional Chinese Medicine* has changed from emphasizing the teaching of basic knowledge and skills to emphasizing not only professional skills, but also the cultivation of students' patriotic feelings, recognition of traditional Chinese medicine culture and professional value, and responsibility consciousness of pharmaceutical workers. The teaching target is changed from two levels of knowledge target and ability target to three levels of knowledge target, ability target and quality target.

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Each teaching plan should be combined with the characteristics of teaching content to determine the value education task and content to be undertaken by this teaching, sort out the corresponding value items, fully excavate ideological and political education resources, and clarify the direction of ideological and political education.

For example, in the introduction of the first lesson, students should master the basic concept of pharmacology of traditional Chinese medicine and be familiar with the origin, development and basic knowledge of pharmacological research of traditional Chinese medicine. Moreover, it is also necessary to strengthen ideological and political education among college students with professional skills and knowledge as the carrier to let students know that traditional Chinese medicine is the treasure of Chinese civilization and the crystallization of more than 5 000 years of civilization. It is hoped that students of traditional Chinese medicine can enhance their cultural confidence and national pride, inherit, develop and make good use of traditional Chinese medicine, and contribute to "healthy China". As Gao Deyi and Zong Aidong<sup>[3]</sup> pointed out in the article that "strengthening ideological and political education for college students by taking professional skills and knowledge as the carrier has strong persuasion and appeal, which is conducive to maximizing the function of the main channel of the classroom and reversing the phenomenon of valuing wisdom over morality in professional course teaching, with irreplaceable advantages of other education methods". With the support of courses on the ideological and political dimension, the teaching content presents rich colors, sublimates the ideological connotation, and forms an organic combination of professional knowledge and ideological education.

### 3 Integrating ideological and political dimension into the teaching content

**3.1 Integrating ideological and political dimension into theoretical courses** Traditional cultural connotation and correct value orientation should be permeated into the teaching of professional knowledge in the teaching content of pharmacological courses of traditional Chinese medicine. For example, when describing the administration methods, usage, pharmacological action and mechanism of ephedra in the theoretical class, the teaching case is carefully designed around the scientific spirit by quoting the story of Chen Kehui and taking "extract ephedrine" as the main line. When presenting classic cases of modern research on traditional Chinese medicine, the case of "compound Danshen dripping pills entering the American market through American clinical trials" is adopted, and the teaching case is designed around "national spirit" with "modern new drugs" as the main line. And the reasons why compound Danshen dripping pills can be successfully marketed in the United States are put forward<sup>[6]</sup>. Compound Danshen dripping pill is approved as national essential medicine because of its remarkable curative effect and no obvious side effects. It is a necessary Chinese patent medicine for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases in China's traditional Chinese medicine hospitals.

Compound Danshen dripping pills make traditional Chinese medicine go global and bring the cause of traditional Chinese medicine to the international stage. Through practical cases, students' confidence in traditional Chinese medicine has been deepened. While ensuring the integrity of the teaching process and teaching professional knowledge, students' scientific spirit of exploration and responsibility consciousness of love and dedication to work have been cultivated<sup>[7]</sup>.

**3.2 Integrating ideological and political dimension into experimental training course** Pharmacology of traditional Chinese medicine is a specialized course integrating theory and experiment. In the practical course teaching of pharmacology of traditional Chinese medicine, the teaching method of "online + offline" and "PAD class" is adopted to promote students' exploration and solution, and team members are required to assist each other to ensure the completion of the goal. Therefore, the scientific research spirit of daring to face failure and innovation, rigorous working attitude and the importance of teamwork should be added into the teaching of practical training courses. In the training process of pharmacology of traditional Chinese medicine, students should take each practical training class seriously, record the experimental results truthfully and analyze the reasons for the results that do not conform to expectations, and should not arbitrarily tamper with data, fabricate facts, or arbitrarily copy other people's data, so as to form a rigorous scientific research style and a realistic attitude while mastering the practical training methods. In the process of using pharmacological experimental animals, teachers should explain experimental ethics to students, explain the significant contribution of experimental animals to the pharmacological research of traditional Chinese medicine, and teach students to follow experimental animal ethics in practice and strive to improve experimental techniques, so as to complete animal experiments quickly and to reduce the pain of experimental animals as much as possible. Training assessment should not only pay attention to the assessment of skills, but also strengthen the cultivation of credibility and scientific style, and the examined content is changed from single skill assessment to skill assessment and quality assessment. Through the change of assessment standards, students will realize the importance of honesty in the process of practical training, and further clarify the value orientation of honesty and dedication in their mind.

### 4 Integrating ideological and political dimension into teaching method

**4.1 Integrating ideological and political dimension into case teaching** Notification or news related to traditional Chinese medicine published by National Medical Products Administration or People's Daily Online and other authoritative websites are rewritten into special teaching cases to integrate professional knowledge into cases, which can explain the professional theory with cases while winning the value identification of students. For example, in the prescriptions for relieving exterior syndrome, it not only describes

the method of taking ephedra and its pharmacological effects and mechanism, but also describes the wisdom of Chen Kehui, how his research on ephedrine was recognized by the world and started the pharmacological research of traditional Chinese medicine. The skillful introduction of famous people will arouse the interest of students. When teaching the pharmacological effects of aconite in warming interior drugs, students can know the influence of genuine nature on the efficacy and toxicity of traditional Chinese medicines by introducing the characteristics of high efficiency and low toxicity of aconite produced by Jiangyou, the main producing area of genuine Chinese medicine, and fully understand that the authenticity and quality of medicinal materials is directly related to the clinical efficacy and safety of traditional Chinese medicine. Based on a piece of news of People's Daily Online on September 10, 2015, "6 people died after eating pig's feet stewed with wild aconite"<sup>[8]</sup>, the case was rewritten to guide students to analyze the manifestations of aconite poisoning, the causes of poisoning, and what measures should be taken, which not only introduced the toxic effects of aconite, but also paid attention to students' thinking about life, their reverence for law, and their awareness of responsibility. Some students said that: "through the story taught in class, I can better understand and memorize knowledge points, and realize the importance of my major. Wrong use of medicinal materials, insufficient efficacy, or even toxicity will be directly related to the safety and effectiveness of clinical medication, which is closely related to people's lives and can not be careless."

**4.2 Integrating ideological and political dimension into heuristic teaching** In order to enable students to better combine professional knowledge with current affairs and politics and social hot spots, the extended homework "traditional Chinese medicine terms and current affairs and politics" is assigned in the teaching. According to the clues, students can find the corresponding resources on the internet, newspapers, literatures or videos. After reading, students can find out the related traditional Chinese medicine terms and explain the meaning of the terms and their extended meanings. During the inspection work in Guangdong on December 7 – 11, 2012, Xi Jinping<sup>[9]</sup> pointed out that "reform should also be treated based on syndrome differentiation; we should not only nourish blood and moisten dryness, remove stasis and promote blood circulation, but also consolidate basis, strengthen the tendons and renew the bones, so as to bring all reforms into full play". Among them, "syndrome differentiation" and other terms are all traditional Chinese medicine terms. In the keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2017 on January 17, 2017, Xi Jinping<sup>[10]</sup> also used the terms such as "addressing both symptoms and root causes". In June 2020, general secretary Xi Jinping presided over a symposium of experts and scholars, and emphasized that "the combination of traditional Chinese and western medicine and the combined use of Chinese and western medicine is a major feature of the epidemic prevention and control; it is also a vivid practice of inheriting the essence of traditional Chinese medicine and upholding in-

tegrity and innovation", fully recognizing the contribution of traditional Chinese medicine in epidemic prevention and control from the strategic perspective of people's safety and health. Such form of homework is welcomed by students and has produced good results.

## 5 Exploring teaching resources integrated into ideological and political dimension

Before the study of pharmacology of traditional Chinese medicine, the introductory course of traditional Chinese medicine is set up. Through the teaching arrangement of "visiting the park to learn about plants", visiting the museum of traditional Chinese medicine, pharmacy of traditional Chinese medicine and enterprises of traditional Chinese medicine, students can personally visit enterprises and pharmaceutical factories, and can feel the real enterprise culture and inheritance spirit. Compared with the traditional teaching materials dictated by teachers, listening and noting by students will receive better effect. The students not only learn the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation and the historical evolution of traditional Chinese medicine, but also feel the spirit of inheriting from generation to generation. At this time, silence is more powerful than words, which must be the purpose of ideological and political education in professional courses. In order to combine the improvement of humanistic quality of traditional Chinese medicine with professional practice of traditional Chinese medicine, extracurricular professional books for teachers are recommended to students. Meanwhile, teacher-student interaction extends out of the classroom, and the shaping of students' outlook on life and values is increased from spirit, thought and life.

In addition, the professional teachers should break the separation between traditional ideological and political education and professional education, keep pace with the times, consciously study the core socialist values and the "four self-confidence" education content, and pay attention to continuous improvement of their own culture and ideological and moral quality, while constantly excavating ideological and political education resources in their professional courses. Professional teachers should not only fully understand the intrinsic value and social value of their own discipline and specialty, and enhance their sense of mission and social responsibility, but also strengthen the cultivation of education consciousness, and consciously put the fundamental task of fostering character and civic virtue through the whole process of education and teaching.

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per understanding of the great spirit of Party building.

In this way, it not only broadens students' horizons, but also helps educators to improve their organizational leadership and work ability, so that the fine tradition contained in the great spirit of Party building can be inherited and carried forward. Secondly, it is necessary to understand the connotation of the great spirit of Party building, and we must grasp specific cases, such as flood fighting in 1998, emergency rescue and disaster relief in Tangshan earthquake and Wenchuan earthquake, and recent national anti-epidemic action, *etc.* The advanced figures, Party history stories and real-time information containing the elements of great spirit of Party building are used as concrete interpretations, so that the educated people can understand the deep logic behind them, absorb successful experience, accept spiritual enlightenment, understand the moral sentiments of the Party and the advantages of the masses, and firmly believe in the historical inevitability of the Communist Party leading China.

At present, there is still room for improvement in the integration of the great spirit of Party building in China's ideological and political education, teaching methods need to be improved, teachers' literacy needs to be improved, and the teaching research on the great spirit of Party building is not profound enough. These are all problems that need to be solved in the future ideological and political teaching. However, as long as we persist in implementing the theoretical core of the great spirit of Party building, pay attention to promoting teaching transformation, enriching teaching methods, reforming teaching methods, incorporating teaching evaluation and promoting teaching integration on the premise of grasping the core essence of the great spirit of Party building, we can implement the integration of the great spirit of

Party building into ideological and political courses in colleges and universities and maintain its prolonged vitality.

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