

Research on the Path of Enhancing Ideological and Political Education in Universities through College Student Volunteer Services

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Abstract: College student volunteer service plays an irreplaceable role in the ideological and political education of university students. It serves as an important pathway for students to forge themselves through practice and realize their self-worth in the process of contribution. It is also one of the effective approaches for universities to enhance ideological and political education. Therefore, this article begins by exploring the significance of integrating college student volunteer service into ideological and political education, followed by a brief analysis of the issues existing in the process of college student volunteer service. Finally, it discusses the implementation pathways for improving ideological and political education in universities through college student volunteer service, providing theoretical reference and practical guidance for enhancing ideological and political education in higher education.

Keywords: College students; Volunteer service; Enhancement; Ideological and political education

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Introduction

College student volunteer service is a vital component of ideological and political education in higher education institutions. It serves as an effective vehicle for achieving the goals and objectives of ideological and political education, as well as an important pathway to enhance the effectiveness of such education. In the context of practical education, it plays multiple roles, including value guidance, quality enhancement, and capability cultivation, demonstrating the ideals, moral character, and sense of responsibility of young college students. Today, college students exhibit active and diverse ways of thinking, and traditional didactic teaching models can no longer meet the intellectual demands of contemporary students. Ideological and political education that overemphasizes theory at the expense of practice lacks real-life engagement, making it difficult for students to develop emotional resonance and ideological identification with abstract theoretical concepts. In this context, college student volunteer service provides a practical platform for growth within ideological and political education. Through various volunteer activities such as community service and educational support, students engage with society and experience life firsthand. This allows them to translate theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom into solutions for real-world problems. Not only does this meet students' desire to contribute to society, but it also strengthens their sense of social responsibility and commitment to service.

1 The Value Connotation of Integrating College Student Volunteer Service into Ideological and Political Education

Cultivating a sense of social responsibility among college students is a crucial aspect of ideological and political education in higher education institutions, and it also serves as a key focal point for promoting socialist core values. Effectively integrating college student volunteer service with ideological and political education is one of the most efficient ways for universities to foster students' social responsibility, as well as a concrete manifestation of fulfilling the fundamental mission of fostering virtue and cultivating talents.

1.1 Contributes to the growth and development of college students as individuals

College students' participation in volunteer service activities not only helps them establish a correct outlook on life, values, and world perspective but also facilitates the transition from "theoretical knowledge in books" to "practical experience in the real world." This enables them to strengthen and enhance their personal capabilities through hands-on engagement. In the process of volunteering, students can not only develop organizational and communication skills as well as teamwork abilities but also cultivate moral character, foster positive ethical qualities, and enhance their sense of social responsibility and cultural literacy. Engaging in volunteer service helps bridge theoretical knowledge with societal needs, promoting the integration of professional expertise and practical application.

First, college student volunteer service plays a significant role in the comprehension and transformation of knowledge, which is crucial for students' growth. Knowledge acquisition does not only come from the classroom but, more importantly, from extracurricular practice. Volunteer service not only provides a platform for students to transform knowledge into practical skills but also stimulates their learning motivation and innovative spirit to a certain extent. By participating in various volunteer activities, students can actively integrate and enhance their professional knowledge based on what they observe and experience in practice, thereby improving their problem-solving abilities. At the same time, volunteer service offers students a platform to translate theoretical knowledge into practice. It guides them to apply specialized theoretical knowledge to solve real-world social problems. Volunteer activities are often tailored to students' academic backgrounds when assigning roles, which not only allows volunteers to leverage their individual strengths and avoid resource mismatch but also better achieves the goal of "enabling everyone to fully develop their talents."

Secondly, it contributes to the enhancement of college students' psychological resilience. In today's society, there are increasingly high demands on the psychological resilience of college students. To meet these societal expectations, students need to engage in various activities to strengthen their mental fortitude. Volunteer service provides valuable opportunities for the development of their personal qualities and abilities.

Volunteer activities require a strong sense of social responsibility, compelling students to dedicate their efforts to helping others. During this process, they learn new skills and accumulate invaluable interpersonal experience. When confronted with unexpected challenges, students not only learn how to respond and resolve issues while maintaining a positive mental state but also enhance their ability to handle pressure. It is through continuous participation in diverse volunteer activities that students gradually cultivate robust stress resistance. The composure, confidence, and self-reliance they demonstrate in addressing various problems are clear reflections of their comprehensive psychological growth. Furthermore, having clear goals is a crucial psychological factor for students as they prepare to enter society and serves as a primary direction for their efforts during university. However, many students struggle with confusion and a lack of self-positioning after entering college.

Actively guiding students to participate in volunteer activities helps them enhance their self-awareness through practical experience, clarify their responsibilities during service, and gradually develop a clearer sense of self-positioning. This, in turn, positively influences the improvement of their psychological resilience.

1.2 It contributes to the enhancement of students' cultural literacy and moral character.

Volunteer service is characterized by two main features: first, its voluntary nature, meaning the act of volunteering is entirely self-determined and non-compulsory; second, its unpaid and public welfare-oriented essence, where individuals sacrifice their time to help others and serve society without expecting any material compensation. In summary, volunteer service refers to organized activities carried out by volunteers during their leisure time, utilizing their professional skills in an unpaid and voluntary capacity. Volunteer service is intrinsically interconnected with cultural and moral cultivation, with both aspects mutually reinforcing and enhancing each other.

On one hand, volunteer activities require students to engage at the grassroots level, providing services to others. In the process, they receive positive value feedback, a strong sense of affirmation, and recognition, which greatly encourages their participation and motivates them to devote themselves more to professional studies, enriching their knowledge to better serve society in the future.

On the other hand, cultural and moral cultivation needs to be demonstrated through external behaviors, which in turn require a platform of social practice to manifest. College student volunteer service serves as an excellent such platform. Volunteer activities advocate "dedication," "helping others," "friendliness," and "mutual assistance," representing not only voluntary and unpaid actions but also a spirit of selfless contribution. It is precisely through such altruistic activities that students actively engage in the process, cultivate self-discipline, and embrace the joy of giving, transforming their inner cultural and moral cultivation into ingrained conscious behavior, thereby achieving the unity of knowledge and action.

2 Research on the Paths to Enhance Ideological and Political Education through College Student Volunteer Service

In April 2024, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued the "Opinions on Improving the Volunteer Service System in the New Era," requiring that "volunteer service be integrated as an important component of ideological and moral education for minors and ideological and political education for college students, incorporated into school education and student social practice." Volunteer service is a significant indicator of social civilization and progress, as well as an important pathway for college students to fulfill their social responsibilities and cultivate good moral character. During this period of rapid economic development, higher education institutions should fully recognize the immense value embedded in volunteer service, integrate it into ideological and political education, and use volunteer service to enhance such education. This will help students deeply understand the profound connotations of volunteer service and guide them to contribute at the grassroots level and in places where the country needs them most.

However, several issues persist in the current practice of college student volunteer service. For instance, there is often a lack of proper attitude and genuine enthusiasm and commitment during volunteer activities. The integration between volunteer service and academic majors remains insufficient, leading to a lack of professionalism in the design and implementation of activities. Additionally, participants often experience a low sense of fulfillment, unclear understanding of activity objectives, and a lack of sustained motivation for volunteer service. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen the management of college student volunteer service, effectively leverage the educational function of volunteer activities, and thereby enhance students' political awareness and sense of social responsibility.

2.1 To strengthen ideological and conviction education for students and ensure the educational value of volunteer service is fully realized

Universities should start by strengthening ideological education on ideals and beliefs among college students, guiding them to form firm convictions and voluntarily integrate their professional knowledge into volunteer service activities.

First, enhance education on ideals and beliefs in college student volunteer service. College student volunteer service is a voluntary and public welfare-oriented activity. Since the service is unpaid, it is essential to instill in students a correct understanding of volunteerism. Proper education on ideals and beliefs is the foundation for recognizing the spirit of volunteer service. In the process of educating students, the University Communist Youth League should reinforce education on ideals and beliefs, fostering a spirit of selfless dedication, compassion, and generosity in students.

Second, strengthen the promotion of volunteer service culture. With the continuous development of new media technologies, methods and channels of promotion are also evolving. Therefore, fully leveraging new media for publicity plays a crucial role in raising societal awareness of volunteer service. By adopting new promotional approaches, the effectiveness of volunteer service advocacy can be continuously improved, allowing more students to experience a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. Contemporary college students prefer obtaining information online, where content is fragmented and updated rapidly. For example, utilizing platforms popular among students, such as Douyin, Xiaohongshu, and social media circles, for promotion can attract more attention and engagement.

Finally, enhance guidance and support for volunteer service. The active guidance and strengthened support from the University Communist Youth League for volunteer service are important measures to boost students' sense of social responsibility and promote harmonious social development. Actively guide volunteer service activities. The University

Communist Youth League should make full use of campus media, bulletin boards, lectures, and other forms to widely promote the importance and significance of volunteer service, inspiring enthusiasm among college students to participate. Through organizations such as student unions and clubs, mobilize a broad base of students to actively engage in volunteer service activities, fostering a positive atmosphere for volunteerism. The University Communist Youth League can collaborate with communities, non-profit organizations, and other entities to build volunteer service platforms, providing students with more opportunities to participate.

2.2 To boost coordination under the guidance of Party building and fully deliver on the educational value of volunteer service

Volunteer service activities are a process that requires collective participation and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Without a clear shared philosophy, the quality of volunteer service is bound to decline. Being "on the front lines" means fully "integrating into the front lines." It is essential to strengthen the guiding role of Party building in coordination, with volunteer Party members serving as the backbone of volunteer teams. This will drive volunteer services to reach the grassroots level—only by staying grounded can we gather popular support, and as long as it is genuinely effective, it will warm people's hearts. It is crucial to strengthen college students' service philosophy of "benevolence." On one hand, the concept of volunteer service should be reinforced, encouraging students to serve with compassion and a spirit of dedication during volunteer activities. On the other hand, volunteers should practice empathy during service, considering the perspectives of the people they serve and addressing their actual needs. Only in this way can they provide better service to the community.

2.3 Foster the integration of academic expertise into volunteer service so that it becomes deeply rooted in students' hearts and minds

With the continuous development of volunteer service, the post-00s generation has become the main force in university volunteer activities. Effectively integrating academic disciplines with volunteer service, and educating and guiding students to combine their professional knowledge or personal strengths with volunteer work, can enhance personal value during service, increase understanding of national and social conditions, and further strengthen their sense of social responsibility. This also assists ideological and political education teachers in their work. For students, this integration can be understood as "major + volunteer service," guiding them to empower their volunteer efforts with their academic expertise. Clarifying the goals and implications of "major + volunteer service" and effectively combining it with ideological and political education is essential.

First, guide students to base their volunteer activities on their majors, making volunteer service a part of their lives, and becoming promoters of the volunteer spirit through conscious action. Second, encourage students to reflect and refine their experiences during volunteer activities, actively integrating the "individual self" into the "collective self." While acquiring professional knowledge is the primary academic task at university, students often lack practical experience. They can be guided to exert initiative in volunteer activities, where ideological and political education can be subtly conducted, enhancing their spiritual awareness and enabling them to become participants and promoters of social progress.

Refine the educational content of "major + volunteer service" and incorporate it precisely and effectively into ideological and political education. On one hand, strengthen the construction of volunteer service teaching teams. Promote the value and significance of volunteer service to students, encourage more teachers to offer relevant courses, and transform volunteer service project cases into resources for ideological and political education, allowing students to systematically learn theoretical knowledge in courses and further stimulate their internal motivation. On the other hand, enhance practical guidance for volunteer service. Instructors should extract ideological and political elements from volunteer activities. Optimize the design of volunteer service content through projects and competitions, guiding students to apply professional knowledge in volunteer service. Through high-quality professional input, improve students' practical understanding and enhance their sense of fulfillment and well-being. During the process, instructors should strengthen both professional guidance and ideological and political education, providing robust external support for college student volunteer service.

3 Conclusion

Empowering society with knowledge, fulfilling responsibilities through action. College student volunteer service serves as a crucial vehicle for ideological and political education in universities, playing an indispensable role in shaping character and values while fostering a sense of social responsibility. Higher education institutions must fully leverage the role of volunteer service in student development, educating and guiding contemporary students not only to be "knowledge learners" but, more importantly, "knowledge practitioners." They should deeply cultivate professional expertise while also stepping into communities and rural fields, enhancing their understanding of society and themselves, and deepening their affection for the country. By applying their wisdom where the nation needs it most, they can contribute their youthful strength to solving social problems.

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