

International Comparative Studies on the Cultivation of Social Responsibility Quality

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Supported by Supported by 2017 Youth Marxist Research Innovation Project of Jiangxi Province “Research on the Cultivation of Social Responsibility Quality” (17QM05); 2017 Bidding Project of Jiangxi Normal University as a National Research Base for College Counselors “Innovation Studies on Discourse System of College Counselors in We-Media Era”; 2017 Annual Project of Jiangxi Normal University as a National Research Center for the Development of College Counselors “Comparative Studies on the Professionalism and Professionalization of Chinese and American College Counselors” (JD17160); 2017 Social Science General Project of Jiangxi Province “Research on the Development of Women Organizations in Transition Period” (17ZZ05).

Received 31 January 2018; accepted 13 February 2018
Published online 26 March 2018

Abstract

The cultivation of social responsibility quality is conducive to the formation of common constraint and social rules to promote the modernization of individuals and society. The international comparative studies on the present situation, objectives, contents and ways for the cultivation of social responsibility quality benefit by examining the theoretical and practical issues during the cultivation of social responsibility quality with developmental notion and open mind. In the future, it will be necessary to deepen the scientific spirit and follow the pulse of times for the cultivation of social responsibility quality to further enhance the academic depth and practical dimension for the cultivation of social responsibility quality.

Key words: Social responsibility quality; Cultivation objectives; Cultivation contents; Cultivation strategy; International comparative studies; Social responsibility behavior

Su, L., & Wan, S. C. (2018). International Comparative Studies on the Cultivation of Social Responsibility Quality. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 14(1), 88-92. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/10269>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/10269>

INTRODUCTION

As a basic moral quality that an individual should have, social responsibility quality is a constructive force for the development of an individual. The cultivation of social responsibility quality plays an important role in enriching an individual’s perception of social responsibility, enhancing an individual’s feelings of social responsibility, strengthening an individual’s willingness for shouldering social responsibility and motivating an individual’s initiative and enthusiasm for social responsibility behavior. It is proposed to conduct international comparative studies on the cultivation of social responsibility quality, gain exact insights into the objectives, contents and methods for the cultivation of social responsibility quality with broad horizon, and better understand the historical features and the characteristics of times for the cultivation of social responsibility quality, so as to provide beneficial reference for the future development of the cultivation of social responsibility quality.

1. DOMESTIC STUDIES ON THE CULTIVATION OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY QUALITY

1.1 Current Situation of the Cultivation of Social Responsibility Quality

With the development of times, on one hand, social responsibility quality carries on the cultural tradition

of outstanding responsibility left over the long history. On the other hand, some problems appear during the process of globalization and social transformation under the influence of social utilitarianism, market economy and multi-culture. According to the *Survey on Present Situation of the Sense of Social Responsibility of College students in China (2014)*, Wei Jinping et al hold the opinion that overall college students in China have high sense of social responsibility with the average score at 83.09 (full score as 100). Those scored higher than 60 take up 93.2%, and those scored higher than 80 take up 70.1% (Zhou, 2015). Some scholars believe that college students generally have a high sense of social responsibility. They hold a basically positive and clear attitude towards national and international affairs. More than half of the students are eager to participate in public welfare undertakings. 82.3% of college students are concerned about the safety of others' lives. 76.2% of college students said they would actively report or stop criminal activities. And 30.4% have a desire to work in the West (Yu, 2006). From the perspective of the structural deficiency of college students' self-consciousness, Wang Youming expounds the following problems as far as the sense of social responsibility of college students is concerned. Specifically, in term of ideal and pursuit, they more value material benefits than ideal and goal. In term of value orientation, they more value individual standard than social standard. And in term of the notion of responsibility, they more value individual responsibility than social responsibility (Wang, 2004).

1.2 Cause Analysis of the Problems for Social Responsibility Quality

There are internal and external causes for the concerns over the "social responsibility quality" of individuals. The internal causes are mainly social cognition deviation, lack of self-consciousness and lack of striving goal in the process of individual development. The external causes are mainly social factors, family factors and education factors. Yu (2008) analyzes the causes for individual lacking social responsibility quality from the factors of society and culture, school education, family education and self-consciousness education (pp.11-12). Some scholars think the causes for individual lacking social responsibility quality are respectively the penetration of Western individualist values, negative impact from social transformation, challenges brought about by market economy, and negative influence of network media (Zheng, 2014, p.71). And some theorists find out the reasons for college students lacking sense of social responsibility from the perspective of network society, and points out that hedonism, extreme individualism and money worship stemmed from network culture lead to college students lacking sense of social responsibility (Ouyang, 2013). The worrisome social responsibility quality is a complicated issue, for which there are

non-ignorable social roots as well as non-negligible educational roots. Therefore, the study should further explore the essence through phenomena from the multi-disciplinary perspectives of philosophy, ethics, psychology, pedagogy and sociology.

1.3 Strategy for the Cultivation of Social Responsibility Quality

The cultivation of individual's social responsibility quality is inseparable from correct education strategy and good environmental mechanism. (a) Education strategy for the cultivation of social responsibility quality. Qiu Weiguang believes that the path for the cultivation of individual social responsibility quality is multi-faceted, which is the process of combining cognition education, moral emotion cultivation and behavioral formation education (Qiu, 2013). Wei et al. (2013) hold the opinion that the formation process of college students' sense of social responsibility is also the formation process of social responsibility action participated by multiple subjects, connected by many links and influenced by many factors. The rules for the formation of college students' sense of social responsibility should be followed, and some effective measures such as classroom teaching, practice motivation and model leading should be adopted to enhance college students' sense of social responsibility. Hu (2005) believes that the core contents of the responsibility consciousness of young college students in the era of globalization should cover the following aspects, national rejuvenation, socialist belief, global ethics and heroism personality. (b) Study on the environmental mechanism for the cultivation of social responsibility quality. First, construction of institutional environment. System is the route for human civilization. As far as society is concerned, we should speed up the establishment of a scientific and rational system of rewards and punishment, so as to better play the role of punishing evil-doers and praising good-doers. For responsible behaviors, publicity and commendation should be made in time to better motivate and guide members of the society to perform their duties. On the contrary, we should never tolerate irresponsible behaviors. To construct the institutional environment for the cultivation of individual's social responsibility quality is to accelerate the establishment of conventionally moral restraints and strongly legal restraints as well. Only under the constraint and supervision of standard and sound regulations can various misconducts of the members of society be effectively controlled. Secondly, construction of cultural environment. The traditional Chinese culture has a long history, and social responsibility quality of is like pearls scattering in the rivers, which is a lifelong pursuit. Carrying forward the traditional culture of the Chinese nation is to make individual citizens become the new force and practitioner of the outstanding traditional culture of the Chinese nation. In addition, campus culture is an important external condition for the formation of

individual's social responsibility quality, which plays an important role in the formation of a good social responsibility quality unconsciously and imperceptibly. From the perspective of strengthening the construction of network culture, scholar Zhang (2015) elaborates on giving full play to the role of network culture in cultivating college students' social responsibility quality by strengthening network legislation and increasing programs on network ideological and political education. Thirdly, construction of the moral environment. The cultivation of individual's social responsibility quality cannot be separated from moral environment. Therefore, creating a moral environment with socialist core value system as the content coordinate plays an important role in cultivating the individual's social responsibility quality.

2. FOREIGN RESEARCH ON THE CULTIVATION OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY QUALITY

2.1 Cultivation Objectives of Social Responsibility Quality

Goals 2000: Educate America Act clearly defines the curriculum objectives of citizenship education as the cultivation of responsible citizens. Such responsible citizens need the knowledge necessary to participate responsibly and effectively in the political and civic life of a democratic society (Goals, 2000). On this basis, citizens are required to take the initiative to shoulder responsibility, make the assumption of responsibility and grasp the methods for analyzing the conflict of responsibility. In 1990, in "Citizenship Education" reported by the British National Curriculum Committee (NCC), citizenship education is described as "the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes for making exploration, making informed decisions and to exercise responsibility and rights in a democratic society". To be specific, qualified and responsible citizens should fully understand and focus on the principles and practices of democracy. By joining unofficial civil society to participate in community, actions can be taken politically to achieve public purpose and virtues in moral and civic sense such as promoting the sense of responsibility for public goodness can be equipped (Patrick, 2004). According to the White Paper on Common Values approved by Singapore parliament after national discussion, ethics is mostly applied to shape common values among nationals so as to better cultivate their social responsibility quality, enhance social cohesion with common values, and play an important role in Singapore social governance. The objective of moral education of Singapore schools is to "cultivate students with national consciousness, social responsibility and correct values", who are good and useful citizens being able to fulfill their obligations for selves, families,

neighbors and countries, and distinguish between right and wrong as well" (Ban, 2003). The main purpose of moral education course *Good Citizen* in the primary schools of Singapore is to make students have correct moral values and be citizens with sense of responsibility.¹ As stipulated in the *Basic Law on Education* of Japan, the central objective of education is to "fully develop personality and cultivate individuals with a sense of responsibility and independence".

2.2 Cultivation Content of Social Responsibility Quality

Since the 1960s, violence and crime, prejudice and hatred, and moral decline have intensified in the United States. In 1983, a report entitled *A Nation at Risk* published by American Council on Education pointed out that the core of citizen responsibility education was to strengthen the legal consciousness, law abiding, legal responsibility shouldering of citizens. There are four volumes of civic teaching materials compiled by American Center for Civic Education, respectively taking the authority, privacy, responsibility and justice as the theme. In the text of *Responsibility*, nine common sources of responsibility are listed: upbringing, commitment, assignment, appointment, occupation, law, tradition, civic principles and moral principles (Hu, 2013). Based on the sources of responsibility, the American civic responsibility education is carried out in the sequence and terms of social and political issues in dilemma, what is responsibility, importance of responsibility, gains and losses from fulfilling responsibility, how to solve the conflicts between different responsibilities and who shall be the responsible person as far as the contents are concerned. Setting specific situations enables citizens to behaviorize their judgments on values while making analysis of responsibility and stylize thinking training program to better promote the pertinence and effectiveness of civic responsibility education.

2.3 Cultivation Mode of Social Responsibility Quality

In the West, the cultivation of social responsibility quality usually adopts the method of "breaking up the whole into parts", which is integrated into the teaching of various basic subjects. For example, in American law course, students are trained to understand the law, obey law and protect law. In social course, students are required to fulfill their civic duties in practice. Oriented to some practical problems in social life, capstone courses guide students to evaluate, summarize and integrate what has learnt during the four years in university. In the process of solving practical problems, the students' cooperation competency and civic sense of responsibility are further cultivated. Based on the principles of pragmatism, the

¹ Refer to *Education Curriculum Standards for Citizenship and Morality*, issued by the Ministry of Education of Singapore in 1999.

development theory on moral cognition and the theory on value clarification, great importance has been attached to enhancing the development of civic moral cognition through the conflicts and defusing of responsibility situation in civic responsibility education of the United State. By adopting the approach of logic dilemma, students are guided to think and clarify the attribution of responsibility and deepen their cognition of responsibility. In the process of thinking, their moral cognition level is improved by learning how to make proper selection and thus citizens' problem-solving competency is been effectively improved. The carefully designed courses are gradually presented through vivid and lively examples of social life and the logical and compact teaching process. In the process of thinking and interaction, the effectiveness of teaching is enhanced. British citizen responsibility education also focuses on enhancing citizens' social responsibility quality through social public activities, participation in unofficial civic associations and community activities. The implementation effect of civic responsibility education is enhanced through the public supervision jointly exerted by schools, society and families. Some scholars think that social culture and school environment play an important role in the formation of students' social responsibility quality, and advocate integrating responsibility cultivation education into routine work and life to enhance students' social responsibility quality (Bryan & Mclaughlin, 2005). Tineke Broer analyzed three aspects of social responsibility quality from the perspective of neuroscience, i.e. optimization, autonomy and vulnerability. And he advocated promoting the social responsibility quality of citizens through the formulation of social policy discourse. In the UK, it is advocated to take the basic course of moral education as the support, and integrate the moral and responsible education into the lives of young people (Tineke, 2015). Lewis et al. (2012) believe that to make students develop a sense of social responsibility, teachers must master the corresponding education strategies, including explaining the impact of bad behaviors, giving early warning and conducting follow-up dialogue.

3. REFLECTIONS ON FUTURE RESEARCH

A survey of the existing corresponding researches shows that scholars are paying more and more attention to social responsibility quality, and there are more and more studies on social responsibility quality and its cultivation, which greatly promotes deepening the citizens' cognition on social responsibility quality and improving the cultivation mechanism of citizens' social responsibility quality. Whereas, the cultivation of social responsibility quality is never an extension and expansion of non-traditional moral education or simple patchwork of multiple disciplines, it is

a sort of dynamic development and integrated promotion of mutual influence and multiple factors of multiple disciplines. In the future research, the following aspects should be focused.

3.1 Academic Depth: Scientific Spirit for the Cognition of Social Responsibility Quality

The wisdom on "responsibility" ethics from the theories and practice on moral education at all times and in all lands is a valuable reference for the cultivation of social responsibility quality. However, the research on the basic concept and theories of "social responsibility quality" are to be further deepened and expanded. On the basis of previous studies, the following problems still exist. Firstly, there is a tendency to generalize the use of the concept of "social responsibility". In essence, social responsibility is a kind of moral emotion, and an emotional experience for an individual to fulfill his or her responsibility self-consciousness and judge whether his or her achieving moral target in moral practice meets moral needs during social practice as well. However, in the existing research, the connotation of social responsibility has been generalized, which has been understood as a moral quality containing the moral process of knowledge, emotion, will and behavior. Secondly, the definition of "social responsibility quality" still lacks its operable definition. In the previous researches, the cognition of the individual' social responsibility quality was rather vague for the corresponding model had not been constructed and the internal structure of an individual's social responsibility quality was unclear. Therefore, the future research should further analyze the structure, features and forming rules of social responsibility quality, and make more scientific cultivation accordingly.

3.2 Dimension of Practice: The Pulse of the Times for Social Responsibility Quality

Marx's theory of practice reveals that the practical existence of an individual is manifested as the dual existence as doer and donee, nature and society, and science and culture. Such dual existence determines that the unity of the relationship between man and world is manifested in human practice, and survives and develops in a responsible and moral way (Cui, 2006).¹ Therefore, only by focusing on practice can future research follow the pulse of times for the development of social responsibility quality and better cultivate the social responsibility quality of individuals along the tide of history, in social life and in the process of times. The quality of social responsibility is a dynamic concept whose connotation is constantly changing and developing. Social responsibility quality is also a historical concept, and it appears in people's field of vision with the emerging of responsibility concept and carries different connotations in different social governance forms. Therefore, dynamic vision should be adopted for the research on cultivating social

responsibility quality, and an evolving ideology and open mind should be taken to review the historical development and logical evolution of the cultivation of social responsibility quality, so as to better understand the connotation of times and practical appeals during the cultivation of historical responsibility quality. On this basis, social responsibility quality can be better cultivated.

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