

Significance and Path of Integrating Local Culture into School-Based Chinese Curriculum in Middle Schools of Shandong Province

Huang Kang

School of Chinese Language and Literature, Jiangsu Normal University, Xuzhou, China
2838732788@qq.com

Abstract. The local culture of Shandong Province with unique characteristics provides valuable resources for the development of school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools. From a cultural perspective, a school-based curriculum injects impetus for the times transformation and innovative development of local culture. From the curriculum perspective, the integration of local culture is conducive to expanding the curriculum extension. Meanwhile, the integration of school-based curriculum and local culture improves students' comprehensive quality, which has been practiced in primary and secondary schools in Shandong. The path of integrating school-based Chinese curriculum into local culture in middle schools in Shandong Province should be considered from many aspects such as curriculum form and curriculum content. The development of a school-based curriculum should follow the principles of comprehensiveness, instrumentality, humanism and practicality with a clear concept of curriculum development. Besides, attention should be paid to curriculum evaluation to realize their organic integration to the greatest extent.

Keywords: School-Based Curriculum; Local Culture; Chinese Course in Middle Schools; Core Literacy; Cultural Self-Confidence

Premised on implementing national curriculum and local curriculum, a school-based curriculum is developed by schools according to local curriculum resources, needs of school education, and "actual situation, learning intentions and hobbies" of students¹. With the advancement of quality education, school-based curriculum, as "an orientation of future basic education reform"², has attracted attention from all over the world. Some schools have also conducted corresponding teaching practice activities to integrate local culture into the school-based Chinese curriculum. Shandong Province with its profound cultural heritage has many cultures such as Taishan culture, Yellow River culture, Confucius and Mencius culture, Water Margin culture, Canal culture and Yimeng culture. "Local culture is an indispensable resource for school-based curriculum development and the significance of school-based curriculum development."³ Integrating school-based Chinese curriculum with local culture in middle schools in Shandong Province not only adds cultural characteristics to school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools in Shandong Province, but also breathes new life into local culture in Shandong Province. Taking the integration of school-based Chinese curriculum with local cultural development in middle schools in Shandong Province as the research object, this paper that adopts empirical research, comparative research and other methods aim at exploring the significance, necessity, conception and suggestions for their integration, so as to provide a reference for the educational reform in Shandong Province.

1. Necessity of Integrating Local Culture into the Development of School-Based Chinese Curriculum in Middle Schools of Shandong Province

First of all, the development of a school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools of Shandong Province is beneficial to inheriting local culture with a carrier provided by a school-based curriculum, which can systematically and rationally sort out and construct local culture before the cultural dissemination to students scientifically and effectively, and help students realize cultural internalization. Yan Na contended that "regional culture is the accumulation of historical development and the soul of a city, which invigorates the city."⁴ Shandong has inherited the excellent

Chinese traditional culture for thousands of years with its unique charm. The forms of these historical quintessence and literati's ideological wisdom are mainly expressed by explicit inscriptions, couplets, stone carvings, poems in celebrity works, and implicit folk customs, moral sentiments, concepts and beliefs, etc. One of the effective ways to develop regional culture and improve people's sense of identity is to integrate local culture with education. Focusing on the development of school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools and organically integrating Chinese curriculum and local culture in Shandong Province facilitates the screening, refining and processing of local culture, which can be shown and spread in a brand-new way to promote the times transformation and innovative development of local culture. In addition, the development of the school-based curriculum can deepen the understanding of local culture in Shandong Province, enhance students' sense of identity and belonging to local culture, and enhance cultural self-confidence. Meanwhile, students can feel the learning environment with a strong cultural atmosphere created by the school-based curriculum in combination with information tips, which also encourages students to explore the local culture and local flavor in the school-based Chinese curriculum independently. Thus, students will more comprehensively understand the local culture in Shandong Province and promote the inheritance of local culture.

Secondly, local culture is a vital source of content selection for the school-based curriculum and a core element to deepen the school-based curriculum reform, which is conducive to expanding the extension of the curriculum. Given that the new curriculum reform emphasizes "the connection between curriculum content and students' life, modern society and the development of science and technology"⁵, the content of the Chinese curriculum should strengthen the connection with life and times, so that teachers and students can carry out Chinese teaching in combination with specific Chinese situations during the learning. Integrating Water Margin Culture, Yellow River culture and the canal culture of Shandong Province into Chinese curriculum can bond daily life with Chinese and strengthen the curriculum effect. Besides, incorporating local culture into the development of school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools of Shandong Province mobilizes students' consciousness of life experience and feelings during learning, constructs their relationships with life and times, and builds a true and advancing Chinese learning situation. The organic combination of middle school Chinese curriculum and local culture is conducive to improving the practicality, comprehensiveness and situational nature of Chinese curriculum for middle school students. In essence, the content selection of the school-based curriculum is a cultural endowment following the context of cultural development. To some extent, the cultural core conveyed by the curriculum shapes students' cultural temperament and cultivates their sense of national belonging. The school-based curriculum seemed to be a tool for inheriting local culture. However, from an inner aspect, the interaction between school-based curriculum and local culture always constructs its cultural taste, forms its cultural characteristics, and shows inclusiveness and reality, which brings new opportunities for the expansion of curriculum extension, curriculum reform and innovation.

Thirdly, integrating local culture into the development of a school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools of Shandong Province is a practical activity based on students' improvement of comprehensive quality. In addition to stimulating students' life experience in learning school-based Chinese curriculum, integrating the school-based Chinese curriculum of middle schools with local culture in Shandong Province can establish an organic and stable connection with local culture, and produce students' emotional experience in Chinese learning. Moreover, such an integration expands students' horizons of Chinese learning, which supplements relevant local culture and characteristics, igniting students' learning enthusiasm. Thus, they can actively accumulate knowledge about culture, geography and history, so as to deepen the organic connection between the Chinese curriculum and other courses, and horizontally and vertically develop the Chinese curriculum. Meanwhile, the development of a school-based curriculum features pluralism and openness, so that students have the right and freedom to choose. As participants in school-based curriculum development, students' feedback is beneficial to the renewal and supplement of school-based curriculum. Students' consciousness as cultural subjects can highlight the unique cultural value of school-based curriculum

and reach a profound understanding of school-based curriculum in the two-way interaction between students and teachers, which provides the "man-made" activity and "man-made" value to the school-based Chinese curriculum with local culture in middle schools⁶.

Furthermore, the development of school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools plays an important role, with many examples of integrating school-based curriculum with local culture in Shandong. Curriculum categories should be "expanded and supplemented by local curriculum and school-based curriculum"⁷. "While implementing the national curriculum and local curriculum, the school should develop or select the curriculum suitable for the school according to the specific conditions of local social and economic development, combined with the traditions and advantages of the school and the interests and needs of students."⁸ Thus, we should organize and fully use the traditional local cultural resources in Shandong, including the local humanistic buildings, folk customs, history and culture, celebrities and their handed-down documents, so as to build a school-based curriculum in line with schools. It is worth noting that many primary and secondary schools in Shandong Province have combined the development of a school-based Chinese curriculum with local culture with vigorous implementation, which has achieved remarkable results. For example, under the guidance of national policies, Yawen Junior High School in Jinan High-tech Zone in 2019, in combination with the local historical background and cultural atmosphere of Jinan, develops a school-based Chinese curriculum of middle school with Jinan literature as the theme⁹. Weiqiao Experimental Primary School in Zouping District of Shandong Province based on Qilu culture relies on local cultural resources to develop a school-based curriculum according to students' development needs and the actual situation of the school, so as to improve students' literacy during the implementation of school-based curriculum¹⁰. In addition, Jining No.1 Middle School integrates "Jining Red Culture" into the school-based curriculum by carrying out the whole book reading activities and Jining Red Research Tour. Yantai No.1 Middle School develops and implements a school-based curriculum by organizing training, observing special reports, and hiring relevant external teachers to hold lectures. Besides, it offers demonstration classes and conducts professional seminars. The successful cases provide a powerful reference for studying the path of integrating local culture with school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools.

2. Conception of Integrating Local Culture into the Development of School-Based Chinese Curriculum in Middle Schools of Shandong Province

First of all, school-based curriculum development needs to fully consider students' requirements and school resources, and takes national curriculum and local curriculum as reference. Besides, it should give full play to local and school superior resources, so as to meet students' needs as the goal. Aiming at students' learning situation and school teachers, all sectors of society outside the school should be united to jointly formulate reasonable and feasible teaching general goals and specific goals, which is also the focus of curriculum development. As for the goal of integrating school-based Chinese curriculum into local culture in middle schools of Shandong Province, it aims to impart students with the present situation of local culture in Shandong Province through the study of school-based Chinese curriculum, so students can explore local culture while protecting, inheriting and innovating it on the one hand. On the other hand, we should ask students to cooperate independently in exploration and practice and cultivate their aesthetic appreciation ability. At the same time, through the study of local culture in Shandong Province, students can deeply understand the unique Qilu culture, Confucianism and Taoism culture in Shandong Province behind these materials, so as to cultivate students' local feelings and sense of identity with hometown culture.

Secondly, attention should be paid to optimizing curriculum form. According to Zhang Haitao, "School-based curriculum development of active Chinese can be divided into listening, speaking, reading, writing and researching"¹¹. In terms of listening, schools can organize special lectures and invite experts to explain local unique resources to students in combination with local characteristics. Teachers should also explain knowledge and culture in class, and make comprehensive use of

multimedia and network resources. In addition to absorbing cultural knowledge in lectures and classes, the development of a school-based curriculum should emphasize students' ability to speak. By holding debates, reading contests, speech competitions and stage performances with the theme of local culture, students can express their inner feelings and opinions on local culture. Moreover, the school can not only launch a series of reading festivals, introduction to famous works, reading exchange meetings and other activities, but also hold thematic reading events about the local historical development of Shandong and the biographies, thoughts and written works of celebrities, so that students can accumulate relevant local culture during the reading. On the one hand, teachers can provide students with books about local culture as a reference, share their views according to what they have learned, express what they want in language, and improve their ability to use language. Unfolding reading festivals with local culture can stimulate students' interest in reading, promote their thinking, and improve their thinking ability. On the other hand, schools should open all libraries and electronic reading rooms, establish a Shandong Special Zone, and classify book resources and video materials related to Shandong local culture. Moreover, schools can establish archives of school-based curriculum management and tease various text archives and electronic archives. As for classes, books about local culture can be placed in the shelf to develop their good reading habits. In addition, during the development and implementation of a school-based curriculum, teachers need to pay attention to cultivating students' writing ability. Students should learn to "write independently, express freely, state their views responsibly, express their true feelings and cultivate scientific and rational spirit."¹² As for teachers, they should develop composition teaching from the perspective of local culture, so that students can strengthen their sense of identity and belonging to local culture during the writing. At the same time, the corresponding essay contest can be held with the unique Qilu culture in Shandong Province to encourage students to think and discover well in their daily life. Meanwhile, teachers should promote students' writing through reading and reading-writing integration in the development and implementation of school-based curriculum, so that "reading in writing and thinking how to write through reading can be deepened."¹³ Finally, teachers should attach great importance to developing research-based learning. Implementation of special research, field investigation and questionnaire survey can cultivate students' ability to find problems, analyze problems independently and solve problems, realizing the comprehensive development of a school-based curriculum. Besides, a school-based curriculum should be conducted with designed schedules for specific Chinese practical activities. "Listening, speaking, reading, writing and researching" are interconnected with each other, and efforts should be made to realize their organic unity in the development. Because of their close bonds, the development and effective implementation of school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools of Shandong Province should be jointly promoted.

When it comes to the selection of school-based curriculum content, students' needs, local characteristics and school resources should be considered in combination with the existing teaching materials for analysis. As for course content, it can be divided into supplementary courses and extended courses. To develop supplementary courses, first of all, school teachers and relevant external experts need to supplement the knowledge involved, and basically sort out and compile the knowledge such as Shandong local culture and school background characteristics. After compiling teaching materials or related bibliographies, teachers will lead students to read and explain relevant knowledge. Shandong Culture Corner can also be set up to provide special places for reading books and discussing related issues. Extended courses are equivalent to all kinds of elective courses for students. Before such courses are offered, students' preferences and development needs can be understood through corresponding questionnaires and a series of academic investigations. Extended courses strive to help students' lifelong development, which requires teachers and experts to fully discuss the existing cultural resources, and carefully select and arrange them when preparing courses or compiling related teaching materials. Specifically, we can refer to the school-based Chinese curriculum of Suzhou No.10 Middle School, so as to offer a variety of courses according to the existing local cultural resources in Shandong, including *History Search*, *Poetry Appreciation* and *Literary Shandong*. In the course of *History Search*, teachers should not only explain the relevant

Shandong history and culture in class, but also extend the implementation of school-based curriculum to students' daily study and life. In addition, during the reading and poetry appreciation, teachers should collect excellent poems in Shandong. In their spare time, teachers can hold corresponding activities such as "Poetry Conference" and "Poetry Creation Competition", which cultivate students' interest in poetry and its appreciation in the form of "Poetry Contest" and "Topic-Given Poetry Creation". In the course of *Literary Shandong*, the literature history materials and works of Shandong literature masters can be selected with teaching methods of intensive reading and extensive reading, so as to carry out group exchange and book sharing. For example, *Fragment* is the second volume of the ninth-grade Chinese textbook published by People's Education Press, which is a modern poem featuring Jinan culture. According to Wang Honghui, "*Fragment* is a love metaphorical poem by Bian Zhilin and a classic blending of Chinese and Western poetic systems."¹⁴ In this poem, "bridge" is an important image. The "bridge" in *Fragment* is the Jinan Baishi Bridge, which is named after Baishiquan. Therefore, when guiding students to learn this modern poem, teachers can present pictures of the Baishi Bridge in Jinan and let students carefully observe pictures with their imagination to construct the artistic conception and atmosphere in this poem.

3. Suggestions on Integrating Local Culture into the Development of School-Based Chinese Curriculum in Middle Schools of Shandong Province

The school-based curriculum is a supplement for national and local curriculum, which aims at the lifelong development of students and the cultivation of Chinese literacy. Hence, we should first pay attention to the principles of comprehensiveness, practicality, instrumentality and humanity in the development. *Chinese Curriculum Standard for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition)* and *Chinese Curriculum Standard for Ordinary Senior High Schools (2017 Edition Revised in 2020)* both emphasize that "comprehensive and practical courses, the unity of instrumentality and humanity are basic characteristics of Chinese curriculum"¹⁵. Through comprehensive learning activities, students can accumulate knowledge and enhance cultural identity through independent inquiry and cooperation, so as to "solve problems in real life using experience and inquiry, and promote the unity of knowledge and practice and the learning-thinking combination"¹⁶. Meanwhile, the development of a school-based curriculum should be "based on practical knowledge and establish the practical connection between curriculum and students' life"¹⁷. Teachers should enhance students' process experience, create situations, and guide them into specific topics. On this basis, students can deepen their understanding of local culture through concrete practice, thus enhancing their cultural identity. Secondly, the development of a school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools should adhere to the unity of instrumentality and humanity. Instrumentality is an essential characteristic of Chinese discipline. As a part of the Chinese curriculum, the local culture school-based curriculum needs to take the development of students and the cultivation of Chinese literacy as its main goal, with teaching as its main purpose according to local cultural resources and relevant characteristics of schools. Besides, local culture school-based curriculum is subordinate to humanities. In its development, teachers should follow the humanistic principle, focus on the expression of thoughts and emotions, and grasp humanistic connotations in teaching, so as to disseminate Shandong local culture and cultivate students' love for local culture.

Secondly, schools and teachers should clarify the concept of curriculum development, which can be seen from aspects of purpose, subject, form and system. Schools should give full consideration to students' needs, personnel training objectives and related resources of local culture, with local culture dissemination and meeting students' needs as the main goals. Besides, its overall goal is to improve middle school students' comprehensive ability of Chinese learning, with their specific ability and emotions in different classes and courses as specific goals. In addition, the development of a school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools should also make clear the main body of development. Such a development requires multi-party participation and joint efforts. Moreover, students should be the main body of school-based curriculum development, participants, recipients and feedback-

givers of a curriculum development. Their needs are vital important basis for school-based curriculum development. For the developed school-based curriculum, "students have the right to make a choice again and constantly improve it in the implementation"¹⁸. In the concrete implementation of a school-based curriculum, teachers should adjust the content of school-based curriculum according to students' learning feedback and actual learning situations, so as to adapt to their learning characteristics and meet their learning needs. In addition, the form and system of school-based curriculum should be scientific, standardized and effective. The development of a school-based curriculum is originally a supplement to the national curriculum, which comes for students' abilities and needs. Hence, the establishment of its form and system has not been regulated by national and local systems. In this case, the school should shoulder the responsibility, and conduct a series of learning investigations when setting up a school-based curriculum. Besides, many subjects should be invited to its building and supervision, so as to create a scientific, standardized and effective curriculum system for students.

In addition, the development of a school-based curriculum should pay attention to curriculum evaluation, which aims to improve students' comprehensive quality, core literacy, understanding and recognition of local culture. Thus, the school-based curriculum should take students' changes and performance after learning as a vital evaluation index. This requires schools to build a comprehensive and scientific evaluation system, and emphasize the investigation and inspection of its specific implementation. At the same time, schools should ask students about their learning feelings and experiences through questionnaires and interviews. First of all, the evaluation principle should be established. In other words, the comprehensive ability displayed by students in class should be taken as the evaluation core. In combination with the preparation materials before class and the ability or harvest formed after class as auxiliary materials, performance assessment can be set up in each link to conduct an assessment from many aspects, so as to avoid the "examination orientation". Moreover, during the specific evaluation, students' performance or formation ability in each form can be evaluated and scored in combination with the classroom form of "listening, speaking, reading, writing and researching". It is also possible to combine self-evaluation, group mutual evaluation, parent evaluation and teacher evaluation. All test and examination scores can be divided into students' curriculum files according to the curriculum cycle, and finally a general evaluation. In this way, students can pay more attention to the learning process and harvest, and the common development of knowledge and ability. All-round evaluation of students' gains in this course can make it more authentic and reliable. Meanwhile, attention should be paid to students' progress in morality and values before formulating evaluation scales. The evaluation of the school-based curriculum should be carried out in combination with the general and specific objectives of the curriculum, with emphasis laid on generative evaluation. In the actual school-based curriculum, students and teachers should be evaluated immediately, so that they can find problems in time and adjust them for solutions. As for schools, they should establish corresponding reward mechanisms to commend teachers and students who have made outstanding achievements in the development and implementation of the school-based curriculum, so as to stimulate their enthusiasm for developing scientific, reasonable and standardized school-based Chinese curriculum in middle schools. The evaluation of school-based curriculum should unshackle the disadvantages of superficiality and simplicity as much as possible, and fully realize the process and intrinsic profundity of evaluation.

4. Conclusion

Integrating local culture into the school-based curriculum of Shandong Province is a crucial manifestation of cultivating students' core literacy of Chinese subjects. Students can deepen their understanding and recognition of local culture in school-based curriculum learning, and enhance their cultural self-confidence. At the same time, the curriculum content can be more close to students' lives, which expands the extension of the Chinese curriculum. School-based curriculum "lays the foundation of curriculum construction based on local culture"¹⁹, which is a powerful supplement to

the national curriculum. In essence, the combination of school-based curriculum and local culture is not only a cultural selection, but also a cultural adjustment. Their integration should be based on the characteristics of the school itself, take the development of the school as the yardstick, screen and combine many cultures, so as to form a scientific, effective, lasting and dynamic development system. The local culture of Shandong Province should be presented to students in a logical whole rather than in a fragmented form, which is conducive to returning the school-based curriculum to its culture and realizing the richness and uniqueness of the curriculum. Meanwhile, the integration of local culture with the school-based Chinese curriculum of middle schools in Shandong Province can improve students' Chinese ability and strengthen their moral cultivation in learning. During the cultivation of local culture, students can improve cultural senses, enrich cultural literacy, and foster cultural identity. The organic combination of school-based curriculum and local culture can improve students' comprehensive quality and cultivate their core accomplishment of Chinese subjects, in addition to reforming education in middle schools and promoting the diversified development of local culture.

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