

# Discussion on the Theoretical and Practical Studies of Campus Culture

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## ABSTRACT

**Campus culture is the internal support and driving force for the survival and development of the school. Aiming at re-recognizing and re-exploring the campus culture theory and practice, this paper differentiates and analyses campus cultural management, campus cultural construction and school cultural management, and clarifies the concept, objectives and functions of campus cultural management. Schools and the like realize the transformation and improvement of campus cultural construction to campus cultural management, strive to move towards "cultural management", further give play to the value-leading role of campus culture, promote connotative development, and seize the commanding heights of future development.**

*Keywords: campus culture, campus cultural management, cultural management*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Campus culture contains the school's development goals, educational philosophy and value pursuit. It is the internal support and driving force for the existence and development of schools and the like. Whether the campus cultural function can be fully exerted directly affects the school's connotative development. However, the author consulted many documents and materials, and the theoretical and practical researches on campus culture are mostly "construction" research ideas, which are built for the construction of campus culture from beginning to end. Under the theory and method of "construction" research, campus culture has formed another set of discourse systems independent of school management, resulting in the phenomenon of "disconnected" in campus culture and school management. And the value-leading role of campus culture has not been played. In addition, some studies draw on corporate cultural management, and propose "management" research ideas for campus culture. Under the "management" research theory and methods, two research directions have been formed. One research direction, which is also highly concerned by educators, mainly refers to the cultural management implemented by schools and the like. It is a new management model following traditional management such as experience management and scientific management. It uses culture as a means of management. It is a people-centered and culture-oriented management and its management main body aims at improving organizational effectiveness, which belongs to the category of school management, that is, school cultural management; another research direction refers to the management of their own culture

by schools and the like. It is a management that takes culture as the object, and a series of management activities carried out by the management subject on the organizational culture in order to achieve organizational goals and connotative development, namely the management of school culture. Because the culture of schools and the like has the concept of general level and individual level, this paper focuses on the discussion of the management of individual culture, so the management of school culture is called campus cultural management. However, whether it is "construction" view or "management" view, research on campus culture often mixes or confuses the concepts of campus cultural management with campus cultural construction and school cultural management. The solidification of thinking patterns and the confusion of core concepts have become the biggest bottlenecks in current campus culture theory and practice research, which need to be urgently recognized and explored again, so that schools and the like can further play the role of campus culture in value leadership and improve management efficiency with their own culture.

## II. THEORETICAL RESEARCH ON CAMPUS CULTURE FROM THE "CONSTRUCTION" PERSPECTIVE

The concept of campus culture was clearly put forward in the mid-1980s after China's reform and opening up. Especially in the late 1980s, all sectors of the society deeply recognized the importance of strengthening ideological and political work in schools. Campus culture research became a hot spot for academic research and attention. The First National

Campus Culture Seminar was held in Beijing in April 1900. The conference collected the main achievements of this stage of campus culture research in China, discussed the concept, definition and related theories of campus culture, discussed the significance and direction of campus cultural construction, and also showed some applied research. It can be said that this conference is a new milestone in the study of campus culture in China. It is of great significance both in theory and in practice, so that all sectors of the society can recognize the importance, necessity and urgency of campus cultural construction. However, it can be seen that the concept of "campus cultural construction" had reached a consensus at that time. So far, the concept of campus culture research has mostly adopted this concept, and has been studying the theory and practice of campus culture from the "construction" perspective.

Regarding the concept of campus culture, 9 opinions were put forward at the first seminar, which can be described as different people have different idea. In general, it can be classified into three views: the first is that it only refers to "literary and artistic activities", the second is that it only refers to "all after-school cultural life", and the third is to adopt a broad concept to refer to the material culture and spiritual culture on campus [1]. Obviously, the first and second categories are in terms of a narrow sense, and the third category is in terms of a broad sense. In the budding stage of campus culture research, the narrow level is too simple and insular, and it doesn't meet the theoretical demands of the "construction" research ideas. The academic community is more inclined to the broad concept, and believes that the "campus culture" with richer meaning and broader extension should be adopted [2]. Up to this day, the campus culture research from the "construction" perspective basically adopts a broad concept and is further enriched. For example, Professor Tian Jing regards campus culture as a school-specific cultural phenomenon in "On the Multiple Dimensions of University Culture — University Spirit, Educational Philosophy, Campus Culture and Their Relationship". In this thesis, Professor Tian Jing believes that campus culture is based on the values of teachers and students as well as the activities and material forms that carry these values, that is, it is the process of forming all the material forms, spiritual wealth and creation with the characteristics of the school campus, which is created, accumulated and shared by the school teachers and students through all levels of the school in the long-term education and teaching practice according to the needs of economic and social development, with the campus spirit reflecting the common belief and pursuit of teachers and students as the core. Because the broad concept of campus culture contains a lot of content, the connotation is too rich, the research on campus culture from the "construction" perspective often uses the four-level theory of organizational culture proposed by

American scholar Edgar H. Schein. This theory explores campus culture from four levels: spiritual culture, institutional culture, behavioral culture and material culture. It believes that campus spiritual culture is the core and soul of campus culture, and different levels of culture penetrate each other. These levels and interrelationships form an organic whole, which is campus culture and is constructed from four levels. In addition, there are some studies on the basic elements of campus culture under four levels, or directly exploring the key elements of campus culture, and grasping some basic elements and laws of the formation and development of campus culture.

However, by consulting many literatures on the research of campus cultural construction, a strange phenomenon is found. Most studies use the term "campus cultural construction", but only the connotation of campus culture is combed, and the connotation of campus cultural construction is not clearly defined. In a sense, it is a concept with high consensus and clear connotation. Analyzing the reasons, this phenomenon is related to China's national conditions. Just like "corporate cultural construction", campus cultural construction is also a Chinese concept. Under the planned economic conditions, affected by the thinking habits and work inertia of economic construction, social construction and spiritual civilization construction at that time, the term "corporate cultural construction" was widely used in corporate practice and became a convention [3]. Naturally, the term "campus cultural construction" is also used in the study of campus culture, which is in a relatively backward and absorbing stage. However, the statement of "campus cultural construction" is inappropriate, because the "construction" vision of the campus culture research adopts an all-encompassing broad concept, examines the campus culture with a static perspective, pays attention to the construction of campus cultural structure level and components and ignores the most important function of campus culture — building character. It needs to implement dynamic management for people on campus culture. It also neglects the connection between campus culture and school management, isolates campus culture, separates from the goal of running a school, and finally goes to a wrong region — talking about culture with culture as well as culture for culture's sake.

### **III. THEORETICAL RESEARCH ON CAMPUS CULTURE FROM THE "MANAGEMENT" PERSPECTIVE**

American management scientists Deere and Kennedy first put forward the concept of "cultural management". They formally came up with the concept of "cultural management" in 1982. The earliest researcher who proposed or used this concept in China

was Professor Zhang De of Tsinghua University. He believes that after the era of service wins, scientific management will definitely give way to "human-centered irrational management model that attaches great importance to concepts and emotions, that is, cultural management". But the first systematic research on school cultural management in China was Dr. Sun Hejuan. She published the book "School cultural management" in October 2004, and conducted systematic research on both theory and practice. "Cultural management" is people-centered and highly values people's irrational factors, such as people's emotions, will, values, etc. Compared with scientific management, this irrational management model is more suitable for modern social and economic development, and has become a major trend in management development. Compared with enterprises, although the research on organizational management in schools and the like has been lagging behind and learns from enterprise management, almost all of its management involves "people" management, which is more suitable for improving management efficiency and achieving organizational goals through "cultural management". The starting point for future organizational management in schools and the like must be the implementation of "cultural management". Liu Fengyun pointed out in "Cultural Management — New Trends and New States of Higher Vocational College Management" that the implementation of "cultural management" in schools is a management philosophy and model to foster the common values of teachers and students, gather the consensus on the development of teachers and students, stimulate the internal driving force of teachers and students, and achieve the ultimate goal of student added value and teacher self-realization as the final goal. Its essence is to achieve the goal of education management with the help of school culture to educate all teachers and students. It is a new concept, new idea, new strategy and new state of efficient management in higher vocational colleges [4].

It can be seen that the focus of school cultural management research is management, which is only a management model or method, and is one of the school management models or methods. School culture is just a tool for achieving management goals. It can even be said that this research direction is not the core of school culture research. At first, and even now, the campus culture research from "management" perspective has been dominated by this research idea. But with the deepening of this research, people find that there is a clear difference between school cultural management and school cultural management, and begin to explore the relationship between the two. In his doctoral dissertation, "Theoretical and Practical Exploration of School Cultural Management — Taking Gezhouba Middle School in Hubei Province as an Example", President Fu Quanxin focused on the study of school

cultural management and discussed the relationship between the two. These discussions helped later researchers to recognize the two concepts, which is very useful for reference. The campus culture research from "management" perspective has slowly evolved into a research direction for school cultural management, that is, the research topic of campus cultural management has emerged. Some studies have begun to focus on campus culture and optimize campus culture with the help of management. This research direction is the new world of school culture research, and "management" is no longer the protagonist. Although some studies on campus culture from the "management" perspective have recognized the difference between the two, they made no distinction between their specific functions, nor did they clarify the connection between them, so that the theoretical and practical studies of the two are vaguely understood, the functions are misaligned, and the cart is put before the horse. In the author's opinion, from the perspective of "management", both school cultural management and campus cultural management discuss management issues, but there are obvious differences and close connection between the two. Only by clarifying the difference and connection between the two can people better grasp the connotation of the two. Only by playing the role of leading value of campus culture, can people use campus culture to improve the management efficiency of schools and the like.

First, the two values point differently. The purpose value of school cultural management refers to the optimization of the school as a whole, and it is a management model or method aimed at improving the efficiency of schools and the like. It relies on campus culture. Campus culture reflects its tool (means) value in the organization and process of implementing "cultural management". The purpose value of campus cultural management refers to the optimization of campus culture, which aims to cultivate and shape campus culture and make teachers and students widely recognize, generally accept and follow the values and codes of conduct advocated by the school. It is realized by means of or through management, and management reflects the value of tool (means) in the process of optimizing campus culture [5].

Second, the scope of the objects managed by the two is different. School cultural management discusses the overall management of the school, which is a management method aimed at and applicable to the organization management of schools and the like. The implementation of cultural management in schools and the like is mainly to cultivate people-oriented campus culture, and under the guidance of the value system advocated by campus culture, establish management concepts, formulate management goals, design management systems, build management mechanisms and create a management atmosphere, which has been

centered on strengthening school management, improving organizational efficiency and achieving school educational goals. Campus cultural management focuses on discussing the management of campus culture. Its main function is to establish, form and develop campus culture according to the school's educational objectives. It has always focused on strengthening the management of school ideas and values, cultivating teachers and students, and shaping a campus culture that is in line with the school's development. It is an aspect of the overall management of schools and the like. School cultural management includes campus cultural management.

Third, there is a complementary relationship between the two. Although the values of school cultural management and campus cultural management are different, they are actually pointing to the difference between the whole and the part. The ultimate goal of the two values is the same, that is, by optimizing the resources of the organization and unifying the services to achieve the school's goals. Campus cultural management is the prerequisite, approach and specific measures to promote schools and the like to enter into "cultural management". Only when the campus cultural management is strengthened and the teachers and students consciously use the values and codes of conduct advocated by the school as the basis for their own behavior choices, can the true meaning of campus culture be formed and the cultural foundation be truly established, and the implementation of "cultural management" to improve organizational efficiency and achieve education management can get twofold results with half the effort. The implementation of "cultural management" in schools and the like will inevitably first strengthen the management of campus culture, and after the implementation of "cultural management", the values advocated by campus culture will be permeated into all aspects of school management, so that the campus culture can be more closely integrated with the school's running goals, the value leading role of campus culture can be further exerted, the campus cultural management can be optimized, and the further development of campus culture can also be promoted.

It can be seen that, from the research thought of "management", campus culture adopts a narrow concept. Because the broad concept regards campus culture as the sum of all school management elements. Although it contains campus culture, its content is too broad, so that campus cultural management is all-encompassing; there is no specific object, and it is impossible to carry out targeted and practical effective management. Therefore, the research on campus culture from "management" perspective holds that campus culture is an organizational culture. It refers to the sum of a school's characteristic values, group awareness, work style, behavior norms and thinking styles that have been formed by long-term accumulation in a

school's long-term schooling practice activities and are generally recognized and followed by teachers and students [6]. It is equivalent to the campus spiritual culture under the broad concept of campus culture. It is a value system that is consistent with the school's educational philosophy and development goals and guides the behavior of teachers and students.

#### **IV. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CAMPUS CULTURAL WORK FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF "CONSTRUCTION" AND "MANAGEMENT"**

After many years of development, the campus culture theory and practice research from the "construction" perspective has achieved remarkable results. Especially when schools and the like were established, all industries were yet to be prospered, which provided correct theoretical guidance for the development of school culture. After decades or even centuries of development, many schools have a wealth of cultural resources. However, many school cultures have high commonalities and insufficient personalities, and their core values are difficult to identify. Campus culture and school management are "disconnected", and the campus culture work mechanism is difficult to adapt to the needs of modern management and other issues have always been in front of us. After an in-depth analysis, the author believes that the "construction" research thought seriously hinders the development of the current campus culture theory and practice. It is necessary to reform and improve from the cognitive level and transform and improve at the practical level. It is necessary to establish a new perspective of "management", brightly put forward the concept of campus cultural management and scientifically grasp the essential difference between campus cultural management and campus cultural construction in concrete practice.

First, the work objectives of the two are different. "Construction" refers to the creation of new businesses, the addition of new facilities, and the enrichment of new spirits. It can be seen that it emphasizes that its own resource elements grow out of nothing and from few to many. It is a change in quantity and it is a relatively simple low-level activity. Based on this research idea, the work value pursuit and ultimate goal of campus cultural construction is to build and enrich campus culture. It emphasizes that the system is built from nothing and from less to more. Its work goals focus on itself and are not closely related to organizational goals. And the more the campus culture is built, the more it is uncombined with the school management. "Management" refers to being responsible for a certain work to proceed smoothly. It can be seen that it emphasizes the optimal allocation of its own resource elements, so as to harmonize and synchronize them and better serve the realization of organizational

goals. It is a complex high-level activity. Based on this research idea, campus cultural management directly cuts into management, and always explores the social significance and survival value of the school around the school mission and school goals, in order to establish the school value system. Campus cultural management optimizes the allocation of campus cultural resource elements through management methods, internalizes these value systems to people, and then generates personal behaviors, team behaviors, and organizational behaviors that meet the school's expectations and serves the realization of school goals.

Second, the focus of the two's work is different. The study of campus cultural construction often adopts a broad concept of campus culture. The focus of work includes all aspects of the school running process. The entire construction is in full swing and in a big way, but it ignores the most critical and core influencing factors, that is, talent is the focus of work and the most important and most active carrier. In actual work, because of the wide range of coverage, there is often no work focus, and people always want to catch everything, but there lacks effective means. And some people even ignore this problem, so that the development of campus culture in some schools has been stagnant. Campus cultural management adopts a narrow concept of campus culture, that is, the spiritual level, that it is not water without a source, a tree without roots, but a form of expression on a certain physical entity; these carriers include people, organizations, systems, materials, networks, classrooms, etc., with people as the center, emphasizing that the main body of culture is people, and culture comes from and shapes people. The focus of its work is to optimize the allocation of elements of campus cultural resources and instill the value system advocated by the school through various forms and methods so as to let teachers and students widely recognize, generally accept and consciously abide, form a true campus culture and continue to consolidate and improve through management.

Third, the working mechanism of the two is different. The study of campus cultural construction uses cultural level theory as a guide, mostly from a static perspective of composition, structure and function, and divides campus culture into spiritual culture, institutional culture, behavioral culture and material culture. It is constructed from four levels, with cultures infiltrating each other and performing their respective functions. However, in actual work, because the staff of the relevant departments have not internalized the value system, it is difficult to implement, resulting in the four levels of campus cultural construction often disconnected and difficult to integrate. Campus cultural management uses organizational culture theory as a guide and focuses on a dynamic management process. It divides campus cultural management into three stages, which are campus cultural establishment, campus

cultural formation, and campus cultural development, including links like campus cultural diagnosis, selection, cultivation, consolidation, innovation and development. When the internal and external conditions of the school change, the campus culture will be reshaped. It can be seen that it is not a static, one-time management, but a dynamic management process that has reached a higher level through continuous cycles. No matter what stage or link the campus culture is in, it has always been closely managed and practiced around the value system advocated, and there will be no disconnection.

Therefore, the author believes that campus cultural management refers to the establishment of a school value system based on the mission and school goals of schools and the like. By optimizing the allocation of campus cultural resource elements and continuously cultivating and consolidating campus culture, teachers and students can generally accept these values and codes of conduct, and the dynamic management process of campus culture can be enriched, improved and developed according to changes in internal and external conditions. The fundamental mission of schools and the like is to strengthen moral education and cultivate people, and the campus cultural management must determine its own goals and evaluation standards around the school's mission and purpose. Its main goal is naturally to closely surround "people", give full play to the value-leading role of campus culture and shape people. Only when the values and codes of conduct advocated by the school are widely recognized and accepted by teachers and students, and consciously used as the basis for choosing their own behavior, the campus culture is truly formed. The function of campus cultural management is naturally to establish, form and develop campus culture, and the essence is to optimize the allocation of campus cultural resources.

## V. CONCLUSION

To sum up, the relationship between campus cultural management and campus cultural construction is to replace and upgrade, and the relationship between campus cultural management and school cultural management is complementary. With the help of organizational culture, schools and the like can improve management efficiency, achieve school-running goals, and assume the function of delivering talents to the society. They should get rid of the "construction" research thinking, establish a new perspective of "management", directly cut in from management, implement dynamic management, optimize the allocation of elements of campus cultural resources through links such as diagnosis, selection, cultivation, consolidation, innovation and development of campus culture, and realize the transformation and improvement of campus cultural construction to campus cultural management in order to give full play to the value-leading role of campus culture, build a

good cultural foundation for the school to implement cultural management, then promote schools and the like into "cultural management", realize the focus of management's shifting from the physical factor to the human factor, cultivate and enhance the school's core competitiveness and seize the commanding heights of future development.

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