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Research on the Synergistic Development of Campus Environment Creation and Educational Management Under the Philosophy of Cultivating Virtue and Talent

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Abstract: As the fundamental mission of education in the contemporary era, the philosophy of "cultivating virtue and nurturing talents" comprehensively defines the underlying developmental logic of the modern campus educational ecosystem. Through rigorous theoretical analysis and extensive practical examination, this paper focuses on the synergistic development path between physical campus environment design and institutional educational management, aiming to elucidate their intrinsic connections and complex interactive mechanisms. The study reveals that the physical and cultural campus environment serves as a crucial, yet often underutilized, vehicle for implicit moral education, while formal educational management acts as the pivotal operational hub for daily educational practices. Currently, both sectors urgently need to overcome their historically fragmented state and establish a robust collaborative framework characterized by aligned strategic objectives, mutually reinforcing operational processes, and integrated performance evaluations. The core essence of this proposed synergy lies in adopting the principle of "cultivating virtue and nurturing talents" as the primary value orientation. This requires deeply embedding thoughtful environmental design principles directly into administrative management practices, and simultaneously leveraging management optimization strategies to continuously enhance overall environmental quality. Ultimately, this integrated approach drives a significant overall improvement in comprehensive educational effectiveness and student well-being. These critical findings provide a systematic theoretical framework and highly actionable recommendations for educational institutions seeking to deepen structural educational reforms and successfully fulfill the fundamental mission of fostering both moral virtue and academic talent.

Keywords: moral education; campus environment; educational management; collaborative development; educational philosophy

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1. Introduction

Education plays a pivotal role in shaping both national and societal progress. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the mission of education has been clearly defined as fostering virtue and nurturing talents. This mission revolves around addressing the fundamental questions of what kind of individuals to cultivate, the methods of cultivation, and the ultimate purpose of such efforts. The campus environment, as the physical and cultural space where students engage in daily learning and life, serves as an implicit yet powerful medium for moral education. Simultaneously, educational management forms the backbone of school operations, influencing the allocation of resources and the implementation of specific measures [1]. However, current practices reveal a significant gap between these two domains. Campus environment development often focuses on superficial enhancements, such as aesthetic beautification, while educational management remains confined to procedural and operational frameworks. This disconnect results in suboptimal moral education outcomes and fragmented utilization of educational resources. For instance, while many schools invest

heavily in improving the physical environment, they fail to integrate these efforts with educational management strategies. This leads to scenarios where visually appealing campuses lack substantive educational impact, and strict management practices foster emotional detachment among students and staff. Addressing this issue requires a synergistic approach that aligns campus environment design with educational management under the overarching goal of fostering virtue and nurturing talents. Such an approach is essential not only for improving educational quality but also for achieving a holistic transformation in educational practices. This study seeks to explore the theoretical underpinnings and practical mechanisms that can facilitate this synergy. By establishing a collaborative framework, schools can transition from a management-centric model to one that prioritizes talent cultivation. This shift would enable the creation of environments that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also deeply integrated with educational objectives, thereby fostering a more cohesive and impactful learning experience. The findings aim to provide actionable insights and guidance for schools striving for high-quality development, ensuring that educational practices align with the broader mission of cultivating virtuous and capable individuals.

2. The Connotation and Educational Value of the Philosophy of Cultivating Virtue and Nurturing Talent

The philosophy of "cultivating virtue and nurturing talents" originates from the traditional Chinese moral education principle of "self-cultivation, family harmony, social order, and global peace." Over centuries, this philosophy has undergone historical accumulation and contemporary refinement, evolving into a guiding framework for education in the modern era. Its foundational tenets prioritize moral education, emphasizing the development of ethical character above the acquisition of knowledge and technical skills. This approach aims to guide students in forming sound worldviews, life philosophies, and values, ultimately fostering individuals capable of contributing to societal progress and national rejuvenation. Rather than serving as an abstract slogan, this philosophy represents a profound re-examination of the essence of education. Its fundamental purpose lies not in producing individuals solely prepared for examinations but in cultivating well-rounded personalities equipped to navigate complex societal challenges [1, 2]. In practical terms, this principle necessitates the integration of moral education throughout the teaching process and the embedding of ethical values into all aspects of campus life. By immersing students in environments that promote character development and spiritual growth, education transcends its traditional boundaries, enabling learners to internalize moral principles through daily experiences and interactions [2, 3].

The educational value of the principle of "cultivating virtue and nurturing talents" lies in its transformative restructuring of the goals and logic underpinning education. It seeks to address the historical imbalance of "emphasizing intellect over morality" by placing moral development at the core of educational practices. This shift redirects the focus from mere knowledge transmission to the holistic cultivation of personality and character. In practice, the campus environment and educational management emerge as two pivotal dimensions for implementing this philosophy effectively. Campus environmental design must transcend superficial aesthetic enhancements, instead embedding moral messaging that resonates with students [2, 4]. For example, integrating moral stories of historical figures into campus landscapes transforms these spaces into dynamic teaching resources that inspire ethical reflection. Similarly, educational management must evolve beyond routine administrative tasks to incorporate practices that actively foster character development. For instance, classroom management strategies that combine rule-setting with student-led reflection can transform disciplinary measures into meaningful opportunities for moral growth. Such practices ensure that students engage with ethical principles in a tangible and impactful manner [5]. The key to successful implementation lies in creating environments and management practices that embody "warm, ethical education." This approach enables students to develop moral

understanding, emotional connection, and behavioral internalization through authentic experiences. By prioritizing character development over academic scores, education returns to its true essence, fostering individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also morally grounded and socially responsible.

3. Theoretical Foundations and Practical Approaches to Campus Environment Design

The theoretical foundation for campus environment design is deeply rooted in environmental education theory and ecological education theory. Environmental education theory highlights the reciprocal and constructive relationship between individuals and their surroundings, portraying the environment as a "third teacher" that exerts a continuous influence on students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development. This influence is mediated through physical spaces, cultural symbols, and the overall behavioral atmosphere of the campus [6, 7]. By shaping these elements, the environment becomes an active participant in the educational process, fostering a deeper connection between students and their surroundings. On the other hand, ecological education theory underscores the importance of viewing campuses as organic, symbiotic ecosystems. In this framework, the physical, humanistic, and institutional environments are harmoniously integrated to form an "educational ecosystem" that supports the holistic development of students. These theories converge on a critical insight: the campus environment is not merely a static backdrop but a dynamic and essential component of education. Its design must align with the overarching goal of cultivating moral integrity and nurturing talent, ensuring that every aspect of the environment contributes meaningfully to the educational mission.

In practical terms, the implementation of campus environment design must adhere to the principles of integrity, cultural relevance, and interactivity [8, 9]. The principle of integrity emphasizes the need for comprehensive environmental planning that transcends single-dimensional approaches. This involves coordinating physical spaces, such as teaching buildings, green areas, and activity zones, with cultural spaces, including university history museums, cultural walls, and classroom cultural corners. Such coordination prevents scenarios where "objects dominate over human presence," ensuring that the environment remains human-centered. For instance, the creation of a "Moral Quotations Corridor" along main campus pathways integrates traditional virtues and contemporary role model stories into the landscape. This transforms routine walking experiences into opportunities for moral reflection and immersion. The cultural principle focuses on embedding clear value orientations within the environment. This can be achieved through symbols such as the university motto, ethos, and class culture, which convey the institution's core values. Initiatives like "Integrity Month" and "Gratitude Week" can be seamlessly integrated into the environmental design, turning abstract concepts into tangible, everyday practices. The principle of interactivity prioritizes openness and active student participation. This can be facilitated through mechanisms such as "Campus Culture Proposal Boxes" and student-led beautification projects, which encourage students to take ownership of their environment. These initiatives transform environmental design into a platform for self-education and community engagement. It is crucial to avoid superficial formalism in the design process, focusing instead on achieving genuine educational impact. The ultimate objective is to foster moral growth and strengthen students' sense of community, ensuring that campuses serve as authentic spiritual soil for character development and holistic education.

4. Modern Transformation and Innovation in Educational Management

Traditional educational management has often been characterized by a "control-oriented" approach, which prioritizes adherence to rules and regulations, emphasizing administrative order while overlooking the emotional and developmental needs of students. This model frequently results in a disconnect between management objectives and educational goals, as students are conditioned to passively comply with external rules

rather than internalizing values. Such an environment can lead to diminished motivation and, in some cases, rebellious attitudes among students. The modern transformation of educational management seeks to address these shortcomings by shifting the focus from "administrative control" to "educational service." This approach emphasizes fostering virtue and nurturing talents, requiring a re-evaluation of the underlying principles and practical strategies of management. By prioritizing the holistic development of students, this transformation aims to create a more engaging and supportive educational environment.

Innovation in educational management unfolds across three critical dimensions: institutional frameworks, methodologies, and educational philosophies. Institutional innovation involves moving away from rigid, traditional systems to establish more adaptable and student-centered structures. For example, classroom management could adopt a "contract-based" model, where teachers and students collaboratively define class rules that emphasize ethical principles such as integrity and mutual support. This approach transforms rules from external mandates into internal commitments, fostering a sense of ownership and accountability among students. Methodological innovation integrates modern technology with pedagogical strategies to enhance the effectiveness and emotional resonance of management practices. Digital platforms, for instance, can be utilized to consolidate students' moral records, document positive behaviors, and provide visual feedback that encourages self-improvement. Such tools avoid simplistic labeling and instead promote nuanced, constructive development [10, 11]. Philosophical innovation represents the most profound shift, requiring the integration of moral education into every aspect of management. Decision-making processes should prioritize educational value, such as evaluating campus activities based on their moral and developmental impact or incorporating metrics of "educational competence" into teacher evaluations to emphasize character-building alongside academic performance. The modernization of educational management transcends mere technological advancements; it signifies a return to foundational values. Management practices evolve into guidelines that support moral education, institutional frameworks become vehicles for nurturing character, and service delivery connects these elements into a cohesive system. This transformation redefines the role of educational management, shifting its focus from controlling students to empowering them. By providing institutional safeguards and practical momentum, this approach fosters positive campus environments that prioritize the holistic development of students and align management practices with the broader goals of education.

5. The Synergistic Development Mechanism between Campus Environment and Educational Management

Collaborative development represents a systematic and dynamic process where the creation of the campus environment and the implementation of educational management are deeply interdependent and mutually reinforcing. This synergy arises because both share aligned objectives and complement each other in practical application. The campus environment provides an implicit context for moral education, embedding values and principles into the physical and cultural fabric of the school. On the other hand, educational management offers explicit pathways to operationalize these values, ensuring they are actively practiced and internalized by students. If these two elements are treated in isolation, the environment risks becoming superficial decoration, devoid of meaningful impact, while management may lose its effectiveness and fail to resonate with students. However, when integrated, the synergy creates a powerful educational effect where the combined impact exceeds the sum of its parts. This "1+1>2" effect underscores the importance of establishing a collaborative mechanism, which can be approached through three critical dimensions: objectives, processes, and evaluation [12, 13].

Target coordination forms the foundational layer of collaborative efforts, ensuring that the overarching goal of fostering virtue and nurturing talents is effectively translated into actionable sub-goals. These sub-goals must be clearly defined for both environmental

development and educational management to ensure alignment and coherence. For example, the environmental development objective could focus on "creating more than three thematic moral and cultural spaces that are strategically located in areas where students frequently engage in daily activities." This ensures that the environment actively supports moral education [14, 15]. Simultaneously, the educational management objective could aim to "integrate moral behavior into the class evaluation system, achieving 100% class participation in moral education activities." By aligning these objectives, schools can prevent environmental initiatives from being implemented as mere aesthetic projects and avoid management practices that prioritize procedural compliance over meaningful outcomes. This alignment ensures that both elements work in harmony to achieve the shared goal of holistic student development.

Process collaboration serves as the cornerstone of effective synergy between campus environment creation and educational management. During the campus planning phase, it is essential for educational authorities to actively participate in the design of the physical environment. This ensures that spatial layouts and features align with educational objectives [4]. For instance, the inclusion of "Reflection Corners" can provide students with dedicated spaces to contemplate ethical dilemmas and moral choices, fostering introspection and personal growth. In daily operations, environmental elements can be transformed into practical management tools. For example, campus cultural walls can be utilized for themed class meetings, turning static spaces into dynamic resources for moral education. To institutionalize this collaboration, schools can establish an "Environmental-Management Collaboration Committee," comprising school leaders, teachers, and student representatives. This committee would meet regularly to discuss and refine collaborative strategies, ensuring that the integration of environment and management is both standardized and sustainable. Such institutional safeguards are critical for maintaining the long-term effectiveness of this approach.

Evaluation of collaboration is essential for measuring the effectiveness of the synergistic relationship between campus environment creation and educational management. An integrated evaluation system should be developed to assess both dimensions comprehensively. This system could measure the extent to which moral education is embedded in environmental development, such as evaluating students' understanding and appreciation of the cultural and moral themes reflected in their surroundings. Simultaneously, it should assess the effectiveness of management practices in fostering moral development, such as tracking changes in students' ethical behavior and decision-making over time. By avoiding single-dimensional assessments, this approach ensures a balanced evaluation that captures the dynamic interplay between environment and management. The essence of this collaborative mechanism lies in the environment serving as a "living classroom," where students can engage with moral and cultural values in a tangible way, while management practices infuse the environment with an "educational soul," ensuring that these values are actively reinforced. Through this dynamic interaction, both elements achieve mutual growth, creating a robust framework for holistic education.

6. Practical Cases and Effectiveness Analysis

Under the guidance of the "Virtue Education" philosophy, a provincial model high school has systematically advanced the coordinated development of campus environment enhancement and educational management, achieving remarkable results. The campus environment emphasizes "moral immersion," featuring a "Gentleman's Garden" themed zone that includes a cultural corridor showcasing "Benevolence, Righteousness, Etiquette, Wisdom, and Integrity." This corridor is complemented by interactive experience areas where students actively engage in moral storytelling and role-playing activities, fostering a deeper connection to ethical principles. In terms of educational management, the school has implemented a "Growth Mentor Program," where each teacher is assigned to guide 5–8 students in their moral development. This program integrates environmental resources into management practices, such as organizing "Integrity Pledge" activities within the

Garden to reinforce ethical values. A cross-departmental team regularly evaluates the utilization rates of environmental resources and the outcomes of educational initiatives to ensure alignment with the school's objectives. These efforts have led to significant improvements in students' moral initiative, including increased instances of proactively assisting peers, maintaining campus cleanliness, and demonstrating a stronger sense of cultural identity and belonging. Furthermore, teachers have received widespread recognition for their educational effectiveness, highlighting the success of the integrated approach. This case illustrates how environmental design gains vitality through its integration with management practices, while educational management becomes more impactful through environmental support, creating a virtuous cycle that benefits both students and educators.

Another case comes from an elementary school in a city that has successfully integrated environmental management into daily moral education through a collaborative framework. The campus environment, themed "Childhood Loyalty to the Party," features a Red Culture Corner and a labor practice garden, with revolutionary stories seamlessly woven into the landscape design to inspire students. In educational management, the school incorporates environmental stewardship into classroom routines, such as implementing an "Environmental Guardian" rotation system where students take turns maintaining cultural corners and sharing their reflections on the experience. This initiative encourages students to take ownership of their surroundings while fostering a sense of responsibility and teamwork. The collaborative mechanism includes an "Environmental Usage Feedback Form," which enables the administration to dynamically adjust environmental content based on student feedback, ensuring that the environment remains engaging and relevant. These efforts have demonstrated sustained improvements in student behavior, with students participating in environmental maintenance showing greater initiative in group activities and contributing to strengthened class cohesion. Additionally, moral education evaluations have shifted from "passive compliance" to "active practice," reflecting a deeper internalization of ethical values among students. Collectively, these cases confirm that successful collaboration does not require substantial funding but rather unified principles, robust mechanisms, and full stakeholder engagement [16]. The outcomes can be summarized as follows: the environment has evolved from a passive backdrop into an active moral education space; management has transformed from one-way control to a two-way interactive educational process, ultimately achieving a synergy where "the environment educates, management educates, and environmental management educates."

7. Conclusion

Guided by the principle of fostering virtue and nurturing talent, promoting synergistic development between campus environment creation and educational management is essential for education to return to its fundamental mission of character education. This study emphasizes that such synergy is not merely an additive process but represents a comprehensive and systematic restructuring under the overarching value orientation of moral cultivation. The campus environment must transcend its traditional role as a "static space" and evolve into a "dynamic vehicle for moral education," while educational management must transition from being an "operational center" to becoming an "educational hub." This transformation requires achieving organic integration across three critical dimensions: objectives, processes, and evaluations. The core of this collaborative mechanism lies in establishing robust institutional safeguards, fostering dynamic process interactions, and implementing integrated evaluation systems. These elements ensure that environmental design provides contextual support for management practices, while management practices, in turn, infuse practical vitality into the development of the campus environment. Practical applications of this model have demonstrated its effectiveness in addressing the long-standing disconnect between environmental design and management. By bridging this gap, moral education is transformed from being a tangible, external construct into an intangible, internalized

value system. Furthermore, this approach shifts the focus from theoretical aspirations to actionable outcomes, ensuring that moral cultivation is deeply embedded in the educational experience. Moving forward, schools should adopt synergistic development as a foundational approach to educational reform. This involves continuously optimizing the interaction between the physical environment and management practices to create a cohesive framework that supports holistic student development. By doing so, moral cultivation can be seamlessly integrated into daily educational activities, fostering the growth of well-rounded individuals who possess both moral integrity and professional competence. Ultimately, this approach will enable campuses to become true spiritual sanctuaries that nurture character, inspire wisdom, and fulfill education's original mission of fostering virtue and talent, thereby laying a solid foundation for future societal progress.

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