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# Strategies for Innovative Teaching of Ethics and Rule of Law in Elementary Schools in the Context of the New Era

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**Abstract:** Today's society is undergoing significant changes driven by technological advancements, cultural convergence, and evolving values, with the new era placing higher demands on basic education. As the core vehicle for shaping students' values, the ethics and rule of law curriculum in elementary schools must move beyond traditional teaching methods. In an increasingly globalized world, students are exposed to a wide variety of information, and if teaching content remains at an abstract conceptual level or relies solely on one-way instruction, it is difficult to engage students in deep thinking or emotional connection on moral issues. Common problems in current teaching include a disconnect between teaching materials and real-life practices, mechanical teaching methods, and a single evaluation system, leading to a gap between students' knowledge and behavior and limited participation in the classroom. At the same time, the professionalism and innovation abilities of the teaching team have not fully adapted to the demands of teaching with information technology. These contradictions highlight the urgent need for educational reform: only through systematic innovation, integrating the spirit of the times into the classroom, and empowering teaching with technology can ethics and rule of law education become a "spiritual lighthouse" for students' development, rather than just a formalized symbol of knowledge.

## 1. Introduction

The new era, characterized by technological innovation and social transformation, has profoundly impacted the cognitive structure and value orientation of young people. As the foundation of the national education system, primary ethics and rule of law education not only conveys legal knowledge and moral norms but also has the mission of cultivating new generations with independent thinking, social responsibility, and respect for the rule of law. However, in reality, the separation of curriculum content from real-life scenarios, the monotony of teaching methods, and the utilitarian nature of the evaluation system result in classrooms often falling into the dilemma of "more teaching, but not enough empathy". For instance, if discussions about "honesty" are limited to textbook cases and lack real-world extensions, such as social interactions and identity management, it becomes difficult to connect with students' real-life experiences. Looking at international education trends, some countries have integrated ethical issues into community practice through project-based learning, while others have strengthened students' empathy for the rule of law through situational simulations, showing that the core of pedagogical innovation lies in building an educational ecosystem where "knowledge and action are united". Current research needs to focus on local contexts and explore reform paths that address the challenges of the times while being rooted in cultural backgrounds, so that ethics and rule of law education can truly become the "spiritual scaffolding" for the growth of students' lives.

**2. New Requirements and Analysis of Current Situation in Teaching Morality and Rule of Law in Elementary School in the New Era**

*2.1. New Requirements for Teaching Morality and Rule of Law in Elementary School in the New Era*

The pluralistic environment and rapid technological advancements in the new era have raised various demands for innovation in elementary school ethics and rule of law curricula. With globalization, young people's cognitive horizons have expanded beyond traditional frameworks, and new social contexts, including online social networks and artificial intelligence, have presented new moral challenges. These changes require educators to not only teach basic legal knowledge but also foster the development of technological ethics and cross-cultural value judgments. The social transformation has highlighted the need for a shift in the classroom from simply "memorizing rules" to "internalizing behavior". By creating practical opportunities, such as community service activities or family agreements, students can better experience the principles of rule of law and morality in action. In the age of information, the teaching environment needs to be reimagined, and virtual simulation technologies can help students experience issues such as online behavior and data privacy, fostering a stronger sense of digital citizenship in a fully immersive way. These changes point to a central concept: education must move beyond traditional instruction and build a dynamic system that links individual life experiences with broader social development. This approach can help transform ethics and rule of law education into a "framework for thinking" rather than a static knowledge base, preparing students to tackle the challenges of the future.

*2.2. Current Situation of Teaching Morality and Rule of Law in Elementary School*

At present, teaching ethics and the rule of law in elementary school faces various challenges, as the implementation of the curriculum reveals a combination of strengths and areas for improvement. Although some textbook content is more aligned with real-life examples, there are still sections that rely on traditional moral narratives and lack future-oriented topics such as digital ethics and the responsibilities associated with emerging technologies in the digital age. This gap makes it difficult for students to effectively apply the knowledge they gain in the classroom to real-world social interactions and the safe use of technology. In teaching practice, the dominant mode of instruction is often one-way, with many teachers adhering to standardized lesson plans, and student discussions are typically limited to a simple question-and-answer format, which does not promote deep reflection on complex moral issues [1]. The assessment system tends to prioritize memorization and knowledge recall, without dynamic tracking mechanisms to assess core qualities such as responsibility and empathy in students' daily behaviors. As a result, students may excel academically but lack essential life skills. Among teachers, the issue of non-specialized teaching still exists, and some educators' interpretation of the rule of law is limited to the recitation of legal provisions, failing to align with children's psychological development to design effective, step-by-step educational programs. These issues reflect a disconnect between traditional teaching models and the educational goals of the modern era, highlighting the need for systematic innovation to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

*2.3. Analysis of the Reasons for the Existing Problems*

The root cause of the challenges in teaching ethics and rule of law in elementary education lies in unresolved tensions within the educational system. The pace of curriculum design updates has not kept up with social changes, and the long production cycle for textbooks has hindered the ability to address emerging ethical issues such as artificial intelligence and data privacy, resulting in a mismatch between the evolving demands of students and the content provided. Structural contradictions in the teacher education system also play a role. Many teacher education programs still focus primarily on theoretical

knowledge, failing to adequately prepare teachers for the practical challenges they will face in the classroom, such as managing cyberbullying, virtual socialization, and other relevant scenarios. The educational evaluation system is based on path dependence, where subjects that are considered primary often receive the most attention and resources, while others, including ethics and rule of law education, are not given equal priority. The involvement of administrative departments in determining resource allocation and curriculum time further exacerbates this imbalance. The collaboration between home, school, and society has not yet reached its full potential, and there is insufficient infrastructure for community-based learning, making it difficult to expand the scope of integrity and responsibility education beyond the classroom, particularly in rural areas. At a deeper level, traditional educational concepts such as "moral instruction" and "promotion of the rule of law" often focus on rule memorization, overlooking the importance of fostering children's awareness of rights and citizenship. This focus on rules rather than broader values makes it challenging to shape the core values of students in the educational process [2].

### 3. Strategies for Innovative Teaching of Morality and Rule of Law in Primary Schools in the Context of the New Era

#### 3.1. Integrating Contemporary Elements into Teaching Content

The modern reconstruction of the teaching content of morality and the rule of law in elementary school needs to reweave the warp and woof of nurturing with the spirit of the times. The preparation of teaching materials should break through the single dimension of traditional moral narratives and turn emerging issues such as online social etiquette, artificial intelligence ethics and data privacy into age-appropriate teaching resources, for example, by embedding virtual account management and online rumor identification into the theme of "honesty and trustworthiness", so that abstract values can be resonated with students' digital life experience. To address the differences between urban and rural areas, modularized teaching content packages can be developed: urban schools can focus on exploring the boundaries of responsibility in the sharing economy, while rural schools can explore the spirit of contract in non-genetic inheritance, so as to organically integrate modern elements with regional cultural genes. A dynamic updating mechanism should be established for constructing the library of teaching cases, and utilize the education cloud platform to encapsulate the newest hot social events, the example being ethical discussion on the "intelligent assistance system for the elderly falling down", so the students will be guided to realize the symbiotic relationship between science and technology and morality, within the process of reflection. It should also be noted that modernity isn't a dissolution of tradition, and one can also explore activating classical cultural resources for rule of law education, i.e. explaining the contractual ideas from classical Chinese texts in relation to the legal effects of electronic contracts, in order to develop a cognitive framework of values consistent across time, i.e. past to present. The focus of this integration strategy is to depict learning to decode the barriers between the "world of textbooks" and the "real world" and demonstrate to students the content of teaching becomes a decoupler for their cognitive understanding of a complex society rather than separate fragments of knowledge.

#### 3.2. Implementing Interactive and Participatory Teaching Methods

The innovation of interactive teaching paradigm needs to break through the physical and psychological boundaries of the traditional classroom to build a multi-dimensional and three-dimensional participation ecology. Teachers can develop "moral dilemma simulation cabin", using virtual reality technology to build a panoramic scene such as bullying in schools, online shopping disputes, etc., so that students can experience different roles and positions in a 360-degree perspective, and their physiological feedback data such as heart rate changes, focus of the line of sight, etc. are synchronized to generate visual

maps, which can provide a concrete basis for the subsequent analysis of values. The basis for the subsequent value analysis. Taking into account the hardware limitations of rural schools, the "Rule of Law Shadow Theater" can be introduced to support students' interpretation of the historical evolution of village rules and regulations through shadow theater. The students can discern the shifting dynamic of the balance of rule-making through the interplay of light and shadow. To promote participation from digital natives in teaching, an educational blockchain enabled, "behavior points bank" can be introduced where positive behaviors, like speaking in class or community service, can be converted to trackable growth coins that can be traded in to visit rule of law education centers or for experiences of taking on roles of the moot court. Finally, with respect to family-school collaboration, the "Family Rule of Law Workshop" mobile program was developed to co-design parent-child collaborative family tasks as, for example, agreeing and formulating a convention on the use of family data, along with capturing moments of emotional interaction aided by face recognition technology, along with generating personalized moral education analysis reports. The key to this teaching method is to turn the learning process into a "social laboratory" for value construction, so that students can complete the qualitative change from cognitive understanding to behavioural internalization through in-person participation, and ultimately form the moral decision-making capacity and rule of law thinking habitus that are adapted to the digital society [3].

### 3.3. Leveraging Information Technology for Enhanced Learning

The comprehensive integration of information technology and education about ethics and the rule of law must go beyond simply using digital media for information transport and instead foster a learning ecology that supports cognitive growth. For example, teachers can use emotion recognition technology to analyze classroom teaching video clips, observing students' micro-expressions when faced with moral dilemmas. By combining these observations with AI-generated personalized reflection reports, students can better understand the connection between emotional reactions and value judgments. A knowledge mapping system can be introduced to transform legal concepts into an interactive network of learning points. For instance, when students engage with real-life cases like "Legal Liability for Throwing Objects", the system can visualize the legal process, helping them understand the complexities of responsibility. In rural schools, a local dialect-based databank of rule of law stories can be created, using speech synthesis technology to turn traditional local case examples into immersive educational content, thereby bridging modern teaching with local cultural practices. To further enhance digital citizenship, virtual environments can simulate situations such as information privacy concerns, helping students learn about ethical decision-making in digital contexts. This approach encourages the development of a sense of responsibility while interacting with technology in a constructive way. The key to this technology-enabled teaching path is to turn digital tools into active instruments for value shaping, ensuring that students develop a deep, integrated understanding of the ethical and legal implications of their actions in the digital world.

### 3.4. Establishing a Comprehensive and Diversified Evaluation System

The change of the education assessment system needs to break away from the single dimension of paper and pencils, and construct a change with a three-dimensional assessment network, to include value perception and behavioral transformations. One possible approach is to integrate intelligent bracelets to assess data regarding the level of students' humility during cafeteria meals and on the playground, and then assess as a combined unit with video clips of campus surveillance scenes of proactive maintenance of public property, thereby allowing for the growth of a semi-longitudinal consolidated file of student daily moral behavior. For assessment of rule of law literacy; a platform of practice has been developed termed, "community-micro courts" to capture students' participation

in the process of mediating neighboring disputes and the ability dimension is scored by the representative of the street justice office, along with parent representatives. Establishing a compensation mechanism for urban and rural differences, rural schools can include the fulfillment of family contracts and local traditions in the evaluation, while urban schools focus on digital civic literacy, such as the standardized use of shared bicycles and self-discipline of online speech. Exploring third-party assessment models, inviting law firms to open up desensitized versions of real cases, and after students complete the design of a liability determination scheme in groups, having practicing lawyers provide feedback scoring against judicial practice. Develop a visualization tool called "Moral Growth Energy Ring", which transforms abstract qualities such as honesty, commitment and collective consciousness into accumulative energy bars, and students upload their own growth stories every week to trigger changes in energy values. The presentation of evaluation results should focus on developmental orientation, using the "Rule of Law Literacy Radar Chart" to dynamically display individual progress in the understanding of rules, awareness of rights, and other dimensions, rather than simple grading. Special attention should be paid to data ethics, and a desensitization mechanism should be established to ensure that the process of generating growth portraits complies with the principle of protecting minors. The core value of this evaluation system lies in transforming cold scores into warm life narratives, so that each student can perceive the real power of moral growth in continuous feedback [4].

*3.5. Strengthening Teachers' Professional Development and Innovation Ability*

The iterative upgrading of teachers' professional competence requires a breakthrough in the linear mode of traditional training and the construction of a virtual and real growth support system. A holographic training space for rule of law education has been created to restore the real courtroom scene with the help of mixed reality technology. Teachers wearing holographic glasses can arbitrarily switch the perspectives of the judge and the parties involved, and deepen their understanding of legal practice through multiple role experiences. Developing an ethical sensitivity training program for teachers, generating a personalized teaching ethics map based on campus monitoring data, and intelligently suggesting fair treatment, privacy protection and other educational details that may be overlooked in the classroom. Establishing an interdisciplinary case co-creation mechanism, and joining forces with community mediators, non-genetic inheritors and other social forces to jointly develop a library of rule of law education examples with regional characteristics, such as transforming the culture of the Dong ethnic group into a template for the development of modern classroom conventions. A "rule of law education gene pool" has been created for rural teachers, and satellite remote sensing technology has been used to analyze the types of historical disputes in their villages and generate customized teaching resource packages, such as the development of a property rights awareness course based on cases of land boundary disputes. Constructing a certification system for teachers' innovation ability, introducing blockchain technology to record teaching and research results, and supporting teachers to transform classroom innovation practices into tradable digital education resources. Emphasis needs to be placed on the two-way enhancement of teachers' digital literacy, both in terms of developing the ability to use affective computing technology to analyze the level of students' moral cognition, and in terms of setting up a digital ethics review panel for teachers to calibrate the values of the recommendations made by intelligent teaching assistants [5]. The design of teacher growth files can incorporate the concept of embodied cognition, recording the changes in their body language as they lead students to participate in community rule of law practices, and forming an analysis report on the correlation between teaching behaviors and educational beliefs. The core of this professional development model is to transform teachers from knowledge transmitters to value ecology co-builders, so that their professional

growth and students' moral development can form a virtuous cycle of symbiosis and co-growth.

## 4. Conclusion

The innovation of teaching ethics and the rule of law in the new era is a fundamental reconstruction of educational values. By integrating modern elements into teaching content, the classroom becomes a dynamic social mirror rather than a static container of knowledge. The combination of interactive teaching methods and information technology transforms abstract moral principles into tangible actions and experiences, while the pluralistic evaluation system moves beyond "scores above all" and creates a more nuanced and holistic view of students' growth. However, the deepening of these reforms must address practical challenges: the professional transformation of teachers requires systematic support, the use of technological tools must avoid the risk of superficial "innovation", and the development of school-based curricula must balance both universal and regional characteristics. Future educational practices should focus more on the "human" aspect, emphasizing students' moral choices and emotional experiences in real-world situations, making the classroom an incubator for value development rather than a factory for knowledge transmission. The first step is to make the classroom an "incubator" for value generation. Only in this way can moral and rule of law education evolve from "imparting knowledge" to "shaping character", thereby laying the foundation for the comprehensive development of citizens in the new era

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