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Research on the Current Status of National Security Awareness Among Art Major College Students

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Abstract

In a new era characterized by global turbulence and transformation, the patriotism and dedication of art major college students are crucial, as they will be the backbone of the cultural and creative industries. This study, employing questionnaires and in-depth interviews, delves into the national security awareness of art-majoring college students. It reveals issues like a lack of interest, insufficient attention from teachers, and cognitive biases. Specifically, students are more focused on personal artistic development than on cultivating national security awareness. In the teaching process, teachers tend to prioritize the imparting of art knowledge and skills, overlooking the education of national security awareness. Moreover, some students possess inadequate knowledge of national security and hold one-sided views. To address these challenges, a collaborative approach is essential. The state should introduce supportive policies, provide teaching resources, and establish an evaluation system. Schools need to optimize their curriculum structures and foster a campus culture that values national security. Teachers should innovate their methods to integrate national security education into their courses. Students, in turn, should enhance their awareness through social practices and diverse learning opportunities. By working together, we can continuously improve the national security awareness of art major students and cultivate art talents with a strong sense of national security.

Keywords

Art Major College Students; National Security Awareness; Current Status

1. Introduction

Currently, China's national security landscape is characterized by new challenges and situations. As General Secretary Xi has highlighted, the depth and breadth of national security are unprecedented, with its temporal and spatial scope expanding and internal and external factors becoming increasingly complex. Given this context, nurturing national security awareness among college students, particularly those majoring in art, is a critical necessity in higher education. Art majors, as ambassadors of Chinese culture, often highlight cultural diversity in their works but may also encounter various issues related to national security, such as cultural security, information security, and the security of the arts industry. Therefore, it is imperative to bolster their understanding of information security, instill a sense of social responsibility, and elevate their cultural awareness. Moreover, it is essential to educate them on the importance of national security, encourage compliance with relevant laws and regulations, and inspire them to actively promote Chinese culture.

2. Formation of the Problem

In the new era, art, serving as a vital carrier of culture, not only embodies the national spirit and emotions but also

represents a crucial manifestation of the country's soft power. General Secretary Xi has repeatedly stressed the significance of national security awareness about national development and rejuvenation in numerous important speeches. At the first meeting of the Central National Security Commission on April 15, 2014, General Secretary Xi initially put forward the holistic concept of national security. In the report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, he emphasized that "national security is the foundation of national rejuvenation, and social stability is the prerequisite for national prosperity." To uphold the holistic approach to national security, it is essential to adhere to the supremacy of national interests, with the safety of the people as the objective, political security as the foundation, economic security as the basis, and military, scientific, technological, cultural and social security as the guarantees, while taking the promotion of international security as the support, thus embarking on a national security path with Chinese characteristics. College students majoring in art, being the mainstay of the country's future cultural and creative industries, the cultivation of their national security awareness is of crucial importance and cannot be overlooked. With the deepening of globalization, the art field is confronted with unprecedented international exchanges and integration, which offer art majors a broader perspective and creative space. However, the influx of Western ideological trends has exerted an influence on the national security awareness of art majors. How to maintain confidence and recognition in Chinese culture and ensure cultural security while assimilating and learning from outstanding Western art concepts has become an urgent problem that demands prompt resolution. Consequently, strengthening the cultivation of national security awareness among art majors will not only contribute to the enhancement of their comprehensive quality and competitiveness but also play a vital role in maintaining national cultural security and ensuring the long-term stability of the country.

In conclusion, amidst the opportunities and challenges posed by globalization, fostering a sense of national security among students majoring in the arts holds particular significance. Strengthening national security education and guiding these students to develop a correct view of the state, security, and culture is not only beneficial for their personal growth and professional development but also crucial for the flourishing of the national cultural and creative industries and the safeguarding of national cultural security.

3. Literature Review and Theoretical Background

As of December 2024, a review of the data from CNKI reveals that there are 388 documents focusing on the theme of "national security education for college students," of which only 19 are sourced from core journals. Remarkably, just a single article specifically addresses the national security education for art major college students. In comparison, it is evident that academic research in this specific domain is relatively lacking.

3.1 Related Research on the Current Situation of National Security in Colleges and Universities

Scholars like Lv Guohui (2010), Yuan Ningbo, Shi Yanggen, and Cui Dianning (2021) have identified numerous issues in the education of the national security concept within colleges and universities. These include college students' inadequate awareness of national security, insufficient recognition of the significance of national security education, a lack of safety awareness and a sense of responsibility among students, an imperfect national security education system, ineffective construction of the media platform, and a weak teaching force. In 2019, Wu Yuedong conducted a questionnaire survey among 1,246 college students in Shanghai and discovered that the students had a poor understanding of relevant national security knowledge. He thus suggested that strengthening national security education for college students is an obligatory duty of higher education and that the government, colleges and universities, and college students need to collaborate closely to enhance national security awareness through multiple channels and in various aspects.

3.2 Related Research on Effective Ways to Strengthen National Security Education

Scholars such as Zou Fangming, Bian Heping, and Pan Panfu (2002), along with Cao Xiaofei (2018), have advocated that colleges and universities should establish a comprehensive and flawless national security education system and mechanism. They should also enhance the classroom teaching of the overall national security concept for college students, organize social practice activities, strengthen the construction of the all-media platform, and improve the teaching staff. Fang Jihong, Chen Wei, and Ning Shangjie (2015) proposed incorporating national security education into the teaching system or the political and ideological education system, applying and implementing it in work ideas, educational content, teaching links, and classroom teaching, and making full use of teaching resources to intensify national security education. Scholars like Ye Sanmei (2010), Qin Xiaohua, Li Liaoning (2014), and He Li (2022) started from the perspective of enhancing national security awareness, emphasizing the cultivation of the awareness of preventing national security risks, the improvement of the knowledge reserve in national security education, the attention to the education of traditional and non-traditional national security awareness, and the strengthening of the education of the network national security situation, striving to explore a new realm of national security awareness education for college students.

3.3 Four Different Research Perspectives on National Security Education

At present, when national security is receiving increasing attention, the academic community has carried out multi-dimensional and in-depth research and discussions in the field of national security. Many scholars have cut in from different perspectives, striving to comprehensively analyze the connotations, significance, and practical paths behind national security-related issues, and laying a solid theoretical foundation for the stability, development, and rejuvenation of the country.

Research on the Overall National Security Concept: Scholars such as Cao Xiaofei (2018), Yuan Ningbo, Shi Yanggen, and Cui Dianning (2021), as well as He Li (2022), have pointed out that the overall national security concept constitutes an essential component of Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

Research on the National Security Concept: Scholars like Chen Xi, Li Yuqin (2017), and Wu Yuedong (2019) have proposed that the overall national security concept of college students is an internal necessity of ideological and political education, an urgent requirement for national security construction in the new era, and an inevitable choice for realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Research on National Security Education: Researchers such as Jihong, Chen Wei, and Ning Shangjie (2015), along with Lv Guohui (2010), have pointed out that strengthening national security education for college students is the responsibility of higher education and have proposed incorporating national security education into the school teaching system or the ideological and political education system.

Research on National Security Awareness and Thinking: Scholars such as Cao Xiaofei (2012) and Gao Junhan (2023) have emphasized the need to commence from the top-level design, teaching content, teaching methods, practice platform, and independent research, and to achieve the goal of national security education for college students by combing the development stage of national security awareness education for college students.

4. Research Design

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4.1 Survey Design

To conduct a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the current status and fundamental data regarding the national security awareness of art major college students, this paper employs a research methodology that combines questionnaire surveys and in-depth interviews. The questionnaire design is centered closely around the core elements of national security awareness, encompassing the concepts, essential components, as well as knowledge domains and practical skills that art major students ought to master about national security. Moreover, it delves deeply into the significance of cultivating national security awareness among art major students, and its specific manifestations in practice, and actively explores feasible approaches to effectively integrate national security awareness into the art major education system. This entails not only the integration strategies of national security awareness in classroom teaching but also pays meticulous attention to the actual demands and specific expectations of students for the cultivation of national security awareness, ensuring a high degree of congruence between the educational content and the students' needs. From November to December 2024, we primarily utilized online platforms to distribute questionnaires in the southeastern region of China and retrieved 102 valid questionnaires.

4.2 In-depth Interview Implementation

During the in-depth interview stage, two modes, namely group discussions and one-on-one interviews, were adopted to guarantee the comprehensiveness and profundity of the interviews. A total of 40 art major students ranging from freshmen to seniors participated in the interviews. In light of our actual circumstances, Hunan Province was selected as the key area for in-depth interviews, and the interview plan was implemented in December 2024. Through these in-depth interviews, a substantial amount of valuable information and data were collected, providing rich empirical materials and profound thinking dimensions for analyzing the current situation of national security awareness among art major college students. These data not only contribute to revealing the cognitive levels and requirements of art major students in terms of national security awareness but also lay a solid foundation for exploring the national security awareness cultivation strategies that suit the characteristics of art majors.

5. Research Findings

5.1 Analysis of the Characteristics of Art Major College Students

To achieve practical results in cultivating national security awareness among art major college students, it is essential to focus on their unique characteristics. Through in-depth interviews, it has come to light that art major students are highly individualistic, with a pronounced inclination towards novelty and differentiation, and they place great emphasis on personal development. They boast strong creative and artistic expression capabilities, along with sharp observational skills and a distinctive aesthetic perspective. Tending to think emotionally, they are rich and delicate in sentiment and possess a robust sense of self. Tailoring national security awareness education to these traits can effectively enhance their awareness in this regard.

Simultaneously, the learning content of art major students is closely intertwined with cultural exchanges and dissemination. In the course of their professional studies, they are required to study and appreciate artistic works from around the world, such as musical compositions and painting genres. Some students of specific majors even need to learn foreign languages, which inevitably exposes them to diverse historical cultures and social backgrounds. Moreover, due to the specialty of their majors, they engage in more frequent artistic exchanges with counterparts from other countries, making them more vulnerable to the influence of foreign cultures.

5.2 Analysis of the Cognitive Differences in National Security Awareness among Art Major College Students

When it comes to the question "Do you think it is important to cultivate national security awareness among art major college students?", a unanimous 100% of the respondents affirmed its importance. In response to the question "What is the importance of national security awareness for art major college students?", 63.73% of them rated it as "extremely important", 32.35% as "important", 3.92% as "average", and none as "unimportant". This clearly demonstrates that the majority of art major college students recognize the significance of national security awareness.

Based on the outcomes of the questionnaire survey and in-depth interviews, significant disparities exist in the cognitive understanding of national security awareness among current art major students. This not only reflects their distinctiveness as a specialized professional group but also uncovers the cognitive challenges and responsibilities they shoulder in the national security domain. The specific manifestations are as follows: In terms of basic national security knowledge, conspicuous differences in cognition prevail within the art major student community. Some students can provide relatively accurate overviews of the basic concepts and scope of national security, indicating a certain level of foundational knowledge. However, when delving deeper into the specific details, importance, and relevant policies of national security, their knowledge appears deficient. They typically lack a systematic comprehension of national security policies and are inadequately aware of the complex challenges and potential threats that national security faces. Such knowledge gaps undoubtedly impede their in-depth consideration and effective engagement in national security matters.

Regarding the degree of attention, the art major students exhibit a diverse range of behaviors. Only a few are capable of deeply contemplating national security issues. Some students do take the initiative to pay attention to such issues, but often merely scratch the surface and fail to conduct thorough analyses. Still, others concentrate solely on their professional studies and career development, showing indifference to other matters.

Concerning the sense of responsibility for safeguarding national security, the attitudes of art major students also display polarization. Although the survey reveals that the vast majority of them acknowledge the importance of national security, only a portion are willing to contribute actively to its maintenance. Another segment believes that safeguarding national security has nothing to do with them and considers it the sole responsibility of the government and the military. Evidently, art major students have not yet fully grasped the broader concept of national security.

5.3 Analysis of the Problems in Cultivating National Security Awareness among Art Major College Students

According to the results of the questionnaire survey and in-depth interviews, several issues currently plague the cultivation of national security awareness among art major college students, involving aspects such as students' lack of learning interest, teachers' inattention, and the cognitive biases of individual students. These problems not only affect individual students but also extend to multiple tiers, including the education system and teachers.

Firstly, the lack of enthusiasm among students for learning about national security awareness has emerged as a prominent concern. Some art major college students fail to fully appreciate the importance of such awareness, resulting in a

dearth of interest and motivation in learning. They focus exclusively on their art major courses. This cognitive misperception not only hampers their in-depth understanding and acquisition of national security-related knowledge but also undermines their ability to integrate national security elements into their artistic creations.

Secondly, the inadequate focus of teachers during the teaching process is another issue that cannot be overlooked. Most art major professors, while teaching, concentrate predominantly on imparting artistic knowledge and skills, paying scant attention to general education components like national security awareness.

Finally, certain individual art major students exhibit significant deficiencies in their understanding of national security. A small number hold a one-sided view, deeming national security-related knowledge useless and regarding learning it as a waste of time with no bearing on their professional development. As a result, they lack even a basic understanding of the meaning of national security.

6. Countermeasures and Suggestions

6.1 Research Results

By meticulously examining the questionnaire survey data and the insights derived from in-depth interviews, we have effectively illuminated the current state and challenges in fostering national security awareness among art major college students. These students undoubtedly possess exceptional professional expertise and a diverse range of artistic skills, bolstered by their unique creativity, keen powers of observation, multifaceted aesthetic perspectives, and remarkable artistic expression capabilities. However, when it comes to the crucial area of national security awareness, a host of concerning issues emerge. It is evident that art major college students show a lukewarm interest in enhancing their national security awareness, preferring to devote the majority of their efforts to advancing their personal artistic endeavors. Instructors, too, struggle to seamlessly incorporate national security awareness into the teaching process, prioritizing the transmission of artistic knowledge and the refinement of technical skills. At the same time, the heavy academic workload further narrows the channels for students to delve deeply and familiarize themselves with national security awareness.

6.2 Countermeasures and Suggestions

To tackle the aforesaid predicaments and actualize an efficacious synergy between art majors and national security education, a suite of pragmatic strategies spanning four cardinal dimensions—namely, the state, educational institutions, educators, and students—must be put into effect.

At the national level, it is of paramount importance to devise pertinent policy directives that galvanize and buttress universities in their pursuit of bolstering the cultivation of national security awareness among art major undergraduates. This could encompass the establishment of dedicated funds, and the provision of exhaustive teaching resources—textbooks, case banks, and online courses, to name a few— with the aim of enriching the instructional content and augmenting learning outcomes. Additionally, capitalizing on new media platforms to widen the reach of national security awareness dissemination and education, and orchestrating germane activities to heighten students' cognizance and esteem for national security. Moreover, an evaluation schema ought to be contrived to periodically appraise universities' performance in curriculum structuring, teaching modalities, and practical initiatives, thereby catalyzing the ceaseless refinement and optimization of the national security awareness cultivation ecosystem.

From the perspective of educational institutions, there is an exigency to streamline and optimize the curriculum framework so as to fortify national security awareness education. In the course of curriculum design, apt content germane to national security awareness should be judiciously interwoven, fusing theoretical knowledge with artistic praxis. For instance, during artistic creation sojourns and field excursions, students could be steered to fabricate works revolving around national security motifs, exhorted to encapsulate the import of national security through their artistic brushstrokes and eulogize the nation's prosperity via musical compositions, thus kindling their sense of national identity and obligation. Equally pivotal is the cultivation of a campus milieu suffused with national security values. By erecting artistic installations and corridors themed around national security, and hosting knowledge jousts and oratorical contests on the subject, not only can campus vitality be invigorated, but students' national security awareness can also be insidiously nurtured. Institutions should also proffer incentives for students to self-organize clubs and interest groups centered on national security, facilitating collaborative exploration and hands-on engagement.

At the educator level, it is imperative to revolutionize pedagogical methodologies to seamlessly integrate national security education into everyday teaching practices. Instructors in art majors must move beyond their traditional focus on specialized knowledge and come to view national security education as an integral, rather than peripheral, part of art education. Utilizing a diverse array of teaching tools such as case studies, group discussions, and role-playing exercises

can aid in weaving national security knowledge into professional courses, allowing students to naturally absorb this knowledge as part of their regular studies. The emergence of modern information technology has opened up a vast array of possibilities for instructional innovation. Educators should leverage technologies like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) to create highly immersive and intuitive learning environments for national security education. For instance, simulating border patrols and cyber defense operations can enable students to learn experimentally and grow in the process. Concurrently, a collaborative mechanism for cultivating national security awareness involving both faculty and students should be established. This would foster joint exploration of the connection between national security and artistic creation, stimulating knowledge exchange and intellectual cross-fertilization.

At the student level, individuals should endeavor to enhance their understanding of national security through a multi-pronged approach to publicity and education. Engaging in social practice activities centered around national security themes, such as community outreach programs and events commemorating National Security Education Day, and integrating artistic creation with real-world applications is crucial. Utilizing platforms like campus radio, bulletin boards, and social media to stay informed about relevant policies, laws, and exemplary cases is also important. Through hands-on practice and continuous learning, students can develop a strong sense of social responsibility and national mission, igniting their patriotic fervor. In summation, through concerted exertions by the state, educational institutions, educators, and students, a seamless amalgamation of art majors and national security education can be affected, culminating in enhanced national security awareness among students and the cultivation of artistic virtuoso imbued with a national security ethos.

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