



Integrating Qiaopi into University Patriotism Education: Enhancing Cultural Awareness and Moral Values in a Globalized Era

Shishi Chen¹

Abstract

This study investigates the potential of incorporating Qiaopi, the traditional postal system used by overseas Chinese, into university patriotism education as a means to strengthen students' moral and cultural values. Qiaopi, a significant element of cultural heritage, encapsulates values such as integrity, patriotism, filial piety and perseverance, which are essential for fostering a well-rounded moral compass among students. By exploring Qiaopi as both a historical artifact and a medium for cultural transmission, this research highlights its unique ability to enhance students' cultural awareness and deepen their sense of patriotism. Using a qualitative methodology, the study involves a analysis of existing literature on Qiaopi. The aim is to understand how Qiaopi's rich cultural significance can be leveraged in modern educational settings to cultivate a stronger sense of national identity among students. The findings reveal that Qiaopi, when integrated effectively into the curriculum, can serve as a valuable educational resource that not only teaches historical and cultural knowledge but also instills important moral values. The study underscores the importance of optimizing the use of Qiaopi in educational programs. This can be achieved by developing digital resources that make Qiaopi more accessible, organizing cultural research activities, and promoting its integration into classroom instruction. Additionally, creating a campus environment that actively supports cultural heritage can further amplify the impact of Qiaopi-based education. Ultimately, this research advocates for a more dynamic and culturally enriched approach to patriotism education that better prepares college students to address the complexities of the globalized world while maintaining a strong moral foundation.

Keywords: *Educational value, Patriotism education, Qiaopi, Strategies*

A. Introduction

Qiaopi, originating in the 19th century, exemplifies a unique postal tradition used by overseas Chinese to share their life experiences and support their homeland's development through letters and remittances (CPC, 2013). This practice encapsulates the deep national sentiments of these expatriates, chronicling their struggles and life trajectories. Each Qiaopi letter serves as a witness to the evolution of overseas Chinese history and the integration of Chinese civilization with global cultures, marking it as a precious historical document (Wang & Zhang, 2018). These letters, steeped in rich patriotic emotions, often express the overseas Chinese's longing for their motherland and aspirations for its prosperity. Their patriotism is evident in their concern for national development, familial care, and dedication to preserving Chinese culture. Thus, Qiaopi represents a valuable resource for patriotism education, offering significant historical and educational value.

Education acts as a crucial bridge between knowledge empowerment and societal contribution, shaping the ideologies and behaviors of the youth (Li, 2021). In the dynamically

¹Universiti Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. chenshishi66@163.com

evolving educational landscape, the importance of patriotic education has become increasingly prominent. Since the 18th National Congress, the Communist Party of China has emphasized the importance of imparting patriotic education to university students (Xi, 2017). General Secretary Xi Jinping has extensively discussed "cultivating socialist builders and successors," addressing the fundamental questions of education: whom we educate, how we educate, and the ultimate goal of education (Qiushi, 2020). He highlights the essence of higher education, emphasizing the principle of "fostering virtue through education." General Secretary Xi insists on ingraining patriotic sentiments, ensuring that the spirit of patriotism is firmly rooted in students' hearts. Both national policies and leadership underscore the significance of patriotic education.

Furthermore, the role of educational institutions extends beyond knowledge dissemination to molding citizens who are well-prepared to contribute to national development and global welfare (Zhao, 2022). Educational curricula are increasingly designed not only to provide technical skills but also to foster a deep sense of national identity and global citizenship. This approach helps students understand their cultural roots and responsibilities as global citizens, preparing them for the challenges of a globalized world. Therefore, integrating patriotic education into the broader educational framework enhances national cohesion and equips students to constructively engage in international affairs, promoting peace and understanding across borders.

As globalization advances and information technology evolves, the fusion and clash of diverse cultures and ideologies create a dynamic landscape. The diversification of information sources has profoundly transformed students' values and thought processes, fostering a more multidimensional, inclusive, and open-minded perspective (Chen, 2019). However, this transformation has also resulted in a diminished sense of loyalty to team organizations, with students increasingly prioritizing individual and personal goals, and emphasizing personal values and interests. Thus, it is crucial to equip university students with the appropriate mindset and guide them towards establishing sound values.

This study aims to transform the landscape of patriotic education by harnessing the unique cultural heritage of the overseas Chinese community, specifically through the integration of Qiaopi. The objectives of the study are twofold: firstly, to assess the significance of Qiaopi in fostering a robust patriotic sentiment among university students, and secondly, to develop practical, innovative strategies for embedding Qiaopi into university curricula. The incorporation of Qiaopi into educational programs is envisioned not merely as an addition of content but as a strategic pedagogical intervention (Sun & Luo, 2020). By integrating these rich historical documents into the curriculum, educators can provide students with a tangible connection to the experiences and sentiments of the Chinese diaspora. This not only aids in fostering a deep sense of national identity and pride but also enhances students' understanding of the complexities of cultural heritage and its impact on modern identity.

B. Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design, synthesizing existing research to enhance our comprehension of the integration of Qiaopi within the sphere of patriotic education. It systematically involves the processes of searching, evaluating, and interpreting a comprehensive array of qualitative studies pertinent to the subject. The methodological of integrating Qiaopi into patriotic education, underpinned by exhaustive literature review, fosters a robust framework that offers both extensive insights into the current incorporation practices and aligns with high academic standards. The anticipated findings from this study promise to contribute to the scholarly discourse and practical enhancements of Qiaopi's application in educational paradigms.

This methodological choice aims to unravel the complex dimensions of Qiaopi's integration into patriotic education. The research commenced with the identification and meticulous selection of literature pertinent to Qiaopi, encompassing empirical studies, theoretical frameworks, and relevant reports. The data were amassed through a thorough review of literature spanning scientific journals, books, research reports, and articles. This comprehensive search extended across academic databases, libraries, and online platforms, aiming to unearth literature that bolsters the study's objectives. Such a detailed analysis has enabled the identification of pivotal factors that bolster patriotic education. The insights derived were subsequently channeled into formulating targeted, evidence-based recommendations designed to support the development of informed conclusions and recommendations for enhancing patriotism education through the integration of Qiaopi.

C. Findings and Discussion

1. Cultural Value of Qiaopi

Integrity

The evolution of the Qiaopi industry illustrates a fascinating intersection of cultural integrity, economic necessity, and social responsibility. The reliance on Shuikè, trusted individuals who shared common origins with their clients, underscores the importance of personal trust and communal bonds in the industry's formative years. This trust was crucial, particularly given the challenging transportation conditions of the time, which often required Shuikè to endure significant hardships to fulfill their duties. The commitment of these individuals to delivering Qiaopi letters and remittances reflects a deeply rooted sense of responsibility that was essential to maintaining social cohesion across vast distances. The business philosophy of the Qiaopi Bureau, as encapsulated in the principles of "seeing profit without forgetting righteousness and maintaining flexibility with trustworthiness" (Yan & Huang, 2013), highlights how the industry balanced commercial success with moral integrity. This approach not only fostered customer trust but also contributed to the long-term sustainability of the Qiaopi system. The emphasis on righteousness and trustworthiness resonates with broader Confucian values that prioritize ethical conduct in business and personal relations, further embedding the Qiaopi industry within the cultural fabric of the time.

The use of credit stamps on Qiaopi envelopes, such as those from the Tianyi Postal Bureau, serves as a tangible representation of the industry's commitment to integrity and customer satisfaction. The explicit promises, like "Never deceive customers or charge unreasonable fees" (Huang, 2016) and "Immediate dispatch and payment of funds" (Zeng, 2022), reflect a proactive effort to reassure customers and establish a reliable brand identity. These practices not only reinforced the reputation of Qiaopi bureaus but also played a critical role in building a sense of security among users, many of whom depended on these services to maintain connections with their families across the globe.

In the context of contemporary education, particularly in the integration of Qiaopi into patriotism education at Chinese universities, these historical practices offer valuable lessons. They demonstrate how traditional values such as integrity, trust, and responsibility can be effectively integrated into modern educational frameworks to foster a deeper sense of national identity and social cohesion among students. By studying the Qiaopi industry, students can gain insights into the importance of community-oriented business practices, which remain relevant in today's globalized world. As China continues to engage with the global community, the values and practices embodied by the Qiaopi industry offer a model

for how to balance economic interests with cultural and ethical considerations. The integration of these lessons into patriotism education can help students appreciate the historical context of China's development and the enduring importance of cultural integrity in navigating the challenges of modernity.

Filial Piety

The enduring practice of sending remittances, as evidenced by the Qiaopi archives, reflects the deep-rooted values of filial piety and familial responsibility among overseas Chinese. The principle that "the money sent knows the sender and returns to those who wait" (Fu, 2021) encapsulates the profound sense of duty that Chinese migrants felt towards their families back home. The examples cited from the Qiaopi archives, such as the 1878 letter from Singapore to Nan'an, Fujian, and the 1935 letter from Xiao Niangcai, provide vivid illustrations of how these values were manifested in daily life. These letters are not just transactions; they are expressions of love, duty, and a commitment to maintaining family ties despite the vast distances that separated family members. The historical context provided by Raffles in his "History of Java" further underscores the economic sacrifices made by overseas Chinese. The fact that nearly half of their income from gold mining in Indonesia was remitted back to China is a testament to the importance placed on supporting family members, even at the cost of personal financial gain. This practice highlights the dual motivations of overseas Chinese: while they sought economic success abroad, they never lost sight of their responsibilities to their families back home.

These Qiaopi letters and remittance practices also shed light on the social and cultural dynamics of the Chinese diaspora. The commitment to sending money back home was not merely a financial transaction; it was a way of preserving cultural identity and fulfilling social obligations. The act of sending remittances served as a tangible connection between the diasporas and their homeland, reinforcing their sense of belonging to a larger community that transcended geographical boundaries. This historical perspective is particularly relevant in the context of globalization, where similar dynamics are observed among modern diasporas. The values of filial piety and familial responsibility in the Qiaopi system continue to resonate in many migrant communities today, providing a continuity of cultural practices that links past and present.

Furthermore, These Qiaopi provide a vivid illustration of how overseas Chinese communities, despite geographical separation, continued to honor their cultural imperatives of respecting elders and caring for family members. This enduring commitment is a manifestation of the deep-seated values embedded within traditional Chinese culture, where family is not merely a unit of society but a pivotal element of personal and social identity. Such practices underscore the principle of 'xiao', or filial piety, which is a cornerstone of Confucian ethical teachings. The remittance letters serve not only as financial support but also as cultural artifacts that reinforce and perpetuate the values of familial duty and communal harmony. They highlight how traditional norms are maintained across distances.

Patriotism

Since modern times, China has faced various threats from foreign powers. Despite living abroad, overseas Chinese have always kept a close eye on their homeland's situation. This was particularly evident during the Sino-Japanese War, when numerous Qiaopi archives captured the overseas Chinese community's patriotic spirit—characterized by loyalty, fearlessness, and bravery. In 1939, a Qiaopi from Kang Qitu, a Chinese expatriate in the Philippines, to his wife Wang, conveyed his strong anti-Japanese stance. He stated, "Every Chinese national should contribute money if they have it, effort if they can, as this is our

inherent duty" (Yan & Zhang, 2022). Lin Shengyuan, an overseas Chinese in Thailand, wrote in a Qiaopi to his nephew, "Although I reside overseas, I always think of my homeland. Recently, we collected clothes to send back to the motherland for the wounded soldiers, fulfilling our duty as citizens" (Luo, 2005).

Moreover, a Qiaopi from a Chinese American to his father mentioned, "It talks about Chinese abroad being drafted into the army, including Dai Hong who was selected to serve" (Chen & Wan, 2022), and the envelope was stamped with an anti-Japanese mark. These Qiaopi demonstrate the overseas Chinese community's support for the homeland by donating money and goods for wounded soldiers and expressing their concern for the country's plight, reflecting a profound patriotic spirit. In the early years following the founding of the People's Republic of China, the country achieved relative peace and stability but faced economic challenges. A Qiaopi from Yonghe Yingdun, an overseas Chinese merchant named Xu Ziju, entrusted to his younger brother Xu Ziqing to be handed over to the Yingdun Village Public Construction Association, documented his efforts to fund the construction of electricity facilities in his hometown (Yan & Zhang, 2022).

Qiaopi offer profound insights into the manifestation and practice of patriotism among the Chinese diaspora across various historical epochs. These documents illuminate how diaspora communities actively participated in patriotic activities, frequently contributing financially to national endeavors or engaging with homeland affairs from afar. Such participation represents a form of patriotism that surpasses geographic limitations, illustrating a commitment that bridges distant lands. These archives provide concrete examples of how patriotism can be meaningfully sustained in a globalized context, thereby enhancing the scope of contemporary patriotic education. Modern educational paradigms can benefit greatly from these historical insights, fostering a form of patriotism that is both anchored in historical awareness and flexible enough to navigate contemporary global challenges.

Perseverance

From the end of World War II through the 1980s, the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia developed a variety of ingenious strategies to circumvent restrictions on remittances to China. These methods often involved using coded messages concealed in everyday items such as cigarette papers, film slides, house numbers, listed characters, biscuits, and sweet potatoes. For example, a sender might note in a letter, "Enclosed are fifty sheets of cigarette paper" (Niu, 2013), which the overseas post office would encode as "Path number 1777." Upon arrival in Shantou, the Yueji Post Office would decode this to mean, "Enclosed are fifty Hong Kong dollars," subsequently processed by the Bank of China's Shantou branch.

Indonesian Chinese, Xu Hongting, shared his initial struggles in a remittance letter: "When I first arrived, I could not understand the language and the weather was oppressive. I carried two bundles heavier than my own weight and sold goods along the streets" (Shandong Qiaobao, 2023). Similarly, Chen Zhifang navigated the disruption of remittance routes during the Pacific War by establishing the "Dongxing Route," tirelessly traveling overseas to set up a network of post offices. This network was later celebrated as the "lifeline for the Teochew diaspora during the late resistance period" (Chen, n.d.). The resilience and entrepreneurial spirit of the Chinese diaspora are vividly captured in these Qiaopi records. These archives underscore the overseas Chinese community's display of perseverance and a steadfast 'never-give-up' attitude in the face of challenges, exemplifying their spirit of tenacity and determination to thrive despite adversity.

Integrating these stories from Qiaopi into patriotic education can effectively utilize these narratives to educate and inspire both current and future generations about the core values of resilience.

2. Practical Strategies for Integrating Qiaopi in Patriotism education

The integration of Qiaopi archives into higher education faces challenges primarily due to their geographic concentration in the Minnan region, limiting access elsewhere. To overcome these challenges, establishing standardized mechanisms to consolidate and manage these dispersed archives is essential. This would involve creating unified archival management standards and enhancing Qiaopi archive databases to ensure their quality, completeness, and broader accessibility. Universities should update these databases regularly to facilitate database sharing across institutions, thus transcending geographical limitations and enhancing their educational utility. In addition to physical management, there is a need for bolstered theoretical research on Qiaopi archives to deepen understanding of their cultural and spiritual value. This research should be a collaborative effort among educational departments, universities, research institutions, and related organizations, promoting a nationwide integration of these resources into patriotism education frameworks.

Digitally, universities should harness multimedia platforms to effectively promote Qiaopi archives to contemporary students. This includes creating web-based applications and utilizing social media platforms like WeChat, TikTok, and official university channels to disseminate historical and educational content. Additionally, digital libraries featuring documents, images, and materials related to Qiaopi archives should be leveraged to provide convenient access for researchers, educators, and students. Innovative technologies like augmented reality can also be used to create interactive learning environments that make the archives' narratives more vivid and engaging.

Furthermore, universities should actively utilize educational resources to create immersive learning environments by linking campuses with actual Qiaopi archive locations. This can be achieved through cultural practice activities such as visits to Qiaopi archive bureaus, museums, and memorials, allowing students to physically interact with the archives. These experiences, coupled with Qiaopi-themed volunteer activities like exhibitions and craft-making, can significantly enhance students' cultural competence and appreciation of Qiaopi culture. Curricular integration is another crucial strategy. Patriotism education courses, which are central to imparting values, can be enriched by incorporating Qiaopi content. Universities should consider developing elective courses centered on Qiaopi culture and creating engaging textbooks that transform abstract archives into compelling narratives. Additionally, innovative presentation methods, such as integrating Qiaopi elements into performances and traditional operas, can help students connect more deeply with the archives' patriotic sentiments, further energizing the promotion of Qiaopi culture on campus. By addressing these strategies comprehensively, universities can build a vibrant campus atmosphere that effectively integrates Qiaopi archives into student life and education, thereby enhancing both the understanding and appreciation of this rich cultural heritage.

D. Conclusion

A major step towards improving cultural preservation and patriotism growth in students is the inclusion of Qiaopi in university patriotism education. This study has shown Qiaopi's significant educational potential by highlighting its exceptional blend of patriotism philosophy

and historical nuance, which may greatly enhance students' educational experiences. Through an examination of Qiaopi's cultural values, and historical relevance, this study has highlighted the need to use traditional cultural assets to satisfy the needs of modern education. The study's conclusions show that Qiaopi is a storehouse of cultural legacy and a symbol of fundamental values including honesty, filial piety, patriotism, and Perseverance. These values are essential for developing university students' patriotism compass because they provide them a complex historical account that enhances their awareness and respect of their cultural origins. Teachers may provide students with a deeper, more interesting learning experience that fosters both intellectual and ethical development by carefully incorporating Qiaopi into their courses.

This research offers practical insights for educational authorities, implying that colleges might develop well-rounded, ethically astute individuals capable of navigating the intricacies of contemporary life by utilizing the profound cultural and ethical principles ingrained in Qiaopi. Future studies must never stop looking for novel approaches to incorporate traditional cultural components into contemporary educational settings. The priceless legacy of our history will live on in the minds and education of future generations thanks to such ongoing academic investigation, creating a generation characterized by patriotic fervor, enriched with moral integrity and cultural awareness. This approach not only nurtures a sense of national pride but also instills a comprehensive understanding of ethical conduct, forming a well-rounded, civic-minded generation.

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