

The Application and Practice of Enneagram in Chinese Youth Education

Tinghong Wang

International Psychology Management College, London, UK

Keywords: Enneagram; Chinese teenagers; education Personality psychology; Personality analysis; Applied Psychology

Abstract: This paper explores the application and practice of Enneagram psychology in Chinese youth education. Firstly, the theoretical basis of Enneagram is introduced, including the division of individuals into 9 unique personality types and their guiding role in educational methods. Subsequently, the characteristics and challenges of Chinese youth education were analyzed, emphasizing the impact of academic pressure, intense competition, and traditional values on personality development. Subsequently, the application of Enneagram in Chinese youth education was elaborated, including self-awareness and personal growth, emotional intelligence and stress management, interpersonal skills and teamwork, as well as personality type based educational methods. Through case studies and practical examples, the positive impact of Enneagram in school education has been demonstrated. At the same time, challenges and considerations were also raised in terms of cultural adaptation, misunderstandings and stereotypes, professional training, and professional knowledge. Finally, the conclusion is drawn that the integration of Enneagram can promote the comprehensive development and success of Chinese adolescents, but requires cautious thinking methods and professional training support.

1. Introduction

In the field of contemporary Chinese education, with the continuous development and changes of society, people's attention to the potential of young individuals is increasing day by day. The traditional "one size fits all" education method is gradually unable to meet the diverse needs of students, so personalized and comprehensive training has become a hot topic in the current education field. In this context, Enneagram, as a framework that can deeply insight into various personality traits, provides a promising reference for educators and parents. By understanding 9 different personality types and their corresponding characteristics, motivations, and concerns, educators can better tailor educational methods to meet the specific needs of different students. This study aims to explore the practical impact of Enneagram on Chinese youth education, revealing its potential in promoting students' self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills, and exploring how to overcome challenges such as cultural adaptation, misunderstandings and stereotypes, professional training, and professional knowledge. Through in-depth research and analysis, we hope to provide useful insights and suggestions for the reform and development of youth education in

China.

2. Theoretical basis of Enneagram

Enneagram, as a theory of personality psychology, divides individuals into 9 unique personality types, each with its own unique morphological manifestations, motivations, and id traits. These types are The Reformer, the Helper, The Achiever, The Individualist, The Investigator, The Loyalist, The Enthusiast, The Challenger, The Peacemaker. This classification system not only provides a deep understanding of individual differences, but also offers a promising reference for educators and parents to better tailor educational methods to meet students' specific needs.

Firstly, let's take a look at these 9 personality types. The Reformer usually identifies as a perfectionist, seeking improvement and reform, and is an advocate for adhering to principles. The Helper aspires to become a supporter and helper of others, paying attention to their needs, and willing to dedicate themselves. The Achiever pursues success and a sense of accomplishment, works diligently, focuses on the value behind goals, and strives to achieve them. The Individualist emphasizes self-expression and emotional experience, and desires to showcase their uniqueness. The investigator enjoys exploring and thinking, pursuing knowledge and understanding, and is often a thoughtful observer.[1] The Loyalist values steadfastness and stability, seeking a sense of belonging and reliability, and is someone who cares about a sense of security. The Enthusiast is full of vitality and optimism, pursuing diversity and happiness, and possessing extremely rich creativity. The Challenger is brave and steadfast, eager for power and influence, and possesses leadership skills. The Peacemaker desires harmony and inner peace, values balance and tolerance, and is a kind and gentle person.[2]

Understanding these types is crucial for tailoring educational methods. Educators can adopt different teaching strategies and methods based on students' individual characteristics and needs. For example, for The Helper, educators can provide more opportunities for collaborative learning and encourage them to exhibit the trait of helping others; For Individualists, more emotional care can be provided and their need for independence can be met; For the Achiever, clear goals and reward mechanisms can be set to motivate them to pursue success and achievement.

In practical educational practice, understanding students' personality types can help establish more positive teacher-student relationships, and if the emotional connection between students and teachers can be strengthened, it can undoubtedly improve teaching effectiveness and promote students' greater love and autonomy for learning. Therefore, Enneagram provides a useful framework for educators to better understand students, establish emotional relationships between teachers and students more effectively, and promote personalized and comprehensive development of education.[3]

3. Characteristics and challenges in Chinese youth education

The educational environment for Chinese youth presents unique characteristics and challenges under the influence of cultural, social, and economic factors. Firstly, academic pressure is one of the main challenges faced by Chinese teenagers. Due to the emphasis placed on education by parents and society, as well as the intense competition for further education, students often face enormous academic pressure, which may lead to mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. [4]At the same time, the modern workplace's demand for comprehensive qualities and innovative abilities also poses challenges to youth education, and traditional exam oriented education models may not fully meet these needs. In addition, Chinese youth education also faces the influence of social values. In traditional Chinese culture, collectivism and family values are emphasized, which may suppress individual development to a certain extent. Teenagers often face expectations and pressures from their families, schools, and society during their growth process, which may have an impact on their self-

awareness and personality development. With the rapid changes in society and the popularization of information technology, teenagers are facing a more complex and ever-changing social environment. The emerging social media, virtual world, and information explosion have brought new challenges and impacts to the growth of teenagers, such as cybersecurity and information authenticity, which have become the focus of attention.[5-7]

Therefore, in such a unique educational environment, educators need to pay more attention to students' personality development and mental health, help them establish a positive outlook on life and values, cultivate innovation and problem-solving abilities, and adapt to the development needs of future society. This also makes the application of Enneagram in Chinese youth education more urgent, as it provides a more personalized educational method that helps better meet students' diverse needs and promote their comprehensive development.

4. Application of Enneagram in Chinese Youth Education

4.1 Self awareness and personal growth

The Enneagram can help Chinese teenagers deeply understand their strengths and weaknesses. This strengthened self-awareness enables them to make wiser choices about their academic and personal affairs. The application of Enneagram in Chinese youth education helps to cultivate their self-awareness and personal growth. By understanding different personality types, teenagers can gain a deeper understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, thus forming a clearer self-awareness. [8]This strengthened self-awareness enables them to make wiser choices about their academic and personal affairs, thus better planning their future development direction. For example, an Achiever may realize that in the process of pursuing their goals, it is equally important to strengthen their attention to details and enhance their ability to think proactively about crises. The enhancement of this awareness helps adolescents with such personalities establish a down-to-earth and progressive attitude towards life, better adapt to academic pressure and social challenges, and also lay a solid foundation for their personal growth. Therefore, the application of Enneagram provides adolescents with a more comprehensive and personalized growth path, promoting their healthy and positive growth and development.[9]

4.2 Emotional Intelligence and Stress Management

Different personality types cope with stress and emotions in different ways. Educators can use this knowledge to impart coping strategies and emotional regulation skills. The application of Enneagram in Chinese youth education also involves emotional intelligence and stress management. Understanding how different personality types cope with stress and emotions in different ways can help educators teach corresponding coping strategies and emotional regulation skills based on the characteristics of different students. For example, a Loyalist who is prone to anxiety can learn to establish trust and confidence in themselves and their surroundings through Enneagram, thereby better coping with stress and emotional fluctuations.[10]

For Loyalists, they often tend to project fear and anxiety, so educators can guide them to establish positive trust and self affirmation by understanding their personality traits, helping them better cope with stress and emotional challenges. Educators can teach them relaxation and calming skills through psychological counseling, emotional management courses, and other methods, encouraging them to develop inner security and confidence, thereby improving their emotional intelligence and stress management abilities.

This emotional intelligence and stress management education method based on Enneagram helps to personalized meet the needs of different students, improve their emotional intelligence, and enable

them to better adapt to various challenges in their studies and life. By understanding their own personality traits, students can better understand their emotional response patterns, learn to effectively handle stress and emotions, and thus develop their personal potential and improve their mental health. Therefore, the application of Enneagram in emotional intelligence and stress management provides important support and guidance for the mental health and comprehensive development of adolescents.

4.3 Interpersonal skills and teamwork

Understanding the personality types of peers is of great significance for teenagers to communicate and cooperate more effectively. Understanding the interactions between different types in group projects or classroom activities can enhance teamwork and help develop interpersonal skills and teamwork abilities in adolescents. Through the application of Enneagram, adolescents can better understand the personality traits of their peers, thus being more tolerant and appreciative of each other's differences, promoting a good team atmosphere and cooperative relationships.

For example, a Challenger may learn to appreciate The Helper's emotional support for others through Enneagram. The Challenger is usually brave and firm, eager for control and influence, but easily uses power to oppress others, while The Helper tends to focus on others' feelings and is willing to listen and care for them personally. By understanding each other's personality traits, The Challenger can better understand The Helper's behavior and motivation, knowing that only by moving people with emotions can a truly close relationship be established, thus appreciating the positive impact it brings and building a good cooperative relationship.

In educational practice, educators can guide students to engage in team collaboration projects, allowing them to experience the complementarity and coordination between different personality types in practice. Through such activities, students can gain a deeper understanding of the impact of individual differences on teamwork, cultivate a respectful and inclusive attitude towards others, and improve their teamwork skills.

Therefore, the application of Enneagram in interpersonal skills and teamwork can help cultivate the cooperative spirit and team awareness of adolescents, improve their coordination ability and leadership potential in collective activities, and lay a solid foundation for their future learning and work.

4.4 Educational methods based on different personality types

The education method based on personality types is one of the important applications of Enneagram in Chinese youth education. By understanding students' personality traits, teachers can adjust their teaching methods and curriculum plans to better meet the diverse learning styles and needs of students with different 9 personality types. This personalized educational approach helps to stimulate students' interest in learning, improve teaching effectiveness, and promote their comprehensive development.

For example, The Investigator may benefit from more independent research projects. As they enjoy exploring and thinking, pursuing knowledge and understanding, teachers can design more independent research projects to encourage them to delve deeper into their areas of interest through self-directed learning, thereby stimulating their motivation and interest in learning.

On the contrary, The Enthusiast may thrive in a dynamic and interactive classroom environment. Due to their vitality and optimism, as well as their ability to motivate others, teachers can design more group discussions, role-playing, and interactive teaching activities to create a positive and relaxed learning atmosphere, stimulate their enthusiasm for participation and creativity.

Through this personality based educational method, teachers can better meet students' learning needs and improve the pertinence and effectiveness of teaching. At the same time, students can better

adapt to teaching methods, enjoy the learning process more, cultivate their ability and interest in self-directed learning, and thus achieve personalized and comprehensive learning development.

Therefore, personality based educational methods provide educators with a more targeted and flexible teaching strategy, which helps to promote the personalized and differentiated development of education and provide students with richer and more beneficial learning experiences.

5. Case studies and practical examples

In some schools and educational institutions in China, Enneagram has begun to be integrated into tutoring and classroom activities, and has achieved certain results. This application provides students with opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and others, helps promote good teacher-student relationships, and creates a positive learning environment. Taking X school as an example, students introduced the Enneagram through seminars and group discussions. According to teacher feedback, this measure has improved the classroom atmosphere, strengthened communication between teachers and students, and demonstrated the positive impact of the application of Enneagram on the school education environment.

In a specific case, student A was identified as The Individualist, and after understanding their personality type, they were able to express their creativity more freely. This improvement in self-awareness has led to an increase in a student's confidence and better academic performance in subjects that allow for self-expression. This case clearly demonstrates the positive impact of the application of Enneagram on students' personal growth and academic development.

Through these practical cases, we can see the potential value of Enneagram in Chinese youth education. It not only helps students better understand their personality traits, but also promotes the improvement of their self-awareness and confidence, thereby having a positive impact on their academic and personal development. At the same time, teachers can better understand students, adjust teaching methods, create a learning environment that is more suitable for students' individual characteristics, and improve teaching effectiveness.

Therefore, these cases provide strong support and evidence for the application of Enneagram in Chinese youth education, and provide useful references and inspirations for its promotion and application in the field of education. These practical cases demonstrate that the application of Enneagram can help improve students' self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills, promote personalized education and comprehensive development, and lay a solid foundation for students' future development.

6. Challenges and considerations

6.1 Existence of cultural adaptation issues

Although the Enneagram has universal aspects, its application in China requires careful consideration of cultural values and norms. Some concepts may need to be adjusted to conform to local beliefs and practices. When applying Enneagram in China, it is necessary to carefully consider the challenges and issues of cultural adaptation. Although the psychology of Enneagram has universal aspects, in its application in China, it is necessary to fully understand and respect local cultural values and norms. China has a long history and rich cultural traditions, which have a profound impact on individual behavior and social interaction. Therefore, caution should be exercised in educational practice.

When applying Enneagram, it is important to be aware that certain concepts may need to be adjusted to align with local beliefs and practices. For example, in Chinese society, collectivism and family values are emphasized, while individual development may be suppressed to varying degrees.

Therefore, in educational practice, it is necessary to adjust teaching methods and content according to the local cultural background, and maintain consistency with local values. In addition, it is necessary to pay attention to the differences in language and expression methods. The concepts and terminology of Enneagram may need to be translated and explained locally to make it easier for students and educators to understand and accept. At the same time, it is necessary to avoid using expressions that may conflict with local cultural concepts to avoid misunderstandings or discomfort.

In educational practice, educators need to carefully consider how to integrate the concept of Enneagram into the local teaching environment and ensure its coordination with local cultural values. This requires close collaboration with local education experts and professionals in related fields to explore how to effectively integrate the concepts of Enneagram and ensure its positive interaction with local culture.

Therefore, when applying Enneagram in China, it is necessary to carefully consider the challenges and issues of cultural adaptation to ensure that its application can be in line with local culture and values, and achieve positive and healthy results.

6.2 Misunderstandings and Stereotypes

There is a risk of misunderstanding and stereotypes when applying Enneagram, especially when it is used to simply label students. Educators must recognize this challenge and ensure that Enneagram is used as a guide for understanding, rather than as a tool to label and discriminate against students.

Firstly, Enneagram is a personality analysis tool aimed at helping individuals better understand themselves and others, establish ideal interpersonal relationships, and unleash their potential. However, if educators misunderstand it as a fixed label, they may fall into the trap of stereotypes and even discrimination. Everyone is unique, and personality type is only a description of individual behavior and motivation, and should not be used as a judgment or limitation on students. Therefore, educators need to guide students and parents to correctly understand the concept of Enneagram and emphasize its importance as a guiding tool. Educators should encourage students to view it as a means of self exploration and understanding others, rather than a rigid definition of individual abilities or talents. In addition, educators should avoid using the Enneagram as the sole explanatory framework, and instead combine other psychological theories and methods to comprehensively consider students' multifaceted characteristics. This can avoid over simplification and misunderstanding, ensuring that students receive more comprehensive and accurate care and guidance. Most importantly, educators need to actively promote a respectful and inclusive educational atmosphere, encourage students to accept each other's differences, and explore and develop their potential with a positive attitude. By correctly understanding and applying the Enneagram, educators can help students establish healthier and more positive self-awareness, promoting their comprehensive development and growth. Therefore, educators need to recognize the risks of misunderstandings and stereotypes, and take effective measures to guide students to correctly understand and apply Enneagram, in order to ensure its positive role and promote students' comprehensive development.

6.3 Problems of insufficient professional training and knowledge

Teachers and counselors need to receive sufficient professional training when applying the theory of Enneagram to ensure that they can effectively and ethically apply it. Lack of appropriate training may lead to ineffective or even harmful applications, therefore professional training and expertise are crucial for educators.

Firstly, professional training can help teachers and counselors fully understand the principles, methods, and application scenarios of the Enneagram, thereby better integrating it into teaching and counseling practices. Through systematic training, they can learn how to identify different personality

types, understand the characteristics and needs of each type, and adjust teaching methods and coaching strategies based on these understandings to better meet students' needs.

Secondly, professional training can also help teachers and counselors realize the limitations and scope of the Enneagram, avoiding over simplification or misuse of the theory. They need to understand the scientific validity and limitations of the Enneagram, and understand that personality types are only a description of individual behavior and motivation, rather than a rigid definition of the entire individual. Only in this way can misunderstandings and improper applications be avoided, ensuring that it plays a positive role in teaching and tutoring.

In addition, professional training also helps teachers and counselors improve their communication and guidance skills, thereby better addressing students' individual differences and needs. They can learn how to listen and understand students, and how to adopt corresponding communication and guidance methods based on different personality types to promote students' self-awareness and growth.

In short, professional training and knowledge are crucial for teachers and counselors to correctly understand and apply the Enneagram. Through systematic training, they can acquire necessary knowledge and skills to better meet the needs of students and promote their comprehensive development. Therefore, educational institutions and relevant departments should strengthen training and support for teachers and counselors to promote the application of Enneagram in the mental health of Chinese youth education.

7. Conclusion

Integrating the Enneagram into Chinese youth education is of great significance in promoting self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills among young people. This theoretical framework provides educators with a deeper understanding of students' individual characteristics and needs, which contributes to the realization of personalized education and comprehensive development. However, this requires a carefully considered approach, taking into account cultural nuances and the need for professional training.

Firstly, the application of Enneagram needs to be adjusted and localized in conjunction with China's cultural background and values. Although this theory is universal, in Chinese educational practice, it is necessary to be cautious about the impact of collectivism and family values on individual development, and avoid simply applying Western theoretical frameworks to China's educational environment. At the same time, educators need to pay attention to the differences in language expression and teaching methods, ensuring the coordination between the application of the Enneagram and local cultural values.

Secondly, professional training for teachers and counselors is crucial. They need to receive sufficient training to effectively and ethically apply Enneagram. Lack of appropriate training may lead to ineffective or even harmful applications, therefore professional training and expertise are crucial for educators. Through systematic training, teachers and counselors can learn how to identify different personality types, understand the characteristics and needs of each type, and how to adjust teaching methods and coaching strategies based on these understandings to better meet students' needs.

The integration of Enneagram into Chinese youth education through appropriate implementation and continuous evaluation can significantly promote the comprehensive development and success of contemporary Chinese youth. This method helps promote students' self-awareness and emotional intelligence development, enhance their interpersonal skills and teamwork abilities, and lay a solid foundation for their future growth and development. Therefore, despite the challenges and risks, the application of Enneagram still has enormous potential to bring positive changes and development to

the education of Chinese adolescents.

References

- [1] Palmer, H. (1991). *The enneagram: Understanding yourself and the others in your life*. Harper One.
- [2] Naranjo, C. (1991). *Ennea-type structures: Self-analysis for the seeker*. Gateways Books & Tapes.
- [3] Riso, D. R., & Hudson, R. (1999). *The wisdom of the enneagram: The complete guide to psychological and spiritual growth for the nine personality types*. Bantam.
- [4] Flaherty, J. (2005). *Coaching: Evoking excellence in others*. Butterworth-Heinemann.
- [5] Rhodes, S. (2014). *The positive Enneagram*. Beijing Institute of Technology Press.
- [6] Riso, D. R., & Hudson, R. (2000). *Understanding the Enneagram*. Mariner Books.
- [7] Riso, D. R., & Hudson, R. (2003). *Discovering your personality type*. Houghton Mifflin.
- [8] *Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice*, 10th edition, authored by Robert Slevin (USA)
- [9] Jane Nelsen. (2009). *Positive Discipline*. Random House Inc
- [10] *Principles and Methods of Behavior Correction* "Author: (USA) Miltenberg Publishing House: China Light Industry Press