

Research on the Dilemma of "Hard Integration" of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Curriculum and Its Digital Governance

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Abstract: At present, despite many efforts to cultivate critical thinking and open dialogue within university courses, it is important to acknowledge that there exist challenges relating to 'hard integration' and 'one-sidedness' in current ideological and political education, which fails to achieve the same direction between curriculum and ideological and political education. Students have not obtained the necessary three-dimensional improvement in knowledge, skills, and literacy in professional courses, and the classroom effect of ideological and political education needs to be improved. The rapid development of digital education to high-quality development has effectively proposed some solutions to weak ideological and political awareness among teachers and the lack of guarantee for personalized development of students in current university education. With the help of digital tools, through the construction of smart teaching, digital personalized education and collaborative education through industry and smart teaching, teachers can break the limitations of traditional teaching and provide students with a wealth of learning resources and interactive learning experiences. Students can experience a more comprehensive and personalized learning approach. This not only improves learning effectiveness but also enhances student engagement. The integration of digital technology and education can actively promote the linkage between "curriculum ideology" and "ideological and political education courses," effectively enhance the value of nurturing students and promote comprehensive development of university students.

Keywords: Ideological and Political Education, "Hard Integration" Phenomenon, Digital Governance

1. Introduction

The General Secretary of the Communist Party of China emphasized that ideological and political courses should not only be taught in the classroom, but also in social life [6]. Educational digitization is a response to the development of the digital age, an inevitable choice for achieving modernization in education and a necessary path towards ensuring equitable and quality education [14]. The digitalization of education, based on digital transformation and digital upgrading, is a key force to drive the structural optimization of the education system and promote the transformation of various elements in the education system. In recent years, curriculum ideological and political education has received high attention from the country and the development environment and educational effectiveness

have been fundamentally improved. However, due to insufficient attention from university management departments, limited teaching staff, and a lack of personalized development for students, there are still phenomena such as "hard integration" and "one-sidedness" in curriculum ideological and political education. Based on the above background, this article intends to solve the problem of "hard integration" of ideological and political courses in universities, propose a research plan for digital governance and promote the construction of "big ideological and political courses".

In Latin America, countries have attempted to do various training programs for teachers. Despite considerable expense, the results achieved so far have been distant from desirable [1] (P. 156). Mexico has a rich history of embracing Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to enhance teaching

and learning experience. However, in foreign countries, the development of digital education also encounters different challenges. Firstly, the government's financial support for teacher training is lacking. Secondly, teachers often lack professional training on how to effectively utilize the latest educational equipments. Thirdly, there is a lack of monitoring and evaluation of the usage of educational devices. Fourthly, there is a delay in updating and improving teaching methods and learning models. Fifthly, government support for digital education is inconsistent, leading to shifting focuses and expectations [1] (P. 156). Owing to this, this article aims to objectively evaluate the efforts made in digital education, taking into consideration the challenges faced and the resources lost. The ultimate goal is to identify and highlight the best practices that can serve as valuable insights for future ideological and political education, not only in China but also internationally, with the aim of making a lasting and impactful contribution.

This paper consists of five main sections. The first section is the introduction, which provides an overview of the research background, objectives and the overall structure of the paper. The second section is the literature review, which examines the current research status on "ideological and political education in the curriculum" and digital education, both domestically and internationally. It critically evaluates existing studies and raises research questions. The third section identifies three key issues regarding the current implementation of "hard integration" of ideological and political education in the curriculum. The fourth section proposes specific measures to address these issues, offering three suggestions and nine practices as practical solutions. The fifth section presents a research conclusion and acknowledges the limitations of the study.

2. Review of Related Research

On the one hand, starting from the goal of talent cultivation in higher education, it is believed that curriculum ideological and political education is to solve the problem of who cultivates people, based on the high level of educating people for the Party and the country, and to understand the essence of curriculum ideological and political education. Roder, CA etc. linked professional attitudes to implicit courses. Through clinical observation and semi-structured interviews with students, and using inductive and deductive methods to analyze the data, they found that clinical service evaluation played a role in conveying implicit course information and changed students' professional attitudes [10]. Tian Qili believes that in the pattern of morality and people's congress, the goal of ideological and political curriculum is to gather the power of the "main classroom" of college curriculum and cultivate the new generation of people needed for Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the new era with scientific knowledge as the carrier [13]. Ye Fei, etc., based on the basic principles of the SECI model of knowledge dimensions, combined with curriculum practice,

proposed a process model for the transformation of elements of curriculum ideological and political construction [15]. In 2022, the Ministry of Education and other departments issued the "Work Plan for Comprehensively Promoting the Construction of 'Great Ideological and Political Courses'," which emphasized that "some places and schools do not attach enough importance to the construction of 'Great Ideological and Political Courses', Some schools lack guidance in the second classroom activities, and there are phenomena such as 'hard integration' and 'one-sidedness' in curriculum ideological and political education [8].

On the other hand, the rise of online education from the popularity of the Internet to the popularity of Big data technology has made mobile learning possible and by 2022, the "Digital transformation" was written into the government work report for the first time. The Digital transformation of education is a process and an inevitable trend [9]. Digital education has gone through the process of "from nothing to something" and "from something to personalized customization." Digital education can not only improve teaching efficiency, enrich teaching resources, and improve educational fairness, but also achieve targeted ideological and political education and comprehensive ability education. Cai Lu believes that although digital empowering universities have a certain coupling foundation for precise ideological and political education, it is still necessary to conduct forward-looking analysis of various constraints in promoting digital empowering universities' precise ideological and political education [2].

We require many more kinds of questions and methods, in order to engage imaginatively with the rapidly shifting terrain of digital education and to respond creatively and critically to claims of 'disruption' and the 'narratives of promise and threat' that accompany social and technological change [7]. To sum up, domestic and foreign scholars have conducted research on the origin, content, function and development of curriculum ideological and political education from different perspectives and research methods, and have achieved fruitful research results that are worthy of learning and reference, but there are still shortcomings. It can be argued that the methodological opening of the 'black box' of digital platforms on an empirical level, which is simultaneously theoretically informed, has not yet extensively been the focus of critical educational scholarship and is in need of further consolidation [3]. The existing domestic research mostly focuses on the theoretical level, and empirical research is relatively lacking. Currently, curriculum ideological and political education is mostly seen from the perspective of teachers in curriculum design, while research on ideological and political education from the perspective of students is rare. With the integration of digital technology and higher education, it provides possibilities for breaking through the predicament of "forced integration" and "one-sidedness" in ideological and political education, as well as empirical research on digital governance from a student perspective.

3. The Dilemma of "Hard Integration" of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Curriculum

3.1. Insufficient Emphasis on Ideological and Political Education in Universities

At present, various universities have formed corresponding ideological and political theory systems, teaching plans, and exemplary courses in accordance with the requirements of the country and the Ministry of Education. However, there is still a problem with "hard integration" in the implementation of ideological and political education. The term "hard integration" refers to the rigid inclusion of ideological and political education within the curriculum, often as a separate or compulsory course. This approach may result in an isolated and disconnected learning experience for students, as they may struggle to see the relevance or connection of content to their other studies. The concept of "one-sidedness" highlights the tendency for ideological and political education to focus predominantly on one particular perspective or ideology, without presenting a balanced and comprehensive understanding of different viewpoints or historical contexts. This can lead to a narrow interpretation of issues and inhibit critical thinking among students. The lack of dynamic interaction and interplay between the two aspects prevents students from understanding how the principles and concepts taught in ideological and political education can be applied to their academic pursuits and future careers. To address these challenges, it is essential to promote a more flexible and interdisciplinary approach to curriculum design, integrating ideological and political education across various subjects. This would allow students to explore the relevance and practical applications of ideological and political concepts within their chosen fields of study.

Shi Yan and others proposed that conflicts in understanding, inadequate method selection due to the lack of a comprehensive curriculum system, ineffective collaboration, teacher's weak role and unclear distribution of management responsibilities are the core issues faced by ideological and political education in the new era [12]. For example, some universities adopt a didactic and rote teaching approach, lacking guidance and inspiration necessary for students. This teaching method is prone to causing boredom and resistance among students. Zheng Yanlin and others combined their own teaching practice and thinking to explore the basic strategies and specific measures for implementing ideological and political education in curriculum [16]. In teaching, teachers should focus on cultivating students' initiative, creativity and critical thinking, rather than simply instilling knowledge and theory.

3.2. Lack of Close Integration Between Teaching and Real-World Contexts

The lack of close connection between ideological and political education in the curriculum and social reality makes

it difficult to achieve the fundamental task of cultivating morality and talent. Ideological and political education encompasses not only the transmission of knowledge and concepts but also the development of moral values, critical thinking skills, and a sense of civic responsibility. However, when there is a disconnect between the content taught and the realities of society, it becomes challenging for students to apply their learning in real-world contexts. Without a direct link between ideological and political education and social reality, students may struggle to see the relevance and practicality of the principles and values being taught. They may question the applicability of these concepts in their daily lives and future careers, resulting in a disengagement from the subject matter. To enhance the effectiveness and pertinence of ideological and political education courses, universities should encourage students to participate in social practice activities, and deepen their understanding of ideological and political education through practice. Specifically, universities can provide more opportunities for students to understand, interact with, and serve society through a variety of social practice projects and activities. For example, students can be organized to participate in social surveys, public welfare activities, volunteer services, enterprise internships, etc., so that they can deeply understand social reality in practice, participate in social construction and development, and better understand the practical significance of ideological and political education, which will help students acquire more knowledge and skills in practice, enhance their overall quality and sense of social responsibility.

3.3. Lack of Effective Evaluation and Supervision Mechanisms in the Implementation of Ideological and Political Education Courses

The process of implementing ideological and political education in the curriculum lacks an effective evaluation and supervision, which prevents timely identification and adjustment of curriculum problems, affecting the effectiveness of the implementation of ideological and political education in the curriculum. The first is insufficient training and qualification for teachers. In order to effectively deliver ideological and political education, teachers need not only a thorough understanding of the subject matter but also the necessary pedagogical skills. The second is student apathy and disinterest. Ideological and political education often faces challenges when it comes to engaging students. Some students may perceive the subject as irrelevant or uninteresting, leading to a lack of motivation and active participation. Without student engagement, the effectiveness of the curriculum implementation can be greatly hindered. The third is a limited resource. Insufficient resources, such as textbooks, teaching materials, and technology, can also hinder the effective implementation of ideological and political education. Without adequate resources, teachers may struggle to provide engaging and up-to-date content, impacting the overall quality of education. However, in some cases, teachers may lack proper training or qualifications in

this area, which can limit their ability to effectively teach and engage students.

In order to improve the effectiveness of curriculum ideological and political implementation, universities should establish a comprehensive evaluation and supervision mechanism, including internal and external evaluations. Internal evaluation can be conducted through teaching feedback, course evaluation, and other methods. External evaluation can invite experts, parents to conduct a comprehensive and objective evaluation of the ideological and political implementation of universities' curriculum, further promoting the implementation of ideological and political education in universities and improving the quality and level of education.

4. Exploring Approaches to Address the Challenges of Ideological and Political Education in the University Curriculum

In response to the current problems in ideological and political education in university courses, this article attempts to explore new models of ideological and political education from the perspective of digital governance, such as the construction of smart teaching, digital personalized education and collaborative education through industry and smart teaching. Some studies provide evidence of how and why digital learning and teaching can benefit learners, teachers and schools [5]. To implement the fundamental task of cultivating virtue and character, prioritize student development, and promote the comprehensive cultivation of individuals through the construction of a "great ideological and political education curriculum".

4.1. Smart Teaching Construction

An entire new field of tech- and data-savvy educational 'professionals' is gradually emerging, with those professionals themselves equally often taking up a brokering role in between digital education platforms and their eventual end users [4]. The construction of smart teaching utilizes modern information technology and educational concepts to integrate innovative teaching methods with educational technologies, aiming to enhance teaching effectiveness and improve students' learning experiences. Its core is to promote educational transformation and student development through integration, personalization, and interaction.

In smart teaching, teachers can utilize educational technology tools such as multimedia resources, online platforms, and mobile applications to enrich classroom teaching content and enhance learning interaction. Personalized learning involves tailoring teaching materials and methods to individual students' needs and strengths using adaptive learning systems and data analysis. Additionally, students are encouraged to actively participate in learning

through collaborative learning, problem-solving and other approaches, fostering teamwork and innovative thinking skills.

4.1.1. Clarifying the Content and Objectives of Ideological and Political Education in the Curriculum

The curriculum of ideological and political education should be organically combined with subject knowledge, focusing on cultivating students' values, humanistic literacy and social responsibility. When clarifying the core content and objectives of curriculum ideological and political education, it is necessary to develop corresponding curriculum ideological and political education plans based on the characteristics of different disciplines. At the same time, attention should be paid to evaluation and feedback during the teaching process, and teaching plans and methods should be adjusted in a timely manner to ensure the effectiveness of ideological and political education in the curriculum.

4.1.2. Utilizing Digital Teaching Methods to Improve Teaching Efficiency and Quality

In the construction of ideological and political education in smart courses, digital tools such as online classrooms, interactive teaching and virtual experiments are utilized to enable students to have a deeper understanding and experience of the ideological and political content of the course. For example, in history classes, methods such as video teaching and online classes can be used to help students gain a deeper understanding of historical scenes and characters. At the same time, data analysis technology can also be used to monitor and evaluate students' learning situation, provide timely feedback on their learning achievements and problems, help students better understand and master the content of ideological and political courses and improve their core literacy.

4.1.3. Emphasizing the Combination of Curriculum Ideological and Political Education with Innovative Education

In the construction of ideological and political education in smart courses, innovative education is used to enable students to have a deeper understanding and experience of the ideological and political content of the course. For example, innovative education in English classes can be achieved by organizing students to make English speeches, debates, performances and other ways. Students can also organize model United Nations Conferences to let students act as representatives of different countries, debate and negotiate on international hot issues, and enhance students' cross-cultural communication and cooperation capabilities. These activities can help students improve their English oral expression skills, and also enable them to better understand and experience the core content of ideological and political education in the course, such as international perspectives and cross-cultural communication to improve students' innovation and practical abilities.

4.2. Digital Personalized Education

Digital personalized education, also known as personalized learning, is the utilization of information technology and data analysis methods to customize teaching content and approaches based on each student's characteristics, abilities and learning needs. It aims to provide a more individualized, flexible, and targeted learning experience. The core idea of digital personalized education is to align educational resources and teaching processes with students' unique characteristics and requirements, fostering their comprehensive development.

In digital personalized education, data analysis and artificial intelligence technologies are leveraged to gain insights into individual differences such as learning styles, subject proficiency, interests and preferences. This allows for the design and adjustment of tailored learning plans that cater to each student's specific needs and developmental trajectory. Teachers can utilize tools including learning management systems, personalized teaching software, and online resources to deliver customized learning materials, challenging assignments, and real-time feedback. These resources aid students in mastering knowledge and skills at their own pace and in ways that suit their preferences.

4.2.1. Establishing a Student Profile System to Comprehensively Understand Students' Characteristics

Establish a student file system to collect personal information, learning situations, interests and hobbies of students, and provide basic information for personalized education. By using data analysis technology, students' learning situation, interests, and hobbies are evaluated and analyzed, providing a basis for subsequent personalized course design and teaching plans.

4.2.2. Designing Personalized Course Plans for Student Characteristics

Develop different course design plans based on students' personalized needs and characteristics, including teaching objectives, teaching content, teaching methods, etc. For example, in English classes, different course modules can be set up based on students' interests and strengths, such as literary creation, reading comprehension, oral expressions, etc., to enable students to participate more actively in learning and enhance their learning interest and enthusiasm.

4.2.3. Utilizing Educational Technology to Improve Personalized Teaching Effectiveness

In digital personalized education, educational technology methods such as online classrooms, virtual experiments, and interactive teaching can be utilized to improve the effectiveness of personalized teaching. In personalized education, special course modules can be set up to enable students to have a deeper understanding and experience of the ideological and political content of the course. For example, in history and humanities courses, students can be organized to visit virtual memorial halls, hold online

historical and cultural exhibitions and other activities to enhance their historical and cultural awareness and social responsibility.

4.3. Collaborative Education of Digital Intelligence, Industry and Teaching

In a VET context, opening the learning environment towards the world is critical, the challenge being to maintain a strong relationship between the school and the workplace [11]. The overall concept of collaborative education between industry and education in the field of data intelligence is to foster talent by strengthening cooperation and communication between educational institutions and industries, and jointly cultivating professionals who possess the knowledge, skills, and capabilities required for the data intelligence industry.

Collaborative education involves creating a bridge between academia and industry, allowing students to gain practical experience, theoretical knowledge, and vocational skills that are directly applicable to the data intelligence field. For example, collaborating with industry partners allows educational institutions to develop a curriculum that aligns with the latest industry trends, technologies and skill requirements; inviting industry experts to deliver guest lectures or conduct workshops can provide students with insights into the practical applications of data intelligence. Through partnerships and collaborations with industry, educational institutions can align their curriculum with industry demands, provide internships and practical training opportunities and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise.

4.3.1. Establishing University-Enterprise Cooperation Mechanisms and Implementing Industry-Academia Research Projects

Establish a school enterprise cooperation mechanism to involve students in the design, development and implementation of actual projects through industry-academia research projects and gain a deep understanding of industry needs and the latest technological trends. For instance, the computer science and technology program can collaborate with companies to undertake software development projects, allowing students to actively participate in real-world software development processes and enhance their practical and innovative capabilities. Through collaboration, students have the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge and technical skills to develop software solutions for industry partners. They become involved in various stages of the software development lifecycle, such as requirements gathering, design, coding, testing and deployment. This hands-on experience exposes them to industry-standard practices, project management methodologies and teamwork dynamics.

4.3.2. Equipped with off Campus Mentors and Providing Personalized Guidance Services

As a guide and manager for students' academic research,

school mentors mainly provide assistance in academic development. The corresponding off campus mentors can provide students with more personalized practical guidance and assistance, which is conducive to achieving personalized educational development and establishing future career development goals. The collaboration between school mentors and off-campus mentors allows for continuous growth and learning beyond the classroom, enabling students to establish their own unique paths and succeed in their chosen fields.

Consider a student who is passionate about social entrepreneurship and aims to create a positive social impact through business ventures. The school mentor offers courses on business planning, financial management, marketing, and social innovation. An off-campus mentor who is a successful social entrepreneur in the field can provide practical guidance and insights. This mentor can share his own experiences, challenges and success stories, providing real-world perspectives and expertise. He can help the student refine his social impact goals and objectives, develop strategies for measuring and amplifying their impact and offer advice on sustainable business models that align with their social mission. By having both mentors, the students receive a comprehensive support system.

4.3.3. Promoting Teaching Through Competition, Realizing the Organic Integration of Ideological and Political Education and Practical Teaching in the Curriculum

Promoting teaching through competition is to guide students to combine their theoretical knowledge with practical skills, improving their practical and innovative abilities. For example, students are encouraged to participate in the provincial "internet plus" innovation and entrepreneurship competition, to find a way out for rural revitalization through the design and practice of creative projects and to provide professional training for students during the competition, including technical knowledge, practical skills, team cooperation and other aspects, so as to improve the comprehensive strength of students.

In summary, the smart education-industry collaborative education model primarily involves establishing school-enterprise cooperation mechanisms, providing off-campus mentors, and emphasizing the integration of curriculum ideological and practical teaching. This approach aims to enhance students' practical and innovative abilities while also meeting the industry demand for talent. It promotes students' overall development and improves their employment capabilities.

5. Conclusion

This article analyzes the dilemma of "hard integration" of ideological and political education in university courses, and proposes a path for digital governance of ideological and political education in courses. In the future, digital governance of ideological and political education in

university courses will pay more attention to data sharing, intelligent management, and collaborative innovation, build a comprehensive, multi-level and three-dimensional digital governance system, and achieve scientific, refined and humanized governance of ideological and political education in university courses. At the same time, it is necessary to actively promote information collaboration among various departments within school, achieve information sharing and resource integration, and improve the overall efficiency of ideological and political education in university courses. It is necessary to further strengthen innovation and collaboration in the digital governance of ideological and political education in university courses, enhance the technology and application scenarios of digital governance, improve the efficiency and security of digital governance and provide more high-quality support and guarantee for the construction of ideological and political education in university courses and talent cultivation.

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