

Teaching Practice and Exploration of Ideological and Political Education in Educational Psychology Courses for primary Education Majors in Universities

Jinjin Niu^{*}, Jie Du

School of Education, Zhaoqing University, Zhaoqing, Guangdong, China

**Corresponding Author*

Abstract: Educational Psychology is a required foundational course for elementary education majors in higher education institutions. The quality of instruction in this course profoundly impacts students' future professional development. "Course-based ideological and political education" represents an innovative initiative in contemporary higher education. It serves as both a vital practice for advancing quality education and a concrete manifestation of cultivating well-rounded, multi-talented individuals with both moral integrity and professional competence. Promoting the integration of course instruction with value-oriented education facilitates the high-quality development of curricula. Consequently, how to infuse value-based content into courses to cultivate teacher candidates' sense of social responsibility and educational mission has become a critical challenge for educators today. This paper aims to explore implementation pathways for value integration within the Educational Psychology course for elementary education majors, thereby achieving the educational goal of cultivating well-rounded talents.

Keywords: Value-Oriented Education; Educational Psychology; Primary Education Majors; Value-Driven Leadership; Implementation Strategies

1. Introduction

With the deepening of higher education reform, universities are increasingly emphasizing ideological and political education within their curricula to enhance students' comprehensive qualities[1].

Within education-related courses, emphasis should be placed on strengthening students' education in professional ethics and conduct.

Through classroom instruction, role model guidance, and institutional norms, students should be guided to embrace the professional ideal of "studying to become a teacher and acting as a model for society." Efforts should focus on cultivating their integrity in loving their country, abiding by the law, and teaching lawfully, while enhancing their abilities to impart knowledge, teach skills, and resolve doubts. This integrates their love for the nation, education, and students into a unified whole. Students should be encouraged to establish themselves through virtue, pursue learning with integrity, and teach with ethical commitment, striving to become exemplary educators embodying the "Four Qualities": ideals and convictions, moral character, solid knowledge, and benevolence. As university faculty, they must integrate ideological and political education across all disciplines, teaching practices, and curriculum systems to cultivate students' sense of social responsibility and professional competence.

Educational Psychology is a foundational core course for undergraduate primary education programs. As an interdisciplinary field integrating psychology and pedagogy, it explores the fundamental psychological principles governing learning and teaching within educational contexts[2]. It helps students transition from "teaching based on experience" to "teaching based on science," and from "focusing on teaching behaviors" to "focusing on learning outcomes," ultimately enhancing the professionalism, effectiveness, and humanistic qualities of education and teaching. Integrating ideological and political elements into the Educational Psychology classroom not only enriches course content but also enhances educational outcomes, cultivating high-caliber future elementary school teachers with noble professional ethics and a solid foundation in

their discipline.

2. Dilemmas in Ideological and Political Education in Educational Psychology Courses for Primary Education Majors

2.1 Inadequate Clarity in Teaching Objectives

Educational Psychology is a foundational core course for the primary education major. It serves as a fundamental course for establishing professional competence among first-year students and also functions as a course for fostering students' professional identity. From the perspective of teacher professional development, primary education majors must possess not only specialized subject knowledge but also a comprehensive knowledge system encompassing educational pedagogy and teaching skills. Therefore, educational psychology aims to equip students with foundational knowledge and theories of learning psychology while developing their educational teaching competencies.

Firstly, while the current training objectives for primary education majors explicitly require the effective integration of ideological and political education into educational psychology courses, teachers typically fail to establish clear core goals in their instructional designs. That is, the curriculum focuses solely on knowledge and process objectives, without establishing any value-orient[3].

Secondly, the articulation of ideological and political education objectives within the curriculum is overly formalistic, failing to specify concrete content. For example, while the objective states "cultivating students to develop certain social values," it fails to integrate specific psychological content with ideological and political goals. This results in a lack of logical connection between the ideological and political objectives and the subject matter. Students can only sense that teachers are forcibly imposing moral indoctrination, rather than genuinely experiencing the educational value inherent in the subject matter.

Finally, the design of teaching objectives failed to account for students' foundational knowledge, overlooking individual differences and interests. Neither the teaching objectives nor the ideological and political objectives focused on

cultivating future educators. For instance, there has been an overemphasis on patriotism, collectivism, and fostering a correct outlook on life and values, while neglecting professional competencies such as teachers' ethical conduct, educational convictions, and occupational identity. This has resulted in overly ambitious ideological and political objectives that prove difficult to internalize, often devolving into mere formalities and even triggering students' rebellious attitudes.

2.2 Insufficient Exploration of the Value-oriented Elements in Courses

The "Educational Psychology" course covers both teachers' teaching psychology and students' psychology, with a focus on student psychology. By revealing the psychological principles underlying teaching and learning, it helps elementary education majors master scientific methods for nurturing students and ultimately learn to address teaching challenges from an educational psychology perspective[4]. It not only focuses on cognitive and behavioral mechanisms but also delves deeper into human development, value guidance, and educational ethics, essentially constituting a "science of nurturing."

Therefore, the curriculum content incorporates numerous ideological and political elements. For instance, humanistic theory advocates a people-centered approach, emphasizing respect for differences, potential development, and holistic human growth. Cognitive development theory embodies scientific spirit and a pragmatic attitude. Integrate concepts such as rule awareness, social responsibility, and collective honor into the teaching of "Theory of Moral Development." In the teaching of educational psychology courses, educators should adopt a holistic perspective and integrate knowledge and skill transmission, ideological and political education, and value guidance from multiple dimensions to fully leverage the educational function of the curriculum.

However, educators still struggle to thoroughly explore values-based content in their teaching. On one hand, due to the extensive curriculum and complex subject matter of educational psychology, most teachers focus primarily on imparting specialized knowledge, neglecting the deeper integration of values-based elements within the material.

Although several instructors make deliberate efforts to excavate and identify ideological and political elements within courses, they often fail to provide targeted value instruction; alternatively, the content they select is overly generalized and poorly aligned with the course's academic knowledge system. Furthermore, these value-oriented components tend to be isolated in separate chapters and discrete knowledge points, lacking an overarching value logic that runs through the entire curriculum. Consequently, the disorganized presentation of value-related elements leads to fragmented teaching outcomes, making it difficult for students to construct a coherent system of value cognition.

2.3 The Teaching Methods are One-Dimensional.

Primarily, the complex curriculum structure of "Educational Psychology" necessitates a lecture-based teaching approach[5]. While this one-way transmission of knowledge facilitates short-term coverage of course content, it severely limits opportunities for classroom interaction, value exploration, and emotional engagement. Consequently, these elements struggle to be organically integrated and naturally permeate the learning process. For instance, when teaching "Bandura's Social Learning Theory," the focus is solely on the theoretical knowledge. On one hand, this approach overlooks the exemplary role and educational responsibility embodied in the "Bobo Doll Experiment." On the other hand, the ethical controversies surrounding the experiment itself provide an excellent opportunity to guide students in reflecting on research ethics, humanistic care, and the fundamental principles of education.

Second, the teaching process lacks contextualization and digital tools. Given the course's heavy theoretical content, instructors typically focus on theoretical explanations while rarely employing contextual scenarios to highlight ideological and political elements. Furthermore, the digital tools employed are outdated, relying solely on slides and videos to present key concepts without utilizing online discussion platforms to guide students in personalized reflection. Therefore, due to the lack of these interactive, generative, and personalized teaching supports, students not only struggle to translate abstract psychological

knowledge into practical wisdom but also fail to establish an intrinsic logical connection between professional knowledge and relevant core value orientations. Ultimately, this hinders the course from achieving the subtle yet profound educational impact of nurturing students imperceptibly.

3. Implementation Strategies for Ideological and Political Education in the "Educational Psychology" Course within the Primary Education Major

3.1 Establish Clear Course Objectives

Defined objectives provide clear direction for course instruction, ensuring the integration of ideological and political education into subject teaching to cultivate new-era talents that meet national needs. Educators should integrate the shaping of students' values, the imparting of knowledge, and the development of competencies into a unified whole.

Building upon existing knowledge, skill, and affective goals, course objectives should be designed in alignment with the discipline's nature. This design must fully consider the training goals for elementary education professionals and the physical and psychological development characteristics of students, while also addressing the connection between the transmission of theoretical knowledge and the guidance of values. As the future reserve force of the teaching profession, elementary education students should be cultivated to become exemplary teachers embodying the "Four Qualities": firm ideals and convictions, moral integrity, solid academic knowledge, and a compassionate heart.

From a macro perspective, the objectives of the "Educational Psychology" course can be refined into the following three aspects: (1) Strengthen students' theoretical foundation and guide them to establish a scientific perspective on education and students. (2) Cultivate a professional learning attitude centered on active inquiry, encouraging students to engage proactively, explore courageously, and reflect effectively. (3) Strengthen pre-service teachers' professional identity and educational ethos, fostering their love and reverence for the teaching profession. This involves establishing their career ideal of serving through education and igniting their passion and pursuit of educational endeavors. At the micro level, when designing the

objectives for each chapter, the knowledge framework should be closely integrated with relevant value orientations to meet the requirements of holistic talent development.

3.2 Deeply Explore the Value-oriented Elements Embedded within the Curriculum

To deepen the integration of value orientation and educational psychology, ensuring both the scientific rigor and value-driven nature of instruction, educators should thoroughly explore the value-bearing content within this course and tightly integrate it with professional knowledge to enhance teaching quality.

First, it is essential to systematically organize and deeply analyze the value-oriented elements across each chapter of educational psychology, avoiding the superficial addition of value-related content[7]. For instance, when teaching the “Overview of Educational Psychology” chapter, cultivate students’ scientific spirit and critical thinking; in teaching “Humanistic Theory,” guide students to understand the people-centered educational philosophy and establish a student-centered teaching perspective; in teaching “Learning Strategies,” systematically elaborate on the connotations and classifications of learning strategies, provide in-depth explanations of cognitive strategies and metacognitive monitoring strategies, and introduce pathways for cultivating learning strategies. Teachers should focus on guiding students to develop self-management skills, cultivate self-discipline, master time management techniques, stimulate proactive exploration, and enhance the effective utilization of learning resources — all while imparting professional knowledge — thereby comprehensively improving learning efficiency. Second, it is essential to achieve an organic integration of the both. This means that teachers should use educational psychology theories as a vehicle in their instructional design, allowing ideological and political content to be seamlessly integrated into the knowledge framework [6]. For instance, “Bandura’s social learning theory” can guide students to reflect on the moral responsibilities of role models, while “attribution training” can cultivate their perseverance and spirit of striving.

Additionally, educators should strive for a unified approach that integrates scientific rigor with ideological depth in teaching: On one hand,

by imparting theoretical knowledge, they cultivate students’ academic integrity — respecting principles and adhering to facts[8]. On the other hand, they reinforce the guiding principle of integrating ideological education into the curriculum, encouraging students to reflect on questions such as “Why do we teach?” and “For whom do we educate?” while mastering learning concepts and strategies. This process elevates specialized knowledge into a profound educational conviction.

3.3 Innovating Diverse Teaching Methods

In implementing within courses, instructors should employ diverse teaching methods to help students proactively internalize value-oriented elements through their specialized studies[9]. Given the characteristics of educational psychology, the case study method is particularly well-suited for stimulating students’ interest in learning and inspiring critical thinking. For example, many psychological experiments not only help students grasp knowledge but also reveal numerous elements. Some experiments even challenge human nature, serving as a warning that students should uphold ethical boundaries and respect human dignity and rights. Additionally, there are authentic primary education case studies. Through analyzing these cases, students can gain insight into the knowledge systems and value systems of students, helping them enhance their moral awareness and professional competence[10]. When students engage in authentic contexts, ideological and political elements can be more deeply integrated to enhance teaching effectiveness. This approach also fosters positive teacher-student interaction, thereby building strong teacher-student relationships.

Moreover, it should also be applied to digital online discussion platforms. Educational psychology is a highly practical applied discipline. During course instruction, instructors can first distribute case materials or video clips, then post discussion questions on the online platform to guide students’ thinking. Students can respond in real time within discussion forums, and those who are less articulate can proactively share their perspectives. Through contextualized, interactive digital teaching methods, educators can effectively boost

students' learning motivation and information literacy, thereby enhancing the education outcomes of this course.

4. Conclusion

Achieving the requirements for high-quality development in elementary education programs necessitates that the "Educational Psychology" course integrate ideological and political education in a manner that keeps pace with contemporary and societal developments. Teaching methods must be continuously updated to ensure this discipline not only equips students with professional knowledge but also cultivates sound professional ethics and moral character, ultimately enabling them to become qualified elementary school teachers.

References

- [1] Liu L. Research on Reverse Instructional Design and Practice of Ideological and Political Education in Educational Psychology Courses. *Journal of Lvliang Teachers College*, 2025, 42(02): 54-57.
- [2] Wang X Y. Integration Strategies of Elementary Educational Psychology and Curriculum Ideological and Political Education. *Examination Weekly*, 2025, (11): 125-128.
- [3] Yang K, Wang S, Yao M M. A Case Study of Educational Psychology from the Perspective of Curriculum Ideological and Political Education: Taking Learning Transfer as an Example. *PR World*, 2024, (23): 43-45.
- [4] Hu Y Q. Exploration of Teaching Reform in Educational Psychology Course Based on Applied Talent Training. *University*, 2021, (31): 116-118.
- [5] Xiong H X, Liu Y L, Wu J H. Curriculum and Teaching Reform of Educational Psychology in Normal Universities: Research Status, Limitations and Trends. *Journal of Leshan Normal University*, 2021, (11).
- [6] Ding J, Huang B Z. Reform and Exploration of Blended Teaching in Educational Psychology Course Under the Background of Normal University Certification. *Journal of Ningde Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 2022, (2).
- [7] Zhang L F. Exploration on the Practical Path of Educational Psychology Course for Normal Majors Based on OBE Concept. *China Journal of Multimedia & Network Teaching (First Half)*, 2025, (05): 126-129.
- [8] Jin D H. Innovation and Exploration of Educational Psychology Teaching Model Based on Multicultural Education Concept. *Delta*, 2025, (13): 183-185.
- [9] Zhang M Z. Application of Educational Psychology Course in the Cultivation of Teachers' Morality and Style — Taking College Students Majoring in Primary School Education as an Example. *Knowledge Window (Teacher's Edition)*, 2024, (11): 74-76.
- [10] Zhang F. Analysis of Problems and Countermeasures in the Curriculum Reform of "Educational Psychology". *Journal of Baoding University*, 2024, 37(04): 87-90.