

Research on the Current Situation and Optimization Path of the Evaluation System Construction for Aesthetic Education Curriculum Ideological and Political Education Under the Background of the “Double High-Level Plan”

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Abstract: The integration of aesthetic education and curriculum ideological and political education serves as a clear and vital practical approach for vocational colleges to implement the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education in the new era ^[1]. A scientific and rational evaluation system, in turn, acts as a core guarantee for the effective implementation of aesthetic education with ideological and political elements ^[2]. This paper first conducts a systematic investigation into the construction status of the evaluation system for aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education in vocational colleges via a special questionnaire survey targeting students, teachers and teaching administrators, with 1,054 valid questionnaires collected. The survey results show that vocational colleges have achieved initial progress in this field. Nevertheless, prominent problems remain in practice, such as rigid integration between teaching content and ideological and political elements, monotonous teaching methods and low student participation. The evaluation system also needs improvement in terms of dimension design, method selection and supporting mechanisms. Against this backdrop, this paper puts forward feasible optimization strategies from four perspectives: evaluation dimensions, evaluation methods, implementation mechanisms and guarantee systems, and proposes practical suggestions for vocational colleges to build a scientific evaluation system for aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education ^[3].

Keywords: Vocational colleges; Aesthetic education; Curriculum, ideological and political education; Evaluation system

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1. Introduction

Aesthetic education integrates aesthetic appreciation, sentiment cultivation and spiritual enlightenment, and is an important carrier for improving students' comprehensive literacy and shaping sound personalities in vocational colleges. Curriculum ideological and political education is a key educational philosophy that incorporates ideological and political education into the whole teaching process of various courses ^[4]. The in-depth integration of aesthetic education and

curriculum ideological and political education can cultivate people through aesthetics and culture^[5]. It not only enhances vocational college students' aesthetic appreciation and artistic practical abilities, but also realizes the organic unity of value guidance, knowledge imparting and competency training, making it a crucial measure for vocational colleges to fulfill the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education.

As the “baton” for the implementation of aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education, the scientificity, systematicness and operability of the evaluation system exert a direct and definite impact on educational outcomes. In recent years, vocational colleges have actively promoted the construction of aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education^[6]. However, the construction of relevant evaluation systems still faces practical dilemmas including single evaluation dimensions, emphasis on results over processes and imperfect supporting mechanisms. These problems are rooted in the operational characteristics of vocational education, faculty competence, teaching resources and other factors. Based on questionnaire surveys, this paper clarifies the current situation and existing problems in the implementation and evaluation system construction of aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education in vocational colleges^[7], so as to develop an evaluation system tailored to the characteristics of vocational education.

2. Research objects and methods

2.1. Research objects

This survey was carried out among various types of vocational colleges across the country. Respondents included students, aesthetic education teachers, ideological and political teachers, teaching administrators and other staff, and 1,054 valid questionnaires were retrieved with a 100% valid response rate. In terms of identity distribution: 1,040 students, accounting for 98.67%; 3 aesthetic education teachers (0.28%); 1 ideological and political teacher (0.09%); 2 teaching administrators (0.19%); and 8 others (0.76%). In terms of college types: 386 respondents from colleges under the “Double High-Level Plan” (36.62%), 464 from ordinary vocational colleges (44.02%), 173 from new-type vocational colleges (16.41%), and 31 from other types of institutions (2.94%). The samples are highly representative.

2.2. Research methods

This study adopted the questionnaire survey method. A questionnaire consisting of 16 questions was designed covering basic information, participation experience, connotation cognition, implementation status, existing problems, evaluation demands and supporting suggestions, including single-choice questions, scale questions, multiple-choice questions and fill-in-the-blank questions. All survey data were processed with statistical analysis to sort out the proportion and distribution characteristics of each indicator, laying a foundation for subsequent analysis and conclusions.

3. Survey results and analysis

3.1. Cognition and participation in aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education

3.1.1. Most participants are mere learners with low participation in construction

Statistics show that 33.68% of respondents have participated in the construction of aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education^[8], 13.47% have occasionally taken part in teaching work, 42.03% only attended relevant courses as learners, and 10.82% had no relevant experience. The majority of respondents are just recipients of courses, while few are involved in construction and teaching work, indicating that an education atmosphere featuring joint construction by teachers and students has not yet been fully formed.

3.1.2. Consensus reached on core connotation with clear educational orientation

In terms of the connotation of aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education, 86.91% of respondents

chose “cultivating people through aesthetics”, 66.6% chose “fostering virtue through education”, 66.32% chose “cultivating people through culture”, and only 10.15% selected other options. Teachers and students in vocational colleges have reached a high consensus on its core connotation, recognizing its essence: taking aesthetics as the carrier, education as the core and value guidance as the goal.

3.1.3. Clear understanding of educational objectives, balancing aesthetic improvement and value cultivation

A total of 83.97% of respondents believed that improving students’ aesthetic ability is the fundamental objective, 80.74% regarded cultivating noble sentiments as a key goal, 76.47% thought it aims to strengthen cultural confidence, and 73.72% held that it guides students to establish correct values. Teachers and students take both aesthetic ability improvement and value guidance as core objectives, which is highly consistent with the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education and talent cultivation characteristics of vocational colleges.

3.1.4. Ideological and political elements are well integrated and widely recognized

A 5-point scale was adopted to evaluate the integration effect of ideological and political elements (1 point for extremely inadequate integration and 5 points for fully adequate integration). The average score reached 4.23. Specifically, 52.85% of respondents considered the integration fully adequate, 23.53% fairly adequate, 19.73% moderate, and merely 3.89% inadequate. It proves that the integration of ideological and political elements has been widely approved by teachers and students.

3.2. Prominent problems in implementation

The survey identifies several urgent problems in practice. Low student participation ranks first at 42.98%, followed by monotonous and uninnovative teaching methods (39.75%), rigid combination of teaching content and ideological and political elements (37.29%), imperfect evaluation systems (26.85%) and insufficient ideological and political literacy of teachers (15.28%).

The results reflect that true integration between teaching content and ideological and political elements is yet to be realized. Traditional lecture-based teaching still dominates, while practical and interactive teaching methods are underutilized. Students’ dominant position in learning has not been fully guaranteed. Meanwhile, the lagging and defective evaluation system fails to assess teaching effects scientifically or drive teaching reform, which has become a fundamental constraint on the high-quality development of aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education^[9].

3.3. Cognition of teaching methods and effective approaches

Traditional teaching methods remain mainstream. Theoretical lectures are adopted by 76% of teachers, ranking the first, followed by artistic practice (66.51%), case discussion (57.4%), situational experience (55.31%), project-based learning (49.05%) and digital teaching (38.8%). Practical and innovative teaching methods are not fully applied.

In terms of optimal teaching modes that conform to the laws of aesthetic education, 47.25% of respondents approve of combining artistic works appreciation with value guidance, a proportion much higher than that of red-themed artistic creation, artistic discussion on social hot issues and inheritance of traditional cultural crafts. This mode is recognized as the most compatible with the educational rules of aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education.

3.4. Educational effects

After taking aesthetic courses integrated with ideological and political elements, 76.09% of respondents reported improved aesthetic ability, 71.82% enhanced cultural confidence, 64.33% cultivated stronger patriotism, 61.2% boosted innovative thinking, 59.49% improved moral attainment, and 53.98% strengthened social responsibility. Only 11.48% felt no change. It is evident that aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education plays a positive role in improving students’ comprehensive literacy, shaping correct values and fostering patriotism. Hence, the evaluation system should

adhere to the orientation of “aesthetic improvement plus value cultivation”.

3.5. Core demands for the evaluation system

3.5.1. Demand for diversified evaluation dimensions integrating knowledge, ability and values

A total of 69.07% of respondents advocated evaluating knowledge mastery, 67.93% for value recognition, 67.27% for practical and innovative abilities, 59.96% for behavioral improvement and 55.98% for changes in emotions and attitudes. Teachers and students generally expect a diversified evaluation system covering knowledge, ability and values, instead of single assessment indicators, to comprehensively evaluate students’ overall literacy.

3.5.2. Preference for evaluation methods suited to aesthetic education, combining classroom performance and practical outcomes

Classroom observation (73.15%) and works analysis (66.6%) are the most favored methods, followed by questionnaire surveys (65.28%) and interviews (44.31%). These two mainstream methods fit well with the practical characteristics of aesthetic education teaching.

3.5.3. Demand for comprehensive evaluation combining diversification and process assessment

In total, 70.59% of respondents support the combination of quantitative and qualitative evaluation, 66.79% advocate joint evaluation by students themselves, peers and teachers, and 66.7% propose integrating formative assessment and summative assessment. Teachers and students have high expectations for the diversification and process-oriented nature of the evaluation system.

3.6. Current situation of support and guarantee mechanisms

3.6.1. School support focuses on resource construction, with inadequate incentives and cooperation

In terms of school support measures, teaching resource construction accounts for 67.74%, teacher training 61.76%, special fund support 55.69%, and school-enterprise cooperation as well as evaluation incentive mechanisms both stand at 47.06%. Besides, 12.71% of respondents stated that their colleges offered no clear support. Schools mainly invest in teaching resources, while incentive mechanisms and cooperative mechanisms need further improvement.

3.6.2. Clear demands for guarantee measures, prioritizing unified standards and evaluation tools

To construct a sound evaluation system, 66.6% of respondents believed it is necessary to formulate curriculum standards, 61.76% proposed building data platforms, 59.58% suggested developing professional evaluation tools, and 54.84% emphasized improving feedback mechanisms. Formulating unified curriculum standards, building digital data platforms and developing evaluation tools are regarded as the fundamental guarantees for the evaluation system construction.

4. Existing problems in the evaluation system construction

Based on the survey analysis, the construction of the evaluation system for aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education in vocational colleges faces prominent problems in system design ^[10], implementation and supporting mechanisms, which are summarized as follows:

4.1. Lack of systematic design and mismatched dimensions and methods

Vocational colleges have not yet established a mature and systematic evaluation system. Current evaluation mainly focuses on knowledge examination and artistic works assessment, failing to integrate knowledge mastery, value recognition and practical innovation capabilities, which falls short of teachers’ and students’ expectation of a comprehensive evaluation covering knowledge, ability and values. In addition, traditional methods such as classroom observation and questionnaires

are widely used, while digital evaluation and whole-process tracking are underdeveloped. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation are not effectively combined.

4.2. Insufficient diversification in implementation with low participation in evaluation

Teachers are still the sole main body of evaluation, while self-evaluation and peer evaluation by students are rarely applied, impairing the objectivity and comprehensiveness of evaluation results. Moreover, summative assessment dominates the evaluation process, and formative assessment is insufficient. The whole learning and teaching process is not tracked dynamically, so it is hard to identify teaching problems in a timely manner and realize the goal of promoting teaching and learning via evaluation.

4.3. Imperfect guarantee mechanisms and insufficient inter-departmental collaboration

Colleges have not provided sufficient support for the evaluation system construction. Incentive mechanisms are incomplete, and there is a shortage of special funds and professional evaluation tools. More importantly, poor coordination between aesthetic education departments, ideological and political education departments and teaching management departments hinders joint efforts for system construction.

4.4. Disconnection between evaluation and teaching with unexerted guiding and feedback functions

The current evaluation system is divorced from teaching practice and fails to conform to the laws of aesthetic education. It cannot effectively guide the innovation of teaching content and methods. Meanwhile, the defective feedback mechanism means evaluation results are not fully applied to optimize teaching, forming no positive interaction between evaluation and teaching and restricting the overall quality of aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education.

5. Optimization paths for the evaluation system

Targeting the above problems and combining the demands of teachers and students, this section proposes optimization paths from evaluation dimensions, evaluation methods, implementation mechanisms and guarantee systems, adhering to the fundamental principles of fostering virtue and cultivating people through aesthetics and adapting to the characteristics of vocational education.

5.1. Build diversified and integrated evaluation dimensions

Based on the framework of “knowledge + ability + values” and the practical and vocational features of vocational college aesthetic education, a multi-dimensional evaluation system is constructed. First, the knowledge dimension assesses students’ mastery of professional aesthetic knowledge and ideological and political theories, as well as their understanding of the connotation of aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education. Second, the ability dimension evaluates students’ capabilities in aesthetic appreciation, artistic creation and innovative thinking, as well as their ability to apply aesthetic literacy and ideological and political concepts to professional learning and vocational practice. Third, the value dimension examines the formation and development of students’ cultural confidence, patriotism, moral attainment and social responsibility. Behavioral changes and emotional transformation are also incorporated into the evaluation system to realize the organic integration of knowledge imparting, ability training and value guidance.

5.2. Adopt diversified evaluation methods suited to aesthetic education

Combining the practical characteristics of aesthetic education teaching, we integrate quantitative and qualitative evaluation as well as process and result assessment to improve evaluation accuracy. First, we prioritize classroom observation and works analysis to assess students’ aesthetic ability and value tendency based on their classroom performance and artistic creations. Second, we adopt questionnaires and interviews to directly understand students’ value recognition and emotional

changes. Third, we promote digital evaluation and build online platforms to track the whole learning process and analyze learning data dynamically. Fourth, we combine quantitative assessment, which uses scores and grades to judge knowledge and ability, with qualitative assessment that relies on comments and analysis reports to evaluate values and emotions, so as to ensure comprehensive and objective evaluation results.

5.3. Implement multi-subject evaluation and strengthen formative assessment

Break the single teacher-dominated evaluation mode and establish a joint evaluation mechanism involving teachers, students and peers. First, teacher evaluation focuses on professional assessment and value guidance based on teaching objectives. Second, self-evaluation guides students to reflect on their own learning gains and deficiencies. Third, peer evaluation conducts group mutual assessment to drive common progress. We should give full play to formative assessment by incorporating classroom participation, practical assignments and phased outcomes into the process evaluation system, and link them with summative assessment including final works and comprehensive examinations, so as to implement whole-process evaluation and facilitate the improvement of teaching and learning.

5.4. Improve the comprehensive guarantee system for implementation

5.4.1. Strengthen school support and optimize supporting resources

Increase special funds for the development of evaluation tools, digital platforms and teacher training. Enrich teaching resources including textbooks, case databases and online courses. Improve incentive mechanisms by linking evaluation results with teachers' performance appraisal and professional evaluation.

5.4.2. Formulate unified curriculum standards and evaluation norms

Work out targeted curriculum standards in line with vocational education characteristics, clarify evaluation dimensions, indicator systems, assessment methods and scoring criteria to standardize evaluation work.

5.4.3. Build digital data platforms

Integrate data of teaching, learning and practical outcomes to realize real-time data collection and analysis, and provide evidence for teaching improvement.

5.4.4. Enhance inter-departmental collaboration

Establish regular communication mechanisms among aesthetic education departments, ideological and political education departments and teaching management departments to break down institutional barriers and form joint educational forces.

5.4.5. Improve the feedback mechanism and form a closed-loop management

Timely feed evaluation results back to teachers and students. Teachers adjust teaching content and methods accordingly, while students conduct self-improvement. Build a closed loop of "evaluation - feedback - improvement - re-evaluation" to continuously elevate teaching quality.

5.5. Promote in-depth integration of evaluation and teaching

Align the evaluation system with teaching practice to drive teaching innovation. First, optimize teaching content in accordance with evaluation indicators, dig out ideological and political elements within aesthetic education content, and realize natural integration rather than rigid embedding. Second, adjust teaching methods based on evaluation results, and widely adopt artistic practice, situational experience and project-based learning to stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning. Third, integrate evaluation requirements into the entire teaching process to ensure that teaching and evaluation reinforce each other.

6. Conclusion

The survey shows that vocational colleges have achieved initial results in aesthetic education curriculum ideological and political education. Teachers and students share a unified understanding of its connotation and objectives, and the integration of ideological and political elements has gained wide recognition. This educational model effectively improves students' aesthetic ability, shapes sound values and fosters patriotism.

However, challenges still exist, including low student participation, monotonous teaching methods, rigid content integration, as well as defects in the evaluation system such as single dimensions, outdated methods, inadequate guarantees and disconnection from teaching.

The construction of the evaluation system is a systematic project. Guided by the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, vocational colleges shall build a scientific evaluation system with diversified dimensions, comprehensive methods, multi-subject participation and sound supporting mechanisms based on the essence of integrated aesthetic education and ideological and political education as well as the features of vocational education. Only in this way can the evaluation system serve as a reliable “baton” to guide teaching innovation, fulfill the goals of cultivating people through aesthetics, culture and morality, and cultivate high-quality technical and skilled talents with all-round development for vocational education.

This research sorts out the current situation and problems via questionnaires and puts forward corresponding optimization paths. Nevertheless, the research samples are mainly composed of students, with a small proportion of teachers and administrators. Further research will expand the scope of investigation, increase samples of teachers and managers, and conduct in-depth interviews and case studies to make the optimization paths more targeted and operable.

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