

Exploration and Practical Research on Civic Teaching in the Course "History of Preschool Education"

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Abstract: Early childhood education holds a pivotal position within educational framework, focusing on cultivating holistic development in young children to establish a foundation for lifelong learning. Similarly, ideological and political education (ideological education) plays an irreplaceable role in higher education, aiming to enhance students' ideological and moral qualities as well as their political awareness. The course "History of Early Childhood Education," as a significant component of early childhood education studies, encompasses a rich content that includes the developmental history, key theories, and practical experiences in early childhood education, thereby providing students with a profound knowledge base. Integrating ideological and political education into the "History of Early Childhood Education" curriculum not only enhances students' professional competence but also strengthens their sense of social responsibility and patriotism. This study aims to explore the necessity and feasibility of integrating ideological and political education into the "History of Early Childhood Education" curriculum, demonstrating the design and practical effects of ideological education through the analysis of relevant literature, theoretical foundations, and actual teaching cases, thereby providing insights and references for the development of ideological and political education in higher education curricula.

1. Introduction

Early childhood education, as the genesis of educational systems, profoundly shapes personal growth and development. The course "History of Early Childhood Education" delves into the developmental journey of early childhood education, aiding students in comprehending its theoretical evolution and practical experiences. However, mere imparting of knowledge falls short in meeting contemporary demands for early childhood education professionals. Modern society requires educators not only to possess expertise but also noble ethical qualities and a strong sense of social responsibility. Moral and political education serves as a pivotal tool in enhancing students' moral and ideological qualities, posing challenges in its effective integration into the "History of Early Childhood Education" curriculum, which is currently a focal point and difficulty in educational research. Political education aims to cultivate students' political literacy and social responsibility through the amalgamation of theoretical knowledge and practical cases, preparing them to be educators of competence and integrity. Integrating political education into the "History of Early

Childhood Education" not only deepens students' understanding of their professional knowledge but also elevates their ideological and moral standards. Examining relevant studies from both domestic and international contexts reveals that integrating political education into professional courses has proven beneficial in various fields. Nevertheless, within the domain of early childhood education, particularly in the course "History of Early Childhood Education," research remains insufficient. This study aims to explore specific methodologies and practical effects of integrating political education into the "History of Early Childhood Education" curriculum, drawing upon foundational theories of political and early childhood education, to provide new insights and practical examples for curriculum and ideological education in higher education.

2. Theoretical Foundations

2.1. Theory of Civic Education

The theory of ideological and political education refers to a systematic theoretical framework for ideological and political education, aimed at cultivating students' moral integrity and political awareness through the integration of theory and practice. Ideological and political education goes beyond mere imparting of knowledge; it encompasses shaping values and fostering social responsibility. Its core objective is to equip students with a correct worldview, outlook on life, and values through systematic theoretical education, thereby nurturing socially beneficial individuals of both ability and integrity. The foundation of ideological and political education theory includes Marxist theory, the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and the moral essence of traditional Chinese culture. Marxist theory provides a scientific worldview and methodology, emphasizing addressing practical issues based on social reality. The theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics combines theory with Chinese realities, advocating core socialist values such as patriotism, collectivism, and socialist beliefs. Traditional Chinese culture, including Confucianism and Daoism, offers rich moral education resources, emphasizing benevolence, justice, and personal cultivation. In practical terms, ideological and political education theory stresses the comprehensiveness and systematic nature of education, requiring education to be conducted from multiple perspectives and at various levels. Curriculum design, teaching methods, and educational environments should all align with the goals of ideological and political education. Through forms such as classroom teaching, social practice, and cultural activities, ideological and political education is integrated throughout the entire educational process. Specifically in teaching, methods like case analysis, interactive discussions, and role-playing are employed to help students understand and internalize the core content of ideological and political education through active participation. Ideological and political education theory also emphasizes the critical role of teachers in the educational process^[1]. Teachers are not only transmitters of knowledge but also guides of students' ideological and moral development. Teachers should possess good ideological and political qualities and moral cultivation, serving as role models for students to learn from and emulate. Simultaneously, teachers should continually enhance their professional competence and educational skills, mastering scientific teaching methods and effectively integrating ideological and political education into the teaching of various subjects. Integrating ideological and political education into the "History of Early Childhood Education" course is a practical exploration of ideological and political education theory. In the field of early childhood education, future educators need solid professional knowledge as well as a high sense of social responsibility and moral integrity. Therefore, incorporating ideological and political education into the "History of Early Childhood Education" course, through historical events, stories of educators, and the development of education, guides students to contemplate the social significance and moral responsibility of education, which is crucial. This approach not only deepens students' understanding of early childhood education but also enhances their ideological and political

qualities, enabling them to better fulfill their educational responsibilities and promote correct values in future educational practices. In summary, the theory of ideological and political education is not only an important branch of pedagogy but also a significant means of cultivating individuals of both ability and integrity. Its goal is to help students establish correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values through systematic theoretical education and practical activities. As a critical course in the field of early childhood education, the "History of Early Childhood Education" course, through the integration of ideological and political education, comprehensively enhances students' ideological and political qualities, laying a solid foundation for cultivating outstanding educators in the new era. In future educational reforms and curriculum development, the theory of ideological and political education will continue to play an important role in guiding and promoting the development of education.

2.2. Theory of preschool education

The theory of early childhood education entails a systematic exposition of the fundamental principles, methods, and practices concerning the education of young children. It encompasses the processes of education, nurturing, and development from birth to pre-school age, aiming to foster the comprehensive and harmonious development of children's physical and mental faculties. Early childhood education theory not only constitutes a crucial component of educational science but also intersects with social sciences, psychology, and pedagogy, profoundly influencing children's future development. Central to early childhood education theory is the notion that children's development is an integrated process that must respect their natural inclinations and developmental patterns. According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, children exhibit distinct cognitive characteristics and needs at different stages of development. Hence, early childhood education should tailor educational content and methods according to children's age and individual differences. This theory emphasizes placing children at the center of education, focusing on their interests and needs, and providing enriching learning environments and diverse activities to promote their holistic development in cognition, emotions, sociality, and physicality. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory has also significantly influenced early childhood education theory. He posited that children's development occurs through interaction with the environment, facilitated by social exchanges with adults and peers. This theory underscores the critical role of socio-cultural contexts in children's development, advocating for educational practices that enhance children's cognitive and social development by creating conducive socio-cultural environments. Teachers play pivotal roles as guides and supporters in this process, fostering children's advancement through interaction and collaboration to achieve higher levels of development. Moreover, early childhood education theory underscores the crucial role of play in children's development. Play serves as a fundamental mode of activity through which children explore the world, express themselves, and engage in social interactions. Through play, children freely explore and experiment, acquiring knowledge, skills, creativity, and imagination. Educators are encouraged to provide ample play materials and opportunities, promoting children's autonomous learning and exploration within playful contexts. In the rapidly evolving societal landscape, early childhood education theory faces new challenges and opportunities^[2]. The rapid advancement of information technology has introduced new resources and tools into early childhood education, prompting exploration of effective integration strategies to enhance children's digital and information literacy. Furthermore, heightened societal demands for early childhood education quality necessitate the development of scientific evaluation systems to improve its efficacy. The practical application of early childhood education theory holds significant implications for cultivating highly qualified early childhood educators. Through systematic theoretical study, educators gain profound insights into the patterns and characteristics of child development, mastering scientific educational

methods and strategies to better meet children's needs and promote their comprehensive development. In actual teaching practices, educators are encouraged to integrate early childhood education theory with specific contexts, continually enhancing educational quality through reflection and methodological improvements.

3. Curriculum Civics Teaching Design

3.1. Teaching Objectives

The pedagogical objectives of the course "History of Early Childhood Education" are multi-layered and multidimensional. They aim not only to impart specialized knowledge but also to elevate students' ideological and political qualities and sense of social responsibility through ideological and political education. In setting these educational goals, consideration should comprehensively integrate knowledge dissemination, skills development, and values guidance to achieve the holistic educational objectives. Regarding knowledge dissemination, the course seeks to enable students to systematically grasp the historical context, significant events and figures, theoretical schools, and their evolutionary processes in the development of early childhood education. This entails not only a longitudinal review of domestic and international early childhood education history but also emphasizes cross-cultural comparisons to help students understand the characteristics and commonalities of early childhood education under different cultural backgrounds. Such knowledge not only deepens students' understanding of early childhood education but also provides a solid theoretical foundation for their future educational endeavors. In terms of skills development, the course objectives should focus on cultivating students' critical thinking, problem analysis, and problem-solving abilities. Through the analysis of historical events and educational theories, students can learn how to approach and address contemporary issues from a historical perspective. For instance, by exploring reforms in early childhood education during a particular historical period, students can acquire skills in evaluating and improving current educational policies and practices. Simultaneously, through project research and group discussions, the course fosters students' collaborative and expressive abilities, laying a solid groundwork for their future career development. Regarding values guidance, the integration of ideological and political education is particularly crucial. The "History of Early Childhood Education" course not only aims to impart knowledge but also aims to enhance students' sense of social responsibility and patriotism through historical education. Educational objectives should include guiding students to establish correct views on history, ethnicity, and culture, helping them recognize that early childhood education is not just a professional field but also a critical endeavor for the future development of the nation. For example, through studying the deeds of educators such as Tao Xingzhi and Chen Heqin, students can deeply understand the social responsibilities and personal missions of education, thereby stimulating their enthusiasm for engaging in educational careers. In terms of specific implementation, educational objectives should be practical and assessable. In curriculum design, objectives can be detailed into specific knowledge points, skill points, and value points. For instance, specifying specific historical events and theories that students should master under knowledge points, defining critical thinking and analytical skills that students should demonstrate in discussions and essay writing under skill points, and evaluating students' ideological and political qualities and sense of social responsibility through reflective journals and case studies under value points. The setting of educational objectives should closely align with actual teaching activities. For instance, when teaching a specific historical event, related discussion topics can be designed to guide students in reflecting on its implications for modern education; when explaining a certain educational theory, arranging group debates can cultivate students' critical thinking and expressive abilities; and when introducing the life stories of educators, organizing students to write reflections can enhance their sense of social responsibility and patriotism.

3.2. Teaching content

The curriculum design of the course "History of Early Childhood Education" should encompass both depth and breadth, covering significant theories, events, and figures in the development of early childhood education. It should integrate ideological and political education, enabling students to cultivate proper values and a sense of social responsibility while mastering professional knowledge. The teaching content should not only present historical facts but also guide students through in-depth analysis and discussions, prompting them to ponder the internal logic and social context of educational development. The theoretical aspect should include major theoretical schools of early childhood education and their representatives, such as Piaget's theory of cognitive development, Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, and Montessori's educational methods. These theories not only form the foundational knowledge of early childhood education but also provide crucial insights into understanding modern educational practices. By elaborating on these theories and analyzing case studies, students can gain a profound understanding of the origins, development, and applications of different educational philosophies, thereby offering theoretical guidance for their future educational practices. Historical events and developmental processes constitute a vital part of the teaching content. Detailed descriptions of the developmental processes of early childhood education in different historical stages, especially key educational reforms and policy changes, are essential. For instance, ancient Chinese private tutoring education, Enlightenment-era Western early childhood educational thoughts, and contemporary developments in early childhood education should be comprehensively introduced. These contents not only help students comprehend the evolution of early childhood education but also illustrate the role of educational reforms in advancing society. Through comparative analysis of the historical processes of early childhood education in the East and West, students can recognize the cultural influences on educational development, enhancing their cultural confidence and global perspectives. Biographies of influential figures and educational practices are also integral components of the teaching content^[3]. By introducing the life stories and educational philosophies of educators such as Tao Xingzhi, Chen Heqin, and Friedrich Fröbel, students can learn about their dedication and innovative thinking in education. The practical experiences and educational ideas of these figures are not only treasures of early childhood education but also significant sources of inspiration for students' enthusiasm for education. Incorporating ideological and political education is a distinctive feature of the curriculum design of "History of Early Childhood Education." By exploring historical events and biographical stories, students are encouraged to contemplate the social responsibilities and moral obligations of education. For instance, when discussing Tao Xingzhi's educational practices, one can integrate his belief in "life as education" to explore how contemporary education should serve society and promote equity. This approach enables students to acquire not only professional knowledge but also to cultivate their sense of social responsibility and historical mission. The teaching content should also emphasize practicality and interactivity. In addition to traditional classroom lectures, it should include diverse practical activities and discussion sessions. For example, organizing visits to kindergartens or educational museums to understand the current status and historical background of early childhood education; arranging group discussions and debates to stimulate students' critical thinking and expressive abilities; designing research topics and project practices to apply their knowledge in practical scenarios, thereby enhancing their practical and innovative capabilities. Assessment and feedback on teaching content are crucial aspects of curriculum design. Through periodic quizzes, essay writing, and practical reports, students' mastery of knowledge and the effectiveness of ideological and political education should be comprehensively evaluated. Teachers should provide timely feedback and adjust teaching content as necessary to ensure continuous improvement and enhancement of students' learning experiences.

3.3. Teaching Methods

In the design of ideological and political education in the course "History of Early Childhood Education," innovation and application of teaching methods are crucial. To achieve optimal teaching outcomes, instructional methods should integrate diverse strategies, combining theoretical exposition, interactive discourse, and practical activities, thereby comprehensively enhancing students' overall capabilities. Lecture remains foundational, where educators vividly expound and employ multimedia aids to systematically present the historical development and theoretical underpinnings of early childhood education. Throughout this process, educators not only impart knowledge but also stimulate student reflection. By analyzing historical events, educators can pose guiding questions, prompting students to consider the causes and impacts of educational issues from multiple perspectives. Interactive discussion serves as a vital means to stimulate proactive learning among students. Through group discussions, classroom debates, and case analyses, students engage in idea exchange, deepening their understanding of course content. For instance, when discussing historical educational reforms, students may analyze backgrounds, processes, impacts, and contemporary educational contexts to articulate their perspectives. Such interactive formats not only enhance students' critical thinking and communication skills but also invigorate classroom dynamics and participation. Scenario simulation represents an effective method to apply theory to practice. Educators can design historical scenarios or educational cases, enabling students to assume various roles and experience decision-making processes and educational practices of historical figures. For example, by simulating scenarios of Tao Xingzhi's rural education initiatives, students gain a firsthand understanding of educators' ideals and challenges, thus fostering a deeper appreciation of the societal responsibilities and significance of education. Scenario simulation not only heightens classroom engagement but also cultivates students' empathy and practical abilities. Project-based learning underscores students' learning and application of knowledge in practical settings. Educators may arrange thematic studies or group projects where students conduct in-depth explorations of specific historical periods or educational philosophies through literature review, field research, and data analysis^[4]. For instance, students could investigate the developmental history of local early childhood education, analyzing its evolution and existing issues to propose improvement strategies. Project-based learning enhances students' research skills, teamwork, and provides them with a concrete and profound understanding of early childhood education. The integration of ideological and political education should permeate every facet of teaching methods. Educators can guide students to contemplate the societal values and personal responsibilities of education through historical stories, biographies of notable figures, and real-life cases. For example, when discussing Chen Heqin's educational philosophy, educators can integrate her child-centered ideology, facilitating discussions on realizing children's rights protection in modern education. Through these methods, students not only acquire professional knowledge but also develop correct values and a sense of social responsibility. Regarding instructional assessment, educators should employ diverse evaluation methods, including periodic tests, classroom performances, project reports, and reflective journals. These approaches enable a comprehensive assessment of students' knowledge mastery, skill development levels, and the effectiveness of ideological and political education, allowing timely adjustments to teaching methods and content to ensure the achievement of educational goals.

3.4. Teaching Evaluation

The ideological and political education assessment of the "History of Early Childhood Education" course should embrace a multifaceted approach, utilizing a variety of evaluation methods to comprehensively gauge students' grasp of knowledge, cognitive abilities, and value orientations, thus ensuring the achievement of educational objectives. Effective teaching assessment not only measures

students' learning outcomes but also serves as a reflection and optimization of the teaching process. In terms of knowledge evaluation, traditional exams and tests remain essential. These methods provide an objective measure of students' understanding of historical events, educational theories, and key figures. However, relying solely on examinations is insufficient; it is imperative to incorporate classroom discussions, essay writing, and project reports to evaluate students' overall competencies and depth of thought. For instance, through open-ended questions and case analyses, one can assess whether students can apply theoretical knowledge to real-world problem-solving and derive independent insights through historical comparisons. Classroom performance and participation are another crucial dimension of assessment. Educators should pay attention to students' engagement in class discussions, the quality of their contributions, and their ability to collaborate in teams. Observing students' interactions can gauge their critical thinking, expressive capabilities, and cooperative spirit. This type of evaluation not only stimulates students' enthusiasm for learning but also enhances their comprehensive skills. For example, when discussing the successes and failures of educational reforms, the diversity and depth of students' perspectives and arguments reflect their understanding and contemplation of the course content. The evaluation of practical activities is also indispensable. By engaging in field research, social practices, and project studies, students apply their knowledge in real contexts to address practical issues. This not only enhances their practical skills but also deepens their understanding of the history and current state of early childhood education. The assessment of practical activities should emphasize both process and outcome, evaluating students' hands-on abilities, innovative thinking, and teamwork skills through their performance and final results in these activities. For example, in researching the development history of local kindergartens, students' abilities in data collection, analysis, and report writing should be included in the evaluation. Special attention should be given to assessing the formation of students' values and sense of social responsibility in ideological and political education. Through reflective journals, personal insights, and ideological reports, students can articulate their learning experiences and reflections. Educators can use these materials to understand the development of students' values and moral cognition, providing timely guidance and feedback. For example, after studying Tao Xingzhi's educational practices, students' reflections and insights on modern education not only deepen their understanding of the course content but also foster their sense of social responsibility. A diverse range of assessment methods not only provides a comprehensive reflection of students' learning achievements but also offers educators feedback and directions for teaching improvement. Through periodic evaluations and summaries, educators can promptly adjust teaching content and methods, optimize teaching design, and enhance educational effectiveness. In summary, teaching assessment should emphasize multidimensional and multi-layered approaches, utilizing scientifically sound evaluation methods to ensure students' comprehensive development in knowledge, skills, and values, laying a solid foundation for their future educational careers^[5].

4. Conclusions

In the context of the new era, integrating ideological and political education into the curriculum of "History of Early Childhood Education" is a crucial approach to enhancing the ideological and political qualities of professionals in early childhood education. Through this study, the significance and feasibility of ideological and political education in early childhood education have been elucidated. Specific teaching designs and assessment methods have been proposed. In the process of teaching, through goal setting, content selection, method application, and effectiveness evaluation, comprehensive integration of ideological and political education with professional education is promoted, achieving the dual objectives of knowledge impartation and value guidance. Research indicates that integrating ideological and political education not only enriches the content of the

"History of Early Childhood Education" course but also enhances students' ideological awareness and sense of social responsibility. Further analysis of specific cases provides additional evidence in support of this conclusion. Future curriculum development should further refine the content of ideological and political education and explore more effective teaching methods to ensure maximal implementation effectiveness within the "History of Early Childhood Education" course. The exploration and practice of ideological and political education in curriculum teaching are integral to educational reform. Through continuous theoretical research and practical summarization, valuable experience can be provided for ideological and political education in other courses, laying a solid foundation for cultivating educators who are both morally upright and talented. The research findings not only offer new perspectives for the teaching of the "History of Early Childhood Education" course but also serve as a reference for the ideological and political construction of higher education courses, possessing significant theoretical significance and practical value.

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