



A Qualitative Study on the Model of Competence for University Major Course Teachers in Curriculum-Based Ideological and Political Education Under the Background of “Internet+”

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Abstract. The competency of major course teachers in ideological and political education largely determines the quality of talent training in universities. This article selects some major course teachers as interview subjects, applies the grounded theory for qualitative research, and constructs an iceberg model of competency for university major course teachers in curriculum-based ideological and political education, including explicit competency characteristics such as teaching innovation ability, teaching organization ability, professional learning ability, as well as implicit competency characteristics such as value identity, personality charm, and professional ethics.

Keywords: Curriculum-based ideological and political education · Competency model · Qualitative research · Grounded theory

1 Introduction

In the 2016 National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Higher Education, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that “We should use new media and information technology to promote the high integration of the traditional advantages of ideological and political work with information technology.” [1]. In June 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the “Guidelines for the Construction of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Curriculum,” which clearly stated that “innovative classroom teaching models should be developed, modern information technology should be applied in curriculum-based ideological and political education so that students’ learning interests should be stimulated.” [2].

The concept of “competence” was first proposed by American psychologist McClelland in 1973, who believed that personal conditions and behavioral characteristics that truly affect work performance, including knowledge, skills, abilities, traits, or motives, should be explored [3]. On this basis, many scholars began to propose their own understanding of competence, among which the most classic are the Onion Model and the Iceberg Model. The Onion Model describes competence from the outside to the inside,

from the surface to the inside, including skills, knowledge, attitude, social roles, self-image and values, personality, and motivation [4]. The Iceberg Model divides personal competence into “above the waterline” and “below the waterline,” layer by layer from top to bottom. “Above the waterline” refers to observable and evaluable knowledge and skills, while “below the waterline” refers to underlying traits that are not easy to observe and evaluate, such as motivation, values, and attitude [5].

So far, there is no unified opinion on what competence qualities university teachers who undertake the task of “curriculum-based ideological and political education” should possess in China. In recent years, a few scholars have conducted research in this area. Zhao et al. (2020) formed a set of competence model indicator system through empirical analysis for university teachers in the context of “curriculum-based ideological and political education” [6]. Cai (2021) [7] and Zhong & Ren (2021) [8] constructed a competence structure model for vocational college major course teachers in curriculum-based ideological and political education.

Research on “Internet+ curriculum-based ideological and political education” is relatively limited in China. Liu (2017) [9], Zhao et al. (2018) [10], Yang et al. (2020) [11] believes that the integration of curriculum-based ideological and political education with the Internet has led to profound changes in teaching content and methods, serves as a new form of education to fulfill the fundamental task of cultivating moral character and nurturing talents.

In summary, there is very limited research on the competence of university major course teachers in curriculum ideological and political education, and even less research on this topic in the context of the “Internet+” era. This study adopts a qualitative research method based on grounded theory to construct a competence model of university major course teachers in curriculum-based ideological and political education under the “Internet+” background. This model can to some extent expand the theory of competence and provide practical guidance.

2 Construction of the Model of Competence for University Major Course Teachers in Curriculum-Based Ideological and Political Education Under the Background of “Internet+”

2.1 Research Methodology and Data Sources

This study used a qualitative research method based on grounded theory, collected data through in-depth interviews with major teachers, and conducted three-level coding and model construction based on this data.

Data was collected through in-depth interviews with 16 demonstration course leaders of curriculum-based ideological and political education and 10 regular major course teachers from a normal university in Jiangxi Province. A total of 870 min of audio materials were collected, which were transcribed into about 180,000 words. Semi-structured interviews were conducted around the following topics: 1) What is your understanding of curriculum-based ideological and political education? 2) What major courses do you teach? Have you incorporated Internet elements into curriculum-based ideological and political education? 3) How do you use Internet technology as a support for curriculum-based ideological and political education in your class? What is the effect? 4) Please

describe something you are most proud of in the process of curriculum-based ideological and political education. 5) Please describe the most challenging thing you have encountered in the process of curriculum-based ideological and political education. The author randomly selected 20 original materials for grounded analysis, and the remaining 6 were used to test theoretical saturation.

2.2 Three-Level Coding

Open Coding. Open coding is described as the process of breaking down data into discrete parts, examining it closely, and labeling it with a descriptive code [12]. The author selected initial concepts that appeared three or more times and obtained the open coding results. The results included 60 initial concepts and 18 initial categories, as shown in Table 1.

Axial Coding. Axial coding involves breaking down data into smaller parts and looking for relationships between them, which also involves identifying categories and subcategories, as well as the properties and dimensions of each [12]. After exploring the intrinsic connections among the 18 initial categories obtained through open coding, 6 main categories were identified.

Selective Coding. Selective coding is discussed as the final stage of coding in grounded theory, it involves selecting one core category from among the previously identified categories and focusing on it to build the theoretical model [12]. Through comparative analysis, the core categories and their relationships in this study were identified, as shown in Table 2.

2.3 Theory Saturation Validation

The theoretical saturation was validated by testing the six reserved samples, and no new categories were found except for the six core categories mentioned above, and no new concepts were found within the categories. Therefore, it is considered that the “competence model of university major course teachers in ideological and political education” has reached theoretical saturation.

2.4 Model Construction

Based on the above research and the “Iceberg Model”, the “iceberg model of competence university major teachers in curriculum-based ideological and political education of under the background of ‘Internet+’” has been constructed. Please refer to Fig. 1 for details.

3 Research Conclusion and Research Application

3.1 Research Conclusion

This study takes 26 major course teachers from a normal university as the research subjects, conducts in-depth interviews using the behavior event interview method, and uses grounded theory to analyze the interview texts. It constructs an iceberg model of the competence of major course teachers in curriculum-based ideological and political education

Table 1. Open coding results of the characteristic competence of university major Course teachers in ideological and political education under the background of “Internet+”

No.	Initial category	Initial concept (Frequency)
1	Curriculum planning	Considering the main line of curriculum-based ideological and political education on the characteristics of different programs (5); Constructing a curriculum-based ideological and political education system (6); Integrating the advantages of the curriculum into the construction of ideological and political education (4); Clarifying the objectives of ideological and political education in the curriculum (9).
2	Teaching methods integrated with Internet technologies	Blended learning (6); Case-based teaching using multimedia resources (12); Utilization of high-quality online course resources (7); Building an online learning space (5); Creating MOOCs with ideological and political education elements (7).
3	Student-centered education philosophy	Problem-oriented (5); Using cases or methods that interest students (6); Using phenomena, cases, or problems to stimulate student thinking(6); Encouraging students to discuss and express themselves (5); Guide students to collect materials independently (4).
4	Connecting with reality	Incorporate current events into case studies or hands-on teaching (8); Bridge the gap between course content and students (6); Make use of red resources within the province, city, and campus (4).
5	Designing the teaching process	Online pre-class introduction through learning platforms (4); Interactive teaching and feedback during the class session (5).
6	Evaluation of teaching effectiveness	Shifts in student attitudes and perspectives (5); Positive student feedback in the class (7); Engage students on a personal level (8); Thought processes and mindset reflected in student homework (6); Encourage students to think, discuss, share, and create on their own (8).

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

No.	Initial category	Initial concept (Frequency)
7	Ability to teach effectively in practical settings	A one-way-input approach to integrating ideological and political education has limited effectiveness (7); Engage in practical teaching activities (9); Ideological and political education through experiential learning (6).
8	Teaching professional knowledge	Integrating ideological and political education with professional knowledge in the curriculum (10); Ideological and political education should not be artificially inserted into unrelated subjects or contexts (8).
9	Continuing education for life	Expand one's mindset through training, idea exchange, and participation in discussions and seminars (5); Enhance self-directed learning and increase the efficiency of utilizing internet technology (8)
10	Integration of resources	Incorporating ideological and political elements into professional knowledge (8); Combining knowledge across different disciplines (5); Use online resources to broaden and enrich teaching materials (6); Contrasting the East and West, the ancient and modern times (4).
11	Comprehending the concept of curriculum-based ideological and political education	There were initial misunderstandings in comprehending the concept of infusing ideology and politics into curriculum (5); Incorporating ideology and politics into curriculum is a process that teachers have always been engaged in while educating their students (9); The integration of ideology and politics into curriculum, along with the use of the internet, can improve the practical effectiveness of curriculum-based education in fostering students' personal development (5); The essence of infusing ideology and politics into curriculum lies in the cultivation of students' moral character, in order to mold them into responsible individuals who contribute positively to society (6).

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

No.	Initial category	Initial concept (Frequency)
12	Ideological identification	Recognize the value of integrating ideological and political education into courses (8); Understand and agree with the ideological and political concepts that are integrated (9).
13	Dedication to work and loyalty to the job	A large amount of time and effort is devoted to lesson preparation (7); Exploration and collection of teaching materials that incorporate ideological and political elements (8); Carry out relevant teaching reforms and research (5).
14	Educating by words and deeds	A rigorous attitude towards academic research (7); selfless dedication and professional spirit(6); Set an example for students through one's own behavior(8).
15	Personality traits	Genuine personality (5); Have a strong interest in the research one is engaged in(6); The power of teaching language(8); Respect students (7).
16	Persistence	Continuously update course resources (9); Consistently implement ideological and political education in courses (6).
17	Overcoming Difficulties	Balance curriculum development with research and other administrative work (6); Confusion on how to establish an evaluation system for ideological and political education in the curriculum (7); There are difficulties in refining the ideological and political concepts in the curriculum and constructing a system (5).
18	Collaborative construction	Collaborative lesson planning (4); Exchange teaching experience (5); Collaboratively build and share teaching resources (4).

under the background of “Internet+,” and expands the research scope of teachers’ competence theory. This study found that the competence model of major teachers under the background of “Internet+” mainly includes teaching innovation ability, teaching organization ability, professional learning ability, value identification, personality charm, and professional accomplishment. Among them, teaching innovation ability, teaching organization ability, and professional learning ability are the explicit competence characteristics, while value identification, personality charm, and professional accomplishment are the implicit competence characteristics.

Table 2. The characteristic competence of university major course teachers in ideological and political education under the background of “Internet+”

No.	Core category	Category	Description
1	Teaching innovation ability (the key)	Curriculum planning	Determining the main line, clarifying the objectives, and building system of the ideological and political education in the curriculum, based on the types of institutions, characteristics of the majors, and features of the programs.
		Teaching methods integrated with Internet technologies	By adopting a blended approach combining online and offline methods, including utilize multimedia resources, high-quality online course materials, the creation of online learning spaces, and the development of MOOCs and other teaching methods that incorporate internet technologies.
		Student-centered education philosophy	Guided by problem-oriented approaches, using cases and methods that interest students to stimulate active thinking, guiding students to collect materials independently, encouraging students to express themselves.
		Connect with reality	Incorporating current events and hot topics into case studies and practical teaching during the teaching process, narrowing the distance between the course content and students, and utilizing red resources both on and off campus.

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

No.	Core category	Category	Description
2	Teaching organizational ability (the foundation)	Designing the teaching process	Designing teaching processes that include pre-class introductions, interactive teaching during class, and post-class knowledge extension through online learning platforms.
		Evaluation of teaching effectiveness	Evaluating teaching effectiveness from the perspectives of changes in students' views and attitudes, class feedback, and the ideological states reflected in assignments.
		Ability to teach effectively in practical settings	Carrying out course practices or experiential ideological and political activities that require students' participation.
		Teaching professional knowledge	Focusing on imparting professional knowledge in professional courses and carry out ideological and political education based on professional knowledge.
3	Professional learning ability (the condition)	Continuing education for life	Constantly improving one's professional and internet technology skills through self-learning, participating in training, seminars, and exchanges.

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

No.	Core category	Category	Description
		Integration of resources	Incorporating ideological and political elements into professional knowledge through the use of internet resources, such as interdisciplinary knowledge integration, extension and expansion of teaching materials, and comparisons between Eastern and Western cultures and past and present.
4	Value identification (the core)	Comprehending the concept of curriculum-based ideological and political education	Understanding the connotation of curriculum-based ideological and political education correctly, clarifying its core goal of fostering virtuous character in students, and understanding the significance of “Internet plus ideological and political education”.
		Ideological identification	Acknowledging the value of curriculum-based ideological and political education, understanding and endorsing the concept of fostering virtuous character through ideological and political education.
5	Personal charm (the premise)	Dedication to work and loyalty to the job	Devoting time and efforts to course construction, resource development, and related teaching reforms and research.
		Educating by words and deeds	One’s attitude towards learning, professionalism, and setting an example for students through one’s own behavior.

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

No.	Core category	Category	Description
		Personality traits	Noble character, academic enthusiasm, the power of language, and a respectful attitude towards students.
6	Professional Ethics (the guarantee)	Persistence	Continuously updating teaching materials and consistently implementing the ideological and political education.
		Overcoming Difficulties	Balancing teaching with research and other administrative work, and continuously resolving difficulties encountered in curriculum-based ideological and political education.
		Collaborative construction	Collaboratively building teaching models, co-creating and sharing teaching resources, exchanging and sharing teaching experiences, and jointly improving the course construction implementation plan.

In addition, the research results also indicate that compared with explicit competency, implicit competency plays a more important role in implementing curriculum-based ideological and political education for major teachers.

3.2 Research Application

The model of competency for university major course teachers in implementing ideological and political education under the background of “Internet+” can be applied to the selection of demonstration courses for ideological and political education, the training for improving the major course teachers’ skills of course construction, and the evaluation of the achievements.

Selection of Demonstration Courses on Ideological and Political Education in Major Courses. The academic affairs department can develop evaluation criteria for demonstration courses on ideological and political education in major courses based on this model, and examine whether major course teachers demonstrate both strong explicit competency characteristics as well as implicit competency characteristics in the application process.

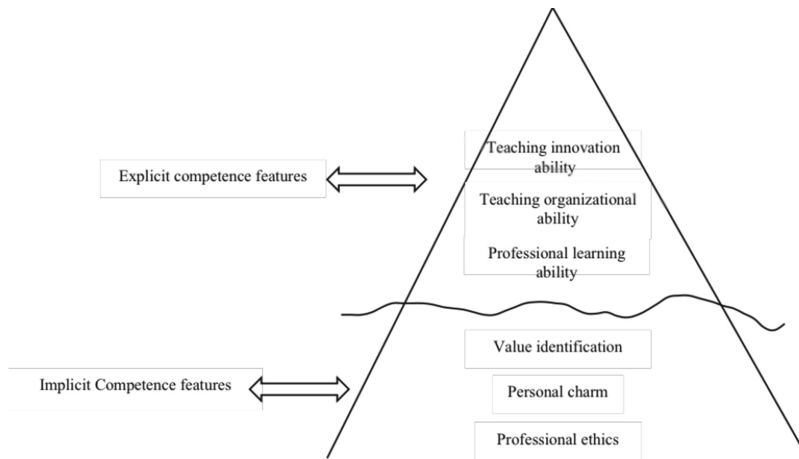


Fig. 1. Iceberg model of competence for university major course teachers in curriculum-based ideological and political education under the background of ‘Internet+’.

Improving the Training of Major Course Teachers in Course Construction. The academic affairs department can use this model to optimize the training system for major course teachers’ course construction of ideological and political education, improve the training content and methods, and enhance the training effect, especially emphasizing the training of the implicit competency characteristics.

Assessment and Management of Major Course Teachers. Each university should consider incorporating the construction of major course teachers’ ideological and political education into the annual assessment of teachers, by formulating a quantitative evaluation index system and highlighting the assessment of implicit competence.

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