

The Logic and Suggestions of Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities Driving the Improvement of College Students' Employability

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ABSTRACT

Improving college students' employability is the key to solving the structural contradictions in employment. As a dynamic comprehensive competence system, employability is naturally compatible with the educational function of ideological and political education in colleges and universities. This paper analyzes the internal logic of ideological and political education driving the improvement of college students' employability from four dimensions: value guidance, quality cultivation, thinking shaping and personality shaping, points out the existing problems in the current practice, and then puts forward improvement suggestions from five aspects: integration orientation, content innovation, method optimization, collaborative mechanism and evaluation system. It is expected to provide theoretical and practical references for promoting the reform of ideological and political education, enhancing college students' employability and facilitating high-quality employment.

Keywords: *Ideological and political education, Employability, Internal logic, Improvement suggestions.*

1. INTRODUCTION

At present, It is widely acknowledged that China's college graduate population remains at a historically high level. Competition in the employment market has intensified significantly. The structural employment contradiction has become a key bottleneck restricting talent training quality in higher education institutions and college students' career development. According to forecasts from the Ministry of Education and relevant employment authorities, the number of national college graduates in 2026 is projected to reach 12.7 million[1]. This figure represents a continuous year-on-year increase and hits a new record high. This large employment cohort injects fresh vitality into social development. However, it also imposes higher requirements on the employment market's carrying capacity and colleges' talent training models.

It is increasingly evident that a dual contradiction plagues the current employment

market: "college students' employment difficulties" and "enterprises' recruitment difficulties". Some graduates possess basic professional knowledge and technical skills. Yet they lack comprehensive abilities to adapt to workplace changes and achieve long-term development. This makes it difficult for them to meet enterprises' demand for high-quality talents. After employment, they often face low job adaptability and weak career progression. The core cause of this phenomenon lies in deficiencies in college students' employability cultivation. Against this backdrop, strengthening employability training has become a critical starting point to resolve structural employment contradictions, improve employment quality, and promote students' lifelong career development.

It is essential to clarify the core connotation of employability. As a dynamic capability running through an individual's entire career cycle, employability differs fundamentally from traditional employment ability that focuses on "immediate job adaptation". It is a comprehensive

competence system that enables individuals to obtain, retain, and advance in jobs, as well as adapt to dynamic workplace changes. It specifically covers five core dimensions: basic skills, professional competence, personal qualities, general skills, and meta-skills[2].

Basic skills are prerequisite conditions for entering the workplace. Professional competence serves as the core support for career development. Personal qualities provide the fundamental guarantee for workplace survival. General skills are key to adapting to job changes. Meta-skills, including career planning, innovative thinking, and lifelong learning, act as the core driving force for continuous employability improvement. These five dimensions are interrelated and organically integrated. They jointly form the core capital for college students to cope with workplace uncertainty, resist employment risks, and achieve sustainable development[3].

As the core carrier of morality cultivation and talent fostering, ideological and political education in higher education fulfills unique educational functions. It shapes core values, nurtures professional literacy, and strengthens social responsibility. These educational outcomes are naturally aligned with the core components of employability. However, existing academic research on the intrinsic connection between ideological and political education and employability training remains underdeveloped[4].

It is therefore of great theoretical and practical significance to conduct in-depth analysis of the challenges in their integration, clarify the internal logic of their synergy, and propose systematic improvement strategies. Such research will advance the reform and innovation of ideological and political education in higher education and enhance college students' employment competitiveness.

2. INTERNAL LOGIC OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION DRIVING THE IMPROVEMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS' EMPLOYABILITY

2.1 Value Guidance: Anchoring the Development Direction of Employability

It is widely recognized that ideological and political education provides fundamental value guidance for college students' employability growth.

Ideological and political education cultivates students' core socialist values and patriotic sentiment. It helps students align personal career development with national strategies and social needs. Students can clarify long-term career goals and avoid short-term utilitarian tendencies. This significantly enhances the stability of their career development[5].

Additionally, ideological and political education strengthens professional ethics education. Ethical qualities such as integrity, dedication and accountability are transformed into students' workplace behavioral norms. It guides students to balance skill improvement and personal development. This achieves the organic unity of "morality fostering" and "talent cultivation".

2.2 Quality Cultivation: Consolidating the Core Foundation of Employability

It is evident that ideological and political education contains rich content that supports college students' employability. Moral education emphasizes honesty and dedication, which are essential workplace requirements. Legal education enhances students' legal awareness and risk prevention capabilities. Humanities and social science knowledge broadens students' horizons and improves their cross-cultural communication skills.

Ideological and political education also delivers targeted empowerment for different majors. For science and engineering students, it focuses on engineering ethics and craftsmanship to strengthen professional bottom-line awareness. For business students, it highlights business ethics and corporate social responsibility to enhance compliance awareness. For liberal arts students, it cultivates communication and cooperation skills to meet workplace humanistic needs.

2.3 Thinking Shaping: Activating the Development Momentum of Employability

It is important to note that ideological and political education shapes students' thinking patterns and activates their employability development momentum. Heuristic and seminar-based teaching methods are widely adopted in ideological and political education. These methods encourage diverse viewpoint exchanges and logical case analysis. They effectively cultivate students' critical thinking, innovative thinking and systematic thinking.

Social practice and enterprise internships expose students to real-world scenarios. These activities help develop students' flexible adaptability and resource integration capabilities. Against the backdrop of rapid digital transformation, ideological and political education guides students to explore cutting-edge issues such as tech ethics and digital responsibility. This cultivates their value judgment ability in the digital age and injects lasting impetus into employability growth.

2.4 Personality Shaping: Strengthening the Adaptive Attribute of Employability

It is crucial to recognize that ideological and political education plays a vital role in shaping students' personalities and strengthening their career adaptability. Ideological and political education delivers targeted frustration education and psychological counseling. These initiatives help students develop resilient and optimistic personality traits.

Self-cognition guidance is integrated into career planning courses. It helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses and formulate scientific career development plans. Team-based practice activities are organized in ideological and political education. These activities cultivate students' empathy, communication skills, conflict resolution abilities and teamwork spirit.

Finally, strong personality traits help students cope with workplace pressure and changes. They enhance students' career resilience and ensure the sustainable development of their future careers[6].

3. EXISTING PROBLEMS IN IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION DRIVING THE IMPROVEMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS' EMPLOYABILITY

3.1 Vague Definition of Employability and Deviation in Integration Orientation

It is evident that a critical conceptual confusion exists in current college education practice. The essential distinction between employability and employment ability has not been clearly defined. This leads ideological and political education training goals to lean toward "immediate job adaptation". The dynamic development and lifelong learning needs of employability are largely ignored.

It is also observed that some institutions treat ideological and political education and ability training as "additional tasks". Career topics are simply implanted into ideological and political education courses. An integrated design of "value guidance - ability training - practical empowerment" has not been formed. A systematic integration orientation between ideological and political education and employability cultivation is lacking.

3.2 Backward Content System of Ideological and Political Education and Poor Supply-Demand Connection

It is widely noted that the ideological and political education content in some institutions is overly theoretical. It lacks in-depth integration with workplace practice and industry demands.

First, teaching content and cases are outdated. Emerging ideological and political education issues and new employability requirements under the digital economy and new quality productive forces are not covered.

Second, the content lacks professional pertinence. A one-size-fits-all teaching approach is often adopted. It cannot meet the differentiated employability training needs of different majors.

Third, the connection between teaching content and core employability elements is imprecise. Content targeting key abilities such as teamwork, problem-solving and innovative thinking is insufficient[7].

3.3 Relatively Single Teaching Methods and Insufficient Educational Effectiveness

It is clear that many institutions still rely on outdated teaching modes. Traditional classroom lectures remain dominant. Interactive methods such as heuristic teaching and practical learning are underutilized.

First, classrooms lack sufficient interaction. Students mostly receive knowledge passively. This makes it difficult to cultivate their critical thinking and communication skills.

Second, practical activities such as social practice and enterprise internships are often formalistic. They lack precise connection with employability cultivation. A closed-loop education

mechanism of "practice participation - reflection - ability improvement" has not been established.

Third, digital teaching methods receive insufficient attention. Conditions for virtual simulation practice and online collaborative seminars are lacking.

3.4 Insufficient Collaboration Among Educational Subjects and Weak Educational Synergy

It is important to recognize that fragmented collaboration among educational subjects severely weakens educational synergy.

Obvious departmental silos exist within most institutions. Communication between ideological and political education departments and academic departments is poor. Ideological and political education teachers lack understanding of professional employability needs. Professional teachers often ignore the integration of ideological and political education elements.

The depth and breadth of enterprise participation in talent training need improvement. Corporate workplace needs and job competency standards have not been effectively translated into teaching content.

Finally, a four-party collaborative education mechanism of "government-university-enterprise-society" is absent. Key links such as policy support and effect feedback are disconnected. Educational synergy has not been formed[8].

3.5 Unidirectional Educational Evaluation System and Lack of Feedback Mechanism

It is a common issue that the current educational evaluation system is unidirectional. Theoretical examinations remain the primary evaluation method. Institutions emphasize theoretical knowledge mastery but ignore qualitative evaluation of core employability elements, including professional literacy, practical ability and innovative thinking.

Evaluation subjects are relatively single. Employers, students and industry experts are largely excluded from the evaluation process. This makes it difficult to fully reflect the effectiveness of collaborative education[9].

The feedback and application mechanism for evaluation results is imperfect. A virtuous circle of

"evaluation diagnosis - improvement - ability enhancement" has not been formed. The system cannot provide a scientific basis for optimizing ideological and political education and employability training.

4. IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS FOR IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION DRIVING THE IMPROVEMENT OF EMPLOYABILITY

4.1 Clarifying Core Concepts and Defining Integration Orientation

It is essential to distinguish employability from employment ability clearly. Employment ability focuses on "immediate job adaptation". It relies on short-term factors such as technical skills and job-hunting techniques. In contrast, college students' employability emphasizes "lifelong career development". It has a three-dimensional core structure: professional skills, general abilities, and professional literacy. It also features dynamic adaptability and sustainable growth potential. Colleges and universities should standardize the understanding of employability. They can compile specialized teaching guides and conduct faculty training programs. These efforts will help identify clear links between ideological and political education and key employability elements, including professional ethics, innovative thinking, teamwork, and lifelong learning. This lays a foundation for integrated talent cultivation.

It is critical to integrate ideological and political education and employability training into institutional talent development plans. The integration should follow the principle of "value guidance as core, ability enhancement as goal, and practical empowerment as path". A full-chain training system should be established, covering general ideological and political education, major-specific ideological and political education, and practice-based ideological and political education[10].

At the general education level, institutions should strengthen patriotism and professional ethics training. At the major level, integration objectives should be tailored to disciplinary characteristics. At the practice level, employability indicators should be included in internship assessments. This prevents the disconnection between ideological and political education and ability development.

4.2 Innovating the Teaching Content System to Achieve Precise Supply-Demand Connection

It is imperative to integrate career-oriented content into teaching. Teaching teams should develop discipline-specific ideological and political textbooks and case libraries. These resources should address the unique employability needs of different majors. Case designs should explicitly map ideological and political elements to employability components. For example, integrity cases can enhance professional literacy, while teamwork cases can improve general collaborative skills.

It is necessary to update teaching content to reflect contemporary trends. Emerging topics such as digital ethics and new quality productive forces should be incorporated into the curriculum. This helps students adapt to the evolving requirements of modern workplaces.

In addition, institutions should regularly collect real workplace cases from partner enterprises. These cases should highlight common moral dilemmas and collaboration challenges. This approach increases the practical relevance and immersion of teaching content. It also helps students understand actual workplace demands and improve problem-solving abilities.

4.3 Optimizing Teaching Methods to Enhance Educational Effect

First, it is important to adopt diversified and interactive teaching approaches. Traditional lecture-based teaching should be supplemented with case studies, project-based learning, scenario simulations, and group debates.

Teachers should design targeted activities for specific employability elements. Scenario simulations of workplace conflict resolution can develop communication and problem-solving skills. Project-based learning on entrepreneurial planning can enhance teamwork and innovative thinking. Group debates on workplace ethical issues can deepen students' understanding of professional values.

It is essential to leverage educational technologies to create immersive learning experiences. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) can simulate real-world work scenarios, such as business negotiations, customer service, and engineering site management. Students can

practice and improve their employability in these virtual environments.

Second, it is crucial to strengthen the practical teaching closed loop. A progressive mechanism of "practice participation - reflection - ability improvement" should be implemented. Students should be encouraged to document their learning outcomes and identify areas for improvement after each practical activity.

Teachers should provide personalized guidance based on students' performance. This helps students convert scattered practical experiences into stable employability skills. It also enables step-by-step ability development.

4.4 Improving the Collaborative Mechanism to Gather Educational Synergy

Firstly, it is fundamental to strengthen intra-institutional collaboration and break down departmental silos. Regular communication channels should be established between ideological and political education departments and academic departments. An integrated teaching working group should be formed, consisting of ideological and political teachers, subject instructors, and student counselors. This group should conduct regular collective lesson planning, teaching seminars, and case development activities. Ideological and political education should be embedded in the syllabi and assessment criteria of all professional courses. Each course should clearly identify specific ideological and political integration points. This supports the implementation of whole-staff, whole-process, and all-round education.

Secondly, it is critical to deepen school-enterprise collaboration for precise talent supply. Colleges and universities should invite corporate executives and industry experts to participate in curriculum design, teaching evaluation, and textbook compilation. Corporate competency standards, workplace norms, and industry ethical requirements should be translated into teaching content. Joint internship and training bases should be established. Institutions can offer customized "order-based" training programs according to enterprise needs. This allows students to access cutting-edge industry technologies and workplace culture during their studies. A corporate feedback mechanism should be established. Institutions can collect evaluations of graduates' employability through regular meetings, questionnaires, and

follow-up surveys. This feedback should be used to adjust teaching content and methods, ensuring talent cultivation aligns with market demands. Additionally, outstanding enterprise employees and entrepreneurial alumni should be invited to share their career experiences. This enhances the practical appeal of ideological and political education.

Thirdly, it is necessary to build a four-party linkage mechanism to integrate diverse educational resources. Colleges and universities should actively seek government policy support. They should align their programs with employment promotion policies from education and human resources departments. Ideological and political education and employability training should be incorporated into local talent development plans to secure funding and project support [11].

A collaborative education model should be formed, with "government building platforms, universities taking the lead, enterprises participating, and society supporting". The government provides overall coordination and policy guidance. Universities assume the primary responsibility for talent training. Enterprises offer practical platforms and demand feedback. Social organizations, such as industry associations and nonprofits, provide additional resources and practice opportunities. This multi-stakeholder approach provides comprehensive support for employability development.

4.5 Improving the Evaluation System and Strengthen Feedback and Improvement

First, it is essential to develop a multi-dimensional evaluation system. This system should cover knowledge mastery, ability improvement, and character development. It breaks the limitations of single theoretical assessments. The knowledge dimension evaluates students' understanding of ideological and political theories and professional knowledge. Assessment methods include closed-book exams and course papers. The ability dimension focuses on core employability elements. It uses practical operations, project outcomes, and workplace simulations as assessment tools. The character dimension emphasizes professional ethics and social responsibility. It adopts qualitative methods such as behavioral observation, ethical case analysis, and employer evaluations. The weight of each dimension should be adjusted dynamically based on disciplinary characteristics. For example, science and engineering majors

should have a higher weight for the ability dimension. Liberal arts majors should have a higher weight for the character dimension.

Second, it is important to involve multiple evaluation stakeholders. A comprehensive evaluation network should be built, including schools, enterprises, industry experts, and students themselves. At the school level, ideological and political teachers, subject instructors, and counselors conduct joint evaluations. They focus on classroom performance, theoretical mastery, and campus practice. At the enterprise level, internship supervisors and human resources managers evaluate job adaptability, professional literacy, and practical skills. Industry experts assess students' industry adaptability and long-term development potential. Students enhance their self-awareness through self-reflection and peer evaluation. It is imperative to establish an evaluation information sharing platform. This platform integrates evaluation results from all stakeholders to create a comprehensive employability profile for each student.

Third, it is crucial to improve the feedback and application mechanism. Evaluation results should be shared with students and teachers in a timely manner through report cards and growth reports. These reports should clearly identify areas for improvement and provide specific recommendations. A longitudinal employability growth file should be maintained for each student. This file tracks ability development from admission to graduation and records the effectiveness of ideological and political education. Evaluation results should also be linked to teaching improvement initiatives, teaching awards, and faculty promotion criteria. This motivates teachers to continuously optimize integrated teaching methods and creates a virtuous cycle of "evaluation-feedback-improvement".

5. CONCLUSION

This study targets the pressing structural employment contradiction among Chinese college graduates. It constructs a four-dimensional analytical framework of ideological and political education driving employability enhancement, including value guidance, quality cultivation, thinking shaping and personality shaping. It identifies five core practical dilemmas and proposes systematic improvement strategies covering integration orientation, content innovation, method

optimization, collaborative mechanisms and evaluation systems.

Theoretically, it clarifies the essential difference between lifelong employability and short-term employment ability, filling the research gap in their integration mechanism. Practically, it provides actionable references for ideological and political education reform and talent quality improvement. Limited by insufficient empirical validation, future research should test the strategies' effectiveness and develop differentiated implementation paths for different institutions and disciplines.

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