

## **Promote the Problem-oriented Teaching Method and Improving the Effectiveness of Ideological and Political Teaching**

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**Keywords:** Problem-Oriented; Teaching Method; Ideological and Political Courses; Effectiveness

**Abstract:** This paper discusses the value of problem-oriented teaching method in ideological and political courses and the concepts that should be insisted on when adopting this method. Besides, it introduces several problems that should be noticed when adopting the problem-oriented teaching method, as well as its relatively good effect in an ideological and political course.

### **1. Reasons for Ideological and Political Courses to Adopt the Problem-oriented Teaching Method**

What is similar to the problem-oriented teaching method is the problem-based method (Problem Based Learning, PBL). Originated from American universities in 1950s, PBL has become a popular teaching method in the world [1]. It focuses on learning through students' active learning, independent exploration and mutual cooperation to solve problems. It highlights roles of students and develops their various abilities, which should be applicable to many courses.

From the perspective of pedagogy, teaching and learning cannot be separated. Thus, we should fully play the roles of both teachers and students to work together. From the perspective of students, learning can be divided into three types. The first is that students accept teachers' education and identify, internalize and apply it. The second is that students actively think, understand and explore. The third is both. The problem-oriented teaching method refers to the teaching method in which teachers guide students to learn actively by establishing problem situations. It emphasizes that teaching is the double-subject activity of teachers and students, and plays both enthusiasm to strengthen roles of students based on the traditional teaching. In terms of ideological and political theory courses, we prefer the problem-oriented teaching method, because these courses are ideological, political, theoretical, practical. They involve not only the Marxist Leninist classics and the Party's great theories, but also the practical issues at home and abroad. However, if we just rely on students to learn and explore, the existing conditions are not very supportive. Thus, it is necessary to guide students to have a deeper learning, thinking, research, and perception of ideological and political theories through the roles of teachers to enhance the teaching effectiveness.

As we all know, China attaches great importance to ideological and political courses. At present, colleges and universities in China are using the unified textbooks. Teachers do not have great political problems concerning the textbooks, but there are still problems in teaching. Feng Xiujun, a member of the Teaching Steering Committee, once pointed out that "political indoctrination" teaching is often the most rebellious and exclusive type of teaching for college students[2]. When analyzing the reasons for "the low rise rate in the ideological and political courses", Minister Chen Baosheng pointed out that the "formula" is old, "craft" is rough, and "packaging" is not so fashionable. It can be seen that how to teach is an important issue. In fact, we should often ask what purposes of ideological and political courses are. If the teachers' teaching can't enter the students' mind, no matter how much they teach, it won't work. However, the problem-oriented teaching method is valuable in this respect.

#### **1.1. Reflecting Students Development as the Center**

Traditional teaching overemphasizes teachers' "teaching", and the classroom focuses on their "teaching". The problem-oriented teaching method seems to focus on teaching problems, but in essence it takes students' development as its starting point and goal. This is because the problems in

teaching are questions that students want to answer. The teaching process is the process of students' active participation and thinking, and the problems are resolved in the interactive discussion between teachers and students. Then, the actual effect is the growth of students.

### **1.2. Promoting Students' Comprehensive Growth**

The problem-based teaching method focuses on the problem-based teaching. It not only guides students to think deeply in the way of enlightening education, but also trains them to think rationally. It not only enables students to master basic theories, but also promotes the formation of correct values, and meanwhile develops many skills. It is a comprehensive education.

### **1.3. Strengthening Students' Problem Awareness**

The process of human understanding and transforming the world is a process of finding and solving problems. Every era has its own problems. Only by establishing a strong awareness of problems, can we correctly deal with problems and find the way forward. On November 15, 2012, after being elected general secretary of CPC, Xi Jinping stressed that the Party faces many serious challenges and has many problems to be solved. He has also worked hard to solve various practical problems in China today. To learn and implement Xi Jinping's socialist thinking with Chinese characteristics in the new era needs to learn his problem awareness.

### **1.4. Solving Students' Ideological Confusion**

Some students do not accept ideological and political courses, and one of the reasons is that some ideological and political teachers are separate from students. "How can we turn what we are learning and what we will learn into something that students like to think about, analyze and observe?" [3] Ideological and political courses adopt problem-oriented teaching method to consciously respond to students' ideological and political needs, and help them solve their ideological confusion. Thus, it is a good method.

## **2. Basic Concepts of Adopting Problem-oriented Teaching Method in Ideological and Political Courses**

### **2.1. Adhering to the Student-centered Concept**

American psychologist Rogers proposed the "student-centered" educational concept in the 1950s, which has had an increasingly influence. In 1998, UNESCO held the "World Higher Education Conference" in Paris. The conference declaration adopted clearly stated that "in today's changing world, higher education clearly needs a new perspective and new mode of 'student-centered'." This declaration also required "focusing on students and their needs; regarding students as the main and responsible participants in educational reform, including participating in the discussion, evaluation, curriculum and content reform of major issues in education, formulating policies and institution management, etc." At present, the "student-centered" concept has become an authoritative term and the consensus of educators. Ideological and political courses are no exception.

### **2.2. Following the Concept of Educational Laws**

There are corresponding laws in education. One is the external educational laws, namely, education must meet the needs of social development. The other is the internal educational laws. The first is that educators must respect and understand students. They must grasp the times and the objects of education. The second is that the teaching content must meet the needs of students' physical and mental development. The third is that teaching activities must start from students' reality, which helps to their physical and mental health. The fourth is that the teaching process must be serious and scientific. In teaching, teachers and students should discuss problems and complete teaching tasks in a cooperative and shared teaching environment.

### **2.3. Establishing the Concept that Teaching Needs Research**

Universities have a history of hundreds of years, but the real combination of teaching and

research began at the University of Berlin, which is why it is regarded as the ancestor of modern universities. Modern universities need research. Research exists not only in "scientific research", but also in teaching. The teaching process is not only a process of teaching knowledge, but also a process of guiding students to create. The college ideological and political courses should spread Marxism-Leninism thoughts, but cannot be limited to propaganda and communication, but must also study and innovate Marxism-Leninism. In the teaching process, there is also a problem of how to implement. Research teaching can develop students' potential, enlighten them, and obtain lifelong benefits and unforgettable effects. Thus, teachers must enhance scientific research including the research of education itself, and also strengthen the research on educational objects namely students. Moreover, teachers should strengthen the research on the teaching process, especially the creative teaching process, and try their best to practice[4].

### **3. The Concrete Implementation of Problem-oriented Teaching Method in Ideological and Political Courses**

#### **3.1. Key Problems in Implementation**

##### **3.1.1. Insisting on being Problem-oriented**

Problem-oriented teaching highlights problems, which is also the distinctive feature and basic method of Marxism. "Quality Questioning" proposes that "effective questions can build scaffolding to support students' learning." [5] Makhmutov, a former Soviet pedagogical expert, also proposed a problem-centered teaching mode. It focuses on creating classroom situations. Teachers create the content of courses as different problems, then ask questions properly in situations and guide them to think. Teachers find out problems from the content, and the process of students' problem solving is the process of deepening the understanding of classroom content. Interpreting problems in deep reflection and analysis can make students "know what they are" and "know why they are like this".

##### **3.1.2. Choosing Problems Carefully**

Problems are everywhere, but it's not easy to find them. There are three ways to find problems. The first is to study textbooks, explore basic theories and great theoretical problems in the them, and refine theoretical themes through the re-organization of their content. The second is to study students, understand their ideological confusion and value needs, and extract important problems that students concern and confuse about. The third is to study practice. Problems come from practice, and practice, cognition, re-practice and re-cognition are the fundamental rule to understand things and solve problems. Combining these three paths can better find problems. Moreover, we need try to form a series of problems. The content of ideological and political courses are some major ideological and theoretical problems which are very grand, like the road choosing problem in the Outline of Modern Chinese History, the socialist problem in the Introduction to the Theory of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics. These problems need to be further refined into a number of small problems in teaching, form a chain of problems, deepen them layer by layer, and promote students' deep thinking and learning.

##### **3.1.3. Establishing the Concept of Equal Cooperation between Teachers and Students**

Teachers and students are equal in personality, especially in market economy. Students pay to go to school, schools provide them teaching services. They have both the relationship of managing and being managed, and the equal civil relations. Then, as teachers employed in schools, they should strive to achieve equality between teachers and students as providing services. In the problem-oriented teaching, teachers and students should cooperate equally, raise, reflect, communicate and solve problems. Only in this way can we really promote the growth of students and realize the mutual development of teaching and learning.

##### **3.1.4. Motivating Students to Learn**

"Teaching today is for not teaching tomorrow." Problem-oriented teaching itself is one of the

ways to motivate students to learn. Besides, problem scenarios and different ways can also be used to attract and motivate them to learn, like the introduction of life practice or practical problems, the use of teaching aids, material objects, simulation, experiments, videos, or the telling of cases and stories related to themes. These can stimulate students' interest and desire to participate by skillfully setting up the suspense.

### 3.1.5. Upholding Great Virtue and Love

Educator Makarenko believes that love is the foundation of education., and without love, there is no education. In an era of economic globalization, communication informatization, and diversified values, students' choices, including learning chooses, are various. One student and author said: "since high school, I have been instilled with the idea that lame class do not need to listen to, which is OK to pass it. In high school, no one listens to politics, history, or geography. In the current college entrance examination system, everyone wants to get more scores in the main subjects to go to a good university. In universities, the academic performance is converted into performance points to determine their evaluation, recommendation, studying abroad and other qualifications. These are just another type of college entrance examination! " It can be seen that the present utilitarianism has seriously affected students' choices in ideological and political study. On the other hand, compared with traditional teaching, problem-based teaching needs more time and energy, and even produces conflicts with students' thoughts. This kind of situation requires teachers' great virtue and love. Xu Xianming proposes what a university is? The "greatness" of the university lies in its great virtues and love, its learning and its masters[6]. "Great virtue" means great responsibility, and "great love" is love without worldly interests. For the development of students, teachers do not care about the rewards and losses, do not complain, devote their truth, sincerity, passions, and patiently help them grow up, which is great virtue and love. For problem-oriented teaching, ideological and political teachers must promote great virtues and love.

### 3.2 Practice Effect

**Table 1. Questionnaire 1**

No.	Questionnaire content: Choose based on your actual situation (5 points for complete conformity; 4 points for conformity; 3 points for basic conformity; 2 points for basic not conformity; 1 point for complete not conformity)
1	Generally, I think the course is very useful. What I learned in the course is very helpful for my future study, work and life.
2	Generally, I think the teaching of this course has aroused my interest and motivated my enthusiasm for learning. I have made the greatest efforts in this course.
3	Generally, I think the teaching of the course is well organized and taught well by teachers.
4	Generally, I think we like and agree with the problem-oriented teaching method adopted by teachers.
5	Through this course, I have understood and mastered its important basic knowledge, form a relatively complete framework and knowledge system of the course.
6	I think teachers are knowledgeable, passionate, clear, organized and enlightening in class.
7	Through this course, I have learned how to analyze, reflect and solve problems.
8	I think teachers encourage students to ask questions and express their ideas freely.
9	I have a better understanding of the problems teachers teach and I agree with them.
10	This course has improved my oral expression, communication ability and comprehensive quality.

Our school's ideological and political courses have always had a good tradition. As one of the ideological and political courses, "Ideological and Moral Cultivation and Legal Basics" (hereinafter referred to as "Basics") has a good foundation, which became the first provincial excellent course in 2006, and won many school and provincial teaching awards. In September 2019, we randomly selected two teachers, A and B, from the 54 classes in "Basics" to conduct the problem-oriented teaching practice in two (38 and 52) experimental classes. We designed the teaching problems first.

For example, in the first chapter "The Question of Youth in Life", we set four questions: firstly, do college students now need to think about life? secondly, what is the nature of human? thirdly, how can life be wonderful? fourthly, how is the youth of college students more beautiful? Under these problems, a series of small problems are designed to form a chain, and then conduct teaching based on different effective methods. To know about the actual effect of this method, we made an online questionnaire on all the students of this course near the end of the course in January 2020. The content is shown in Table 1, and each survey content accounts for 10% of the total score.

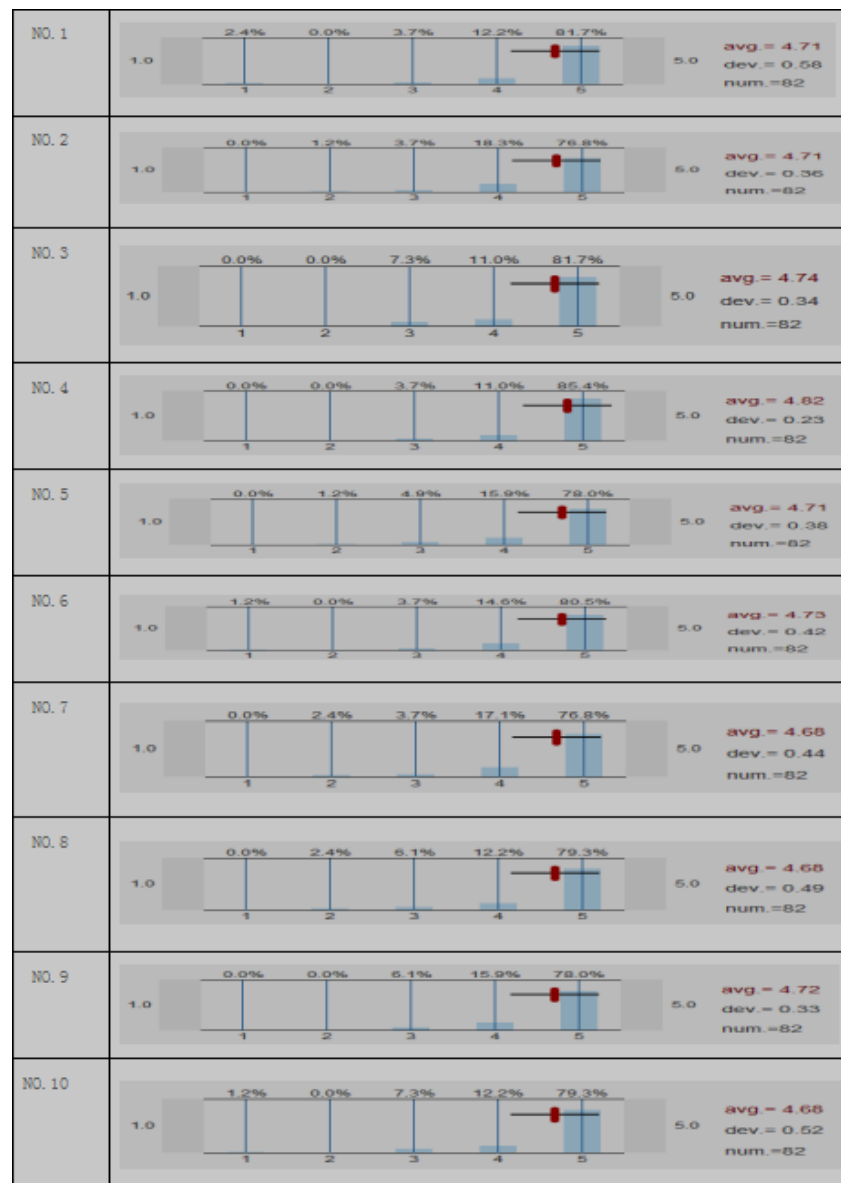
The results show that the two experimental classes get 4.8 and 4.74 respectively (full score 5). Taking class 38 as an example, the analysis and evaluation results of each index are shown in Fig. 1. The evaluation score of class 52 is 4.74, which is also obviously better than that of conventional classes.

Course name: Ideological and Moral Cultivation and Legal Basics

Class No. 38

Evaluation of the class: Number of evaluators = 82, average score = 4.8, variance = 0.14

Overall evaluation of all classes of the course: Number of evaluators = 3598, average score = 4.6, variance = 0.39



**Fig 1.** Analysis and Evaluation Results of Each Index of Experimental Class 38

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