

The Construction Paths of Curriculum Ideology and Politics Based on the WSR System Approach: Taking the Marketing Course as an Example

Wei Pan^{1,a}, Tiansen Liu^{1,b,*}, Weiwei Liu^{1,c}, Fei Liu^{1,d}, Chengju Gong^{1,e}, Chenggang Wang^{2,f}

¹School of Economics and Management, Harbin Engineering University, Nantong Street, Harbin, China

²School of Economics and Business Administration, Heilongjiang University, Xuefu Road, Harbin, China

^apanwei@hrbeu.edu.cn, ^btiansen0328@harbeu.edu.cn, ^cheulww@hrbeu.edu.cn,
^df.liu@hrbeu.edu.cn, ^ecj_gong@hrbeu.edu.cn, ^fwangchenggang@hlju.edu.cn

*Corresponding author

Keywords: Curriculum ideology and politics; the WSR system approach; marketing course

Abstract: In the context of the new era, the curriculum ideology and politics construction has become more and more important. Drawing upon the WSR system approach and taking the marketing course as an example, this paper combines the three dimensions of “*wuli*, *shili* and *renli*” in the WSR system approach with the three educating goals of “knowledge imparting, value shaping and ability cultivating”, and proposes the paths of marketing course ideology and politics construction. It has important theoretical and practical implications for curriculum ideology and politics construction in Chinese higher education.

1. Introduction

“The guidelines for ideological and political construction of curriculum in institutions of higher education”, issued by the Ministry of Education in 2020, emphasizes that fostering virtue through education is the fundamental task of colleges and universities. Curriculum ideology and politics construction is an effective way to complete this task. It not only enriches the ideological and political education system in higher education but also nurtures a new generation of capable young people who are well-prepared to develop socialism and carry forward the socialist cause.

Curriculum ideology and politics construction refers to the organic combination of “transmitting wisdom” with “imparting knowledge” through integrating ideological and political elements into the professional knowledge teaching process. In recent years, with the deepening of curriculum ideological and political reform, theoretical research and practical application become hot topics. At present, lots of attentions have been paid to the evaluation index system of curriculum ideology and politics implementation performance, but relatively few researches have used some systematic methodology to guide the construction paths of curriculum ideology and politics. Therefore, drawing upon the WSR system approach and taking the marketing course as an example, this paper attempts to explore the ideological and political construction paths of from the three dimensions of

“*wuli*, *shili*, and *renli*”.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Curriculum Ideology and Politics Construction

With the in-depth development of informatization and globalization, social values have become more and more diversified and complex. Prior studies have confirmed the political role of curriculum teaching [1]. However, in the context of the new era, the limitations of relying solely on ideological and political courses to guide students' values have become more and more prominent. There is an urgent need to integrate ideological and political education into specialized courses. This integration will lead to a synergistic effect so that students' correct values will be shaped along with the absorption of professional knowledge. Although it is essentially still one form of ideological and political education, the integration of ideological and political education into specialized courses will make it more acceptable for students. The ultimate goal is to help students shape the correct values so that the primary goal of fostering virtue through education can be achieved.

The focal points of the curriculum ideological and political construction are to explore the relevant ideological and political elements and naturally integrate these elements into the course teaching process so that students can build the socialism with Chinese characteristics with firm ideals and beliefs [2]. Students should improve their ideological and political level while expanding their professional knowledge and skills. At present, researchers have mainly concentrated on how to evaluate the curriculum ideology and politics implementation performance. For example, Cheng (2022) proposes an evaluation model of the ideological and political effectiveness of curriculum from five dimensions of “curriculum design, teaching staff, student cognition, development evaluation, and system design” [3]. However, there is relatively few research investigating the specific construction paths of curriculum ideology and politics.

2.2. WSR System Approach

Proposed by Gu Jifa and Zhu Zhichang, the WSR system approach is an oriental systems methodology for analyzing complex systems [4]. W-S-R stands for *wuli*, *shili*, and *renli* respectively, and the WSR system approach holds that the *wuli* (i.e., regularities in objective existence), *shili* (i.e., ways of seeing and doing things), and *renli* (i.e., patterns underlying human relations) together constitute a differentiated whole that conditions systems projects [4]. The WSR system approach simplifies complex systems by organizing various perspectives, which is a unique oriental system methodology [5]. The three dimensions of the WSR system approach involve various methods in the fields of management science, system science as well as social science [6]. In this paper, we contend that the WSR system approach can provide the theoretical basis and path guidance for the curriculum ideology and politics construction in universities.

3. The Paths of Marketing Course Ideology and Politics Construction Based on the WSR System Approach

3.1. Wuli Path: Knowledge Imparting

The *wuli* dimension in the WSR system approach refers to the regularities in the objective existence of the system and its operation principles [4]. *Wuli* usually answers the question of “What is the objective existence?”. When applying it to the education domain, “*wuli*” can be understood as

the knowledge taught by teachers in college or university. Therefore, *wuli* path in the curriculum ideology and politics construction is what people often called “knowledge imparting”. Knowledge imparting is not only the starting point of curriculum ideology and politics construction but also one of the important indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum ideology and politics construction [7]. Specifically, taking the marketing course as an example, the following three critical things should be done to construct the *wuli* path so that the effectiveness of knowledge imparting can be improved.

First, we should optimize the teaching team and improve the course teaching quality. Teachers are the main subjects of curriculum ideology and politics construction. A teaching team with good professional knowledge and political quality is an important guarantee for the ideology and politics construction in the marketing course. For example, colleges and schools should develop relevant training programs to help teacher master cutting-edge professional knowledge. The teaching team should prepare lessons together and discuss their lecture contents regularly. Second, the course contents should be updated regularly to reflect the latest marketing practice. In the current digital economy era, the marketing practice of organizations has changed greatly. For example, big data marketing is increasingly used in current organizations. Thus, when designing the course contents, the teaching team should incorporate those newly developed marketing theories and methods into the teaching process. Third, the new teaching methods should be adapted to make sure students fully understand the knowledge. Instead of using the traditional classroom teaching method, teachers can fully use online teaching resources on MOOC. For example, students can be required to learn online lectures and do assignments before class, and then the flipped classroom teaching method can be used to free up classroom time for the exploration of concepts and topics in greater depth. This student-centered teaching method will help students better master the knowledge. A combination of online and offline teaching methods can impart knowledge through the whole learning process, namely, before, during, and after class.

3.2. Shili Path: Values Shaping

The *shili* dimension in the WSR system approach refers to ways of seeing and doing things [4]. *Shili* usually answers the question of “how to do things”. When applying it to the education domain, *shili* can be understood as values held by students. Therefore, *shili* path in the curriculum ideology and politics construction is what people often called “values shaping”. Ideological and political education should not give students only some abstract concepts, but help students form the correct view of the world, view of life, and view of value [8]. Teachers should actively guide students to practice core socialist values in order to enhance their commitment to patriotism, collectivism, and socialism. Taking the marketing course as an example, the following two things should be done to construct the *shili* path so that the effectiveness of value shaping can be improved.

On one hand, teachers should help students build up their cultural confidence and morality throughout the whole marketing course. Although most modern marketing concepts and theories come from Western academia, it should be emphasized that there are many important marketing ideas and principles in the history of our country. For example, Shanxi businessmen had always adhered to the five marketing principles of “benevolence, justice, courtesy, wisdom, and sincerity”. Integrating Chinese ancient marketing wisdom and thinking into the course can strengthen students’ national pride and cultural confidence. On the other hand, teachers can also link the new development philosophy of our country with modern marketing philosophy. In this way, students can have a better understanding of our country’s future development direction and focus. China has established its new development philosophy of innovative, coordinated, green, open, and shared development. This new development philosophy is in line with the holistic marketing concept, such

as socially responsible marketing, and relationship marketing. To sum up, through the *Shili* path in marketing course ideology and politics construction, students not only can form the correct values but also know what they can contribute to China's future development.

3.3. Renli Path: Ability Cultivating

The *renli* dimension in the WSR system approach highlights intersubjective relations among parties concerned with a system project. *Renli* usually answers the question of “whom to do it”. When applying it to the education domain, *renli* might be understood as the abilities which students have so that they can handle interpersonal relationships well and do things right. Therefore, *renli* path in the curriculum ideology and politics construction is similar to what people often called “ability cultivating”. Taking the marketing course as an example, we emphasize cultivating the following three abilities to strengthen the *renli* path so that the effectiveness of ability development can be improved.

First, students' communication abilities should be cultivated. Marketing activities involve continuous communication with other parties, such as the customers, media, government, and so on. For example, teachers can design the corresponding marketing scenarios, and let students play different roles in the class to improve their communication skills with other parties. Second, students' practical abilities should be developed throughout the marketing course. Marketing is regarded as both a science and an art. As a science, marketing, like any other natural science, has its own theories, principles, and methods. As an art, those marketing principles and rules should be put into practice in the appropriate manner to get the best results. Thus, students should improve their abilities to use relevant marketing theories to solve corresponding problems. For example, students can be required to do market research and analysis on the products they are interested in. In this way, students are able to apply marketing theories in practice and solve relevant problems. Third, students' innovation ability should be promoted. Innovation is crucial to the development of an individual and a country. For example, we can ask the student groups to develop new product concepts and design their marketing mix. This will allow the students to propose some innovative ideas, and design the 4 Ps of marketing, i.e., product, price, place, and promotion.

4. Conclusions

Based on the WSR system approach, this paper discusses the construction paths of curriculum ideology and politics in Chinese colleges and universities from the three dimensions of *wuli*, *shili* and *renli*. The *wuli* path, *shili* path, and *renli* path proposed by this paper are consistent with the three educating goals of “knowledge imparting, value shaping, and ability cultivating”. Taking the marketing course as an example, this paper further demonstrates the key contents of each path construction. The curriculum ideology and politics construction should integrate the *wuli* path (i.e., knowledge imparting), *shili* path (value shaping), and *renli* path (ability cultivating) to form a synergistic effect.

Acknowledgements

This paper is funded by the General Project of Heilongjiang Higher Education Teaching Reform Research (SJGY20210179), the University-Industry Collaborative Education Program of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (202102629021), the First Batch of New Liberal Arts Research and Reform Practice Project of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2021140048), Harbin Engineering University Teaching Reform Research (XK2090021005018), and the Education and Teaching Reform Project of School of Future

Technology of Harbin Engineering University (JG2022B6004).

All authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest among us, and we all know the process of paper organization and submission.

Conceptualization, formal analysis, and original draft were organized by Wei Pan and Tiansen Liu. The investigation, revision process, and language review were organized by Weiwei Liu, Fei Liu, and Chengju Gong. The supervision was done by Chenggang Wang.

References

- [1] Wilfred Carr. (1998) *The curriculum in and for a democratic society* [J]. *Curriculum Studies*, 6, 323-340.
- [2] Lai Y, Ye L, Xie P, et al. (2021) *Teaching reform of entrepreneurial project management based on curriculum ideological and political education* [J]. *Education Research Frontier*, 11, 54-59.
- [3] Cheng P. (2022) *Evaluation method of ideological and political classroom teaching quality based on analytic hierarchy process* [J]. *Scientific Programming*, 6554084.
- [4] Gu J., Zhu Z. (2000) *Knowing wuli, sensing shili, caring for renli: methodology of the WSR approach* [J]. *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, 13, 11-20.
- [5] Lin X, Zhang Q, Han X. (2009) *Application of Wuli-Shili-Renli system methodology in knowledge management* [J]. *Kybernetes*, 38, 346-353.
- [6] Gu J.F., Tang X.J. (2000) *From ancient system thoughts to modern oriental systems methodology* [J]. *System Engineering- Theory & Practice*, 1, 89-92.
- [7] Wang B, Yu H, Sun Y, et al. (2023) *An effect assessment system for curriculum ideology and politics based on students' achievements in Chinese engineering education* [J]. *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications*, 14, 948-953.
- [8] Xie H, Song J. (2022) *Research on the guiding role of curriculum ideology and politics on students' social character* [J]. *Psychiatria Danubina*, 34, 818-818.