

# Exploring the Practice of Ideological and Political Education for College Students

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**Abstract:** *This study examines the practice of ideological and political education among college students in China, focusing on fostering patriotism, social responsibility, and critical thinking. Using a mixed-method approach, the research assessed student engagement, teaching effectiveness, and challenges faced by educators. Surveys of 200 students revealed high engagement levels, with active participation, timely assignment completion, and real-world application of concepts. Interviews with 15 teachers identified challenges such as limited time for in-depth discussions, diverse student beliefs, assessment difficulties, and teacher burnout. Grounded in experiential, social, and constructivist learning theories, the study highlights the value of interactive teaching methods, personalized learning, and practical applications. Teachers employing diverse instructional strategies, critical thinking exercises, and real-world examples were deemed effective in enhancing learning experiences. However, persistent issues, including time constraints and burnout, underscore the need for institutional support.*

**Keywords:** *Practices; Ideological and Political Education; College Students; Higher Education*

## 1. Introduction

The current generation of college students in China has grown up in the age of information, characterized by extensive knowledge and open-mindedness. However, they face numerous challenges and temptations brought about by rapid social, technological, and cultural changes. In this context, ideological and political education aims to ignite students' patriotism, cultivate their sense of social responsibility, and instill a sense of mission, preparing them to take on the responsibilities required by the times.

Ideological and political education serves as a critical means to enhance students' ideological awareness, moral standards, and understanding of national development strategies and societal needs. Through systematic content and scientific methods, it equips students with a heightened sense of sensitivity toward social issues and fosters their responsibility to contribute to societal progress. It also develops their communication, problem-solving, and teamwork skills, helping them become responsible citizens with proper behavioral norms. Moreover, it stimulates students' innovative thinking and entrepreneurial awareness through practical activities, providing vital talent support for the country and society (Yang & Wang, 2022) <sup>[1]</sup>.

In recent years, higher education in China has expanded rapidly. Since 2022, the number of annual college graduates has exceeded 10 million, reflecting the nation's commitment to education (Yang, 2022) <sup>[2]</sup>. However, several challenges persist in the realm of ideological and political education. While surveys report a 78.58% satisfaction rate among students, many perceive the courses as overly theoretical, monotonous, and lacking practical application (Dong, 2022) <sup>[3]</sup>. Additionally, students often exhibit a limited understanding of social issues, insufficient reflection on national strategies, and a weak grasp of Core Socialist Values. These challenges highlight a gap between current educational methods and the expectations of contemporary students.

The objective of this research is to explore practical approaches to ideological and political education, evaluating its effectiveness in fostering students' ideological literacy, social responsibility, and innovative abilities. By combining theoretical exploration with empirical investigation, this study seeks to propose innovative educational models that better align with the evolving needs of today's students. The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the theoretical framework of ideological and political education while providing actionable recommendations for improving curriculum design and teaching methods in higher education.

In summary, ideological and political education plays an irreplaceable role in shaping well-rounded,

morally sound young individuals who are capable of contributing to national rejuvenation. Continuous innovation in educational approaches, tailored to students' needs, is essential to achieving deep integration between education and societal development.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to evaluate the current state of ideological and political education by assessing student engagement, teaching effectiveness, and challenges faced by educators. It sought to identify actionable insights to enhance the subject's effectiveness and relevance.

- 1) To identify the perceived level of student engagement in ideological and political education.
- 2) To determine the level of effectiveness of the teaching strategies of the teachers in ideological and political education.
- 3) To find out the problem encountered by the teachers in ideological and political education.

## 3. Methodology

This study used a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. Structured questionnaires were distributed to 200 college students in Nanjing to assess engagement and teaching effectiveness, while semi-structured interviews with 15 teachers explored teaching challenges. Random sampling was used for students, and purposive sampling ensured diverse teacher representation. Data collection involved the Questionnaire Star platform for surveys and in-person interviews for qualitative data. Findings were analyzed statistically and thematically, offering insights and recommendations to improve ideological and political education.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Perceived Level of Student Engagement in Ideological and Political Education

Table 1 presents the perceived level of student engagement in ideological and political education. The table highlights various dimensions of student engagement, including active participation in class discussions, interest in course topics, timely completion of assignments, and real-world application of learned concepts.

*Table 1: Perceived Level of Student Engagement in Ideological and Political Education*

Item	Mean	Description
I actively participate in class discussions during my ideological and political education courses.	3.55	High Level
I find the topics covered in my ideological and political education courses interesting	3.57	High Level
I regularly complete all assignments for my ideological and political education courses on time.	3.66	High Level
I feel motivated to learn more about the subjects discussed in my ideological and political education classes outside of class time.	3.55	High Level
I often apply the concepts learned in ideological and political education to real-world situations.	3.53	High Level
I collaborate with my peers on projects related to ideological and political education.	3.52	High Level
I seek additional resources (e.g., books, articles, videos) to deepen my understanding of the topics covered in ideological and political education.	3.60	High Level
I participate in extracurricular activities related to ideological and political education (e.g., seminars, workshops, discussion groups).	3.57	High Level
I feel that my ideological and political education courses are relevant to my personal and professional goals.	3.60	High Level
I regularly discuss the content of my ideological and political education courses with others outside of the classroom.	3.57	High Level
Overall	3.57	High Level

The results in Table 1 indicate a high level of student engagement in ideological and political education, with strong interest, active participation, and a solid understanding of the material. Students

show notable motivation in class discussions (3.55), aligning with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which highlights the role of peer interaction in fostering engagement. They find course topics engaging (3.57), reflecting Constructivist Learning Theory, as students actively build understanding through interaction and relevance to their personal and professional goals.

Timely completion of assignments (3.66) demonstrates organizational skills and commitment, supported by Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, which emphasizes practical application and responsibility in learning. High scores for seeking additional resources (3.60) and applying concepts to real-world situations (3.53) suggest that students value independent learning and experiential approaches. Collaborative projects (3.52) and extracurricular participation (3.57) further reinforce Bandura's framework, showcasing effective peer learning and holistic engagement.

In summary, students are deeply involved in ideological and political education, indicating that the subject resonates with their interests, fosters critical skills, and supports real-world application. This high engagement underscores the relevance and effectiveness of current teaching methods.

#### ***4.2 Level of Effectiveness of The Teaching Strategies of The Teachers in Ideological and Political Education***

Table 2 provides an analysis of the effectiveness of teaching strategies employed by teachers in ideological and political education. The table evaluates various aspects such as the use of engaging methods, clarity in explaining complex concepts, diversity in teaching strategies, and the provision of helpful instructional materials. It also highlights the encouragement of critical thinking, the design of impactful assignments, and teachers' approachability.

*Table 2: Level of effectiveness of the teaching strategies of the teachers in ideological and political*

Item	Mean	Description
The teaching methods used by my teachers make the ideological and political education classes engaging.	3.60	High Level
My teachers effectively explain complex concepts in a way that is easy to understand.	3.60	High Level
My teachers use a variety of teaching strategies (e.g., lectures, discussions, multimedia) to enhance learning.	3.61	High Level
The instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, online resources) provided by my teachers are helpful.	3.62	High Level
My teachers encourage critical thinking.	3.61	High Level
The assignments and projects in my courses are well-designed and help me understand the material better.	3.61	High Level
My teachers provide constructive feedback on my work.	3.63	High Level
My teachers are approachable and available for questions outside of class.	3.64	High Level
The use of real-world examples by my teachers helps me relate the course content to practical situations.	3.60	High Level
Overall, the teaching strategies employed by my teachers enhance my learning experience in ideological and political education courses.	3.62	High Level
Overall	3.61	High Level

The results from Table 2 demonstrate that students perceive the teaching strategies used in their ideological and political education courses as highly effective. It means that teachers' strategies are highly effective, making the classes engaging, easy to understand, and relevant. Students feel supported and receive constructive feedback. Teachers are engaging students through various methods, with a mean score of 3.60 for making the classes engaging. This can be linked to Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, where students are actively involved in hands-on learning and real-world applications, which help maintain their interest. The score of 3.60 for explaining complex concepts in an easy-to-understand way reflects Bandura's Social Learning Theory, as teachers are modeling behaviors and simplifying difficult ideas, allowing students to observe and replicate these concepts effectively.

Moreover, teachers are incorporating a variety of teaching strategies, including lectures, discussions, and multimedia, which received a high score of 3.61. This use of diverse methods aligns with Constructivist Learning Theory, emphasizing the need for varied instructional approaches to cater to different learning styles. Ren and Li (2022)<sup>[4]</sup> highlight the importance of integrating multimedia tools

in teaching, which helps keep students engaged. The instructional materials provided, such as textbooks and online resources, are also seen as highly effective (3.62), indicating that the materials are well-aligned with the course objectives and support students' learning, as noted by Li (2021) <sup>[5]</sup> in the context of personalized learning tools.

Teachers' encouragement of critical thinking (3.61) demonstrates a successful application of Kolb's and Bandura's theories, as they push students to reflect and apply their knowledge in new contexts. Yang & Wang (2022) <sup>[2]</sup> emphasize the importance of critical thinking in ideological education, and the results here show that students are being challenged in ways that foster deeper cognitive engagement. The well-designed assignments and projects (3.61) further support this, as they likely involve practical, real-world applications, consistent with Kolb's experiential learning approach <sup>[6]</sup>.

Constructive feedback, with a score of 3.63, plays a crucial role in student improvement, aligning with Social Learning Theory, where feedback helps refine student understanding and behavior. Liu et al. (2021) <sup>[5]</sup> support the notion that teacher-student interactions, including feedback, are vital for effective ideological education. Additionally, students find their teachers approachable (3.64), which fosters a supportive learning environment and aligns with Bandura's theory that social interaction plays a key role in learning. This approachability encourages students to seek help outside of class, reinforcing their learning.

Finally, the use of real-world examples in teaching (3.60) shows that teachers are making the material relevant to students' lives and future roles, a critical component of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. Dong (2022) <sup>[3]</sup> supports this by stressing the importance of integrating cultural values and practical examples in ideological education to make the lessons more meaningful for students. The overall high score of 3.62 for the teaching strategies employed reflects the effectiveness of a well-rounded approach, combining experiential, social, and constructivist learning theories.

#### ***4.3 Problem Encountered by The Teachers in Ideological and Political Education***

Table 3 outlines the key challenges faced by teachers in delivering ideological and political education. It categorizes the issues into four main themes: limited time for in-depth discussions, diverse student backgrounds and beliefs, assessment difficulties, and teacher burnout. Each theme is supported by teacher responses that highlight the practical difficulties encountered in managing time, addressing varied perspectives, evaluating ideological growth, and maintaining personal well-being.

*Table 3: Problem Encountered by The Teachers in Ideological and Political Education*

Theme	Frequency	Sample Response
Limited time allocation for in-depth discussions	3	Teacher 1: "The class schedules are tight, and I often feel that we don't have enough time to fully explore topics with students."
Diverse student backgrounds and beliefs	3	Teacher 4: "Students come from different regions with varying political views, and it's hard to manage conflicts during discussions."
Assessment difficulties	3	Teacher 7: "It's difficult to assess students' ideological growth and understanding because these are not easily quantifiable."
Teacher burnout	6	Teacher 12: "There's pressure to keep students engaged in a subject they don't always find interesting"

The findings highlight four key challenges faced by teachers in delivering ideological and political education: limited time for in-depth discussions, diverse student beliefs, assessment difficulties, and teacher burnout <sup>[7]</sup>. Limited class time prevents teachers from fostering critical thinking and meaningful discussions, while managing diverse student perspectives can lead to conflicts or disengagement <sup>[8]</sup>. Assessing ideological growth remains challenging due to its intangible nature, requiring innovative, qualitative methods beyond traditional grading <sup>[9]</sup>. Teacher burnout, the most frequently cited issue, stems from the effort required to keep students engaged in sensitive topics and mediate emotionally charged discussions <sup>[10]</sup>. These interconnected challenges underscore the need for institutional support, flexible schedules, and resources to improve teaching effectiveness and maintain teacher well-being.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study comprehensively explored the practices, challenges, and strategies of ideological and political education for college students. The findings demonstrate that while current methods are effective in fostering critical thinking, social responsibility, and personal growth, significant challenges remain, including time constraints, diverse student beliefs, and teacher burnout. The work involved extensive data collection and analysis, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure a robust evaluation of current practices.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform practical strategies for enhancing ideological and political education. Through refining teaching methods, diversifying course content, and addressing institutional support gaps, this study offers actionable insights that can improve both teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. These findings highlight the feasibility of applying innovative solutions, such as personalized learning tools and flexible course structures, to better meet the needs of contemporary students.

Looking forward, future research may explore the integration of advanced technologies, such as AI-driven platforms and interactive multimedia, to further personalize and enhance ideological education. Additionally, longitudinal studies assessing the impact of these refinements on both student development and teacher well-being would provide valuable insights. This research underscores the importance of continuous innovation and adaptation in ideological and political education to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to contribute meaningfully to national and societal progress.

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