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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

LIFE GROWTH OF CURRICULUM IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Yuntian Xie

Department of Applied Psychology,
Changsha Normal University, China.

Abstract

The fundamental task of curriculum ideological and political education is to cultivate morality and virtue. As a discipline concentrating on individual development, positive psychology advocates a positive connotation of life and a proactive behavioral orientation. From the perspective of positive psychology, course-based political education should pay attention to every individual, emphasize the stimulation of students' potential, enhance students' sense of life meaning, and promote student development. In the process of integrating political education elements into course teaching, it is crucial to focus on cultivating students' positive attitudes, guiding them to experience and appreciate positive emotions and feelings, and strengthening positive behaviors. In this process, in combination with the characteristics of the course and teaching content, it is essential to cultivate students' positive values, enrich their moral literacy, guide them in establishing and maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships, and value the role of social support.

Keywords: Positive Psychology, Course-based Political Education, Positivity, Life.

INTRODUCTION

The growth of life is not only upward but also good-oriented. It is also a process of cultivating a positive mentality. As we all know, positive psychology is a discipline that studies individuals' sense of well-being, optimistic attitudes, and positive behaviors. It is a scientific study of the strengths and virtues of ordinary people (Alex et al., 2006), and has exerted a profound influence on fields such as education (Kristjánsson, 2012). Since its birth, positive psychology has challenged negative psychology and interpreted psychology in a brand-new manner. In the practice of curriculum ideological and political education, we should actively draw on the research achievements of positive psychology and continuously improve the effectiveness of educating people in aspects such as promoting students' individual development, strengthening positive behaviors, enriching moral accomplishments, and attaching importance to social support.

Expanding on this, the integration of positive psychology into educational practices can be seen as a strategic move towards fostering a holistic approach to student development. This involves not only academic success but also the development of personal qualities that contribute to a well-rounded individual. By focusing on the positive aspects of human experience, educators can create an

environment that nurtures resilience, gratitude, and a growth mindset in students. In the context of curriculum ideological and political education, the application of positive psychology principles can lead to the design of programs that encourage students to set and achieve personal goals, recognize their own strengths, and develop strategies for overcoming challenges. Such programs can also help students to build positive relationships with their peers and educators, which are crucial for their social and emotional well-being. Moreover, the emphasis on positive psychology in education can lead to the creation of curricula that are not only informative but also inspiring. By highlighting the potential for greatness within each individual, educators can motivate students to strive for excellence and to contribute positively to their communities. This approach can also help to counteract the effects of stress and burnout, which are common issues faced by students in today's competitive academic environments. In addition, the incorporation of positive psychology into ideological and political education can also extend to the training of educators themselves. By equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to promote a positive classroom culture, schools can ensure that their educational practices are aligned with the latest research in psychological well-being. This can lead to more effective teaching strategies and a more supportive learning environment for all students. In conclusion, the growth of life is indeed a journey towards the good, and positive psychology provides a valuable framework for understanding and nurturing this growth. By integrating the principles of positive psychology into curriculum ideological and political education, we can foster an educational environment that not only promotes academic achievement but also encourages the development of positive attitudes and behaviors that will serve students well throughout their lives.

Pay Attention to Every Life and Promote Individual Development

Curriculum ideological and political education is a logical return to the original essence of education in terms of educating people. Its core lies in paying attention to and cultivating every unique and precious individual life. Each student is an independent entity with different goals, values and lifestyles. These differences are fully reflected in interests, personalities, life concepts and value orientations. Individual differences are manifested not only in cognitive styles, emotional regulation, behavioral habits and thinking patterns but also shape each person's unique personality traits at a deeper level. These personality traits are not only the unique ways for students to cope with life challenges but also important signs of their personality development. Therefore, a profound understanding and respect for students' individual differences is the cornerstone of designing effective curriculum ideological and political education programs. Teachers need to conduct detailed analyses of students' learning situations to deeply understand the psychological needs and personality characteristics of each student. On this basis, they can formulate teaching plans that not only meet the requirements of ideological and political education but also organically integrate students' personalities. Personalized curriculum design can not only promote students' mental health but also stimulate their internal potential, guiding them to show a more positive and active attitude in the pursuit of personal goals. Such teaching is helpful for students to form correct worldviews, outlooks on life and values, and can also plant seeds of positive upward



spirit and the courage to explore in their hearts, laying a solid foundation for their all-round development. In the practice of curriculum ideological and political education, teachers should act as guides and partners, and jointly explore the ocean of knowledge with students and experience the joy of growth. Through carefully designed teaching activities, teachers can guide students to understand themselves and society while cultivating their sense of social responsibility and historical mission. Only education like this can truly touch students' hearts, inspire their longing and pursuit for a better life, help them find the correct position in the complex and diverse social environment and realize their self-worth.

Individual differences enrich the diversity of education and make its forms more diversified. Everyone has unique strengths and potentials. And these potentials can be explored and developed by teachers under the guidance of the theoretical framework of positive psychology. Teachers play an important role in cultivating students' positive psychology and promoting their all-round development. Teachers have the responsibility to pay attention to students' personal strengths, stimulate their internal potentials and guide them to explore and give play to their own characteristics. The unique strengths and potentials that each person possesses are different. They can be excellent language expression abilities, artistic talents, creativity, or leadership, teamwork abilities or talents in other aspects. For this reason, teachers should start from students' individual differences, understand and experience the strengths and potentials of each student so as to better guide their professional learning and personality development. Beliefs about the self (including self-concept, self-esteem and the mindset/implicit theory of self-attributes) are important causes of human behavior and learning (Vu et al., 2022). Under the positive guidance of teachers, students can apply their awareness of their own strengths and uniqueness to various fields of study, life and work, which can not only promote academic improvement but also contribute to the growth of life. For example, some students may show talents in art. They can express emotions, convey aesthetic feelings and arouse resonances by giving play to their artistic talents. And some students may have outstanding abilities in the field of science. They can use this advantage to explore the boundaries of knowledge in scientific laboratories and contribute to promoting scientific progress. Different and diverse individual strengths and potentials will provide rich resources and driving forces for the progress and prosperity of society. Therefore, in the process of curriculum ideological and political education, teachers should focus on guiding students to conduct self-analysis, tap and give play to their strengths, continuously enhance their self-confidence and self-esteem and improve their sense of self-efficacy, thus promoting the all-round growth and healthy development of every life. As independent and upward-growing life entities, students need to understand themselves, discover and expand their strengths, experience the joy of learning and stimulate their sense of personal responsibility and self-confidence. For this purpose, teachers can, in the teaching integrated with ideological and political elements, combine the characteristics of their own courses and teaching contents, set some tasks or activities related to self-awareness and encourage students to actively think about their own strengths and potentials and apply these strengths through actual projects or specific tasks to improve their self-esteem and sense of self-efficacy. If students can fully recognize their potentials and apply them to real life, then their life



growth will become more powerful and meaningful. In this process, students will find that the challenges and problems encountered in learning and life are not terrible or insurmountable because they believe that they have the ability to cope with them. They will constantly feel their own growth and experience the joy after growth, and then arouse greater enthusiasm and motivation for learning. They will participate in course learning more actively and strive for personal excellence and continuously realize and surpass themselves.

Positive psychology encourages individuals to set clear goals and cultivate positive achievement motivation. People with high achievement motivation usually show continuous action and set challenging goals. Therefore, in specific course teaching, teachers can guide students to set some goals with a certain degree of difficulty according to their own characteristics and actual situations and formulate corresponding action plans. Goal orientation and achievement motivation can stimulate individuals' motivation and perseverance and promote individuals' continuous growth and success. Of course, the support of teachers and peers is also crucial. Their support can help individuals formulate self-development goals more clearly and further strengthen individuals' achievement motivation. In addition, since the thinking of curriculum ideological and political education is scientific innovation, and scientific innovation cannot be separated from self-awareness and self-reflection abilities. Through in-depth self-reflection and self-awareness, individuals can understand their perception, memory, emotions, feelings and thinking more comprehensively and deeply. This understanding is helpful not only for individuals to understand themselves but also plays an important role in scientific innovation. Positive psychology emphasizes individuals' self-awareness and self-reflection and changes the focus from a negative orientation to a positive one. In the field of scientific innovation, this change itself is based on self-reflection and self-awareness. Through in-depth thinking and awareness, individuals can better cope with challenges and adjust their thinking patterns to promote the development of innovative thinking. To achieve all-round development, individuals need to focus on combining reflection and innovation. Scientific innovation is not only the change and promotion of theoretical knowledge but also requires individuals to constantly reflect and innovate in practice. The combination of reflection and innovation helps to promote the sound and all-round development of individuals' personalities, making them more energetic and creative. Similarly, curriculum ideological and political education plays an important role in promoting innovation. By improving the educational effectiveness of curriculum ideological and political education, students with stronger self-awareness and self-reflection abilities can be cultivated. Such students are more likely to achieve better results in changes and innovations and make positive contributions to social development.

In the research of positive psychology, the sense of meaning in life is regarded as an important component of individuals' sense of well-being and mental health. Experiencing positive emotions and meaning is the foundation of human prosperity. If individuals can understand and perceive their own meaning and value in life, then they are more likely to obtain a sense of satisfaction and well-being. Positive psychology encourages individuals to actively discover and pursue their own meaning in life and establish close connections through relationships with others and society. In fact, this is in line with the goals of curriculum ideological and political



education. Curriculum ideological and political education focuses on cultivating students' thinking and practical abilities, guiding students to think about the meaning of life, demonstrating the value of life and inspiring them to strive for the realization of personal and social goals. Therefore, in curriculum ideological and political education, the sense of meaning in life should be integrated into it, guiding students to actively think about the meaning of life and pursue the goals of life. Meanwhile, students should be guided to explore and understand their own interests and goals in course learning, combine personal responsibilities with social responsibilities and incorporate a positive outlook on life into every teaching link of courses.

Cultivate a Positive Mindset and Strengthen Positive Behaviors

Positive emotions and emotional experiences are also one of the main research contents of positive psychology. It studies how to cultivate and maintain positive emotions, how to effectively regulate emotions, improve individuals' stress resistance and enhance well-being. The power of gratitude plays an important role in cultivating a positive mindset. Gratitude is a key determinant of personal well-being and the quality of interpersonal relationships (Yunanto, 2020). When an individual has a grateful heart, he/she will experience the happiness he/she currently has and will be aware of the help and support from those around. This mindset will make the individual face difficulties and challenges in life more positively. In course learning, the requirements and difficulties of learning tasks vary, and difficulties or setbacks are inevitable. Positive psychology emphasizes cultivating positive coping styles and psychological resilience. Guided by a positive mindset, even in the face of great difficulties and setbacks, an individual will adopt an optimistic attitude and actively seek solutions to problems. Optimism is one of the core concepts in the field of positive psychology. It emphasizes people's expectations of the outcomes of future events (Rincon et al., 2022). Therefore, in curriculum ideological and political education, teachers can carefully design teaching links, focus on cultivating students' optimistic mindset to help them better complete tasks and solve the difficulties they face. Moreover, teachers should encourage students to believe that they have the ability to solve problems and guide them to maintain an optimistic mindset when facing difficulties. This mindset will make students more resilient and more motivated to find solutions to problems. Teachers can incorporate typical cases of successful people in the discipline or course field to stimulate and cultivate students' optimistic qualities. These ideological and political cases will inspire students to believe that as long as they maintain a positive mindset and strive hard, they can overcome difficulties and achieve their goals one after another. Guided by positive mindsets such as gratitude and optimism, students can better face the requirements and difficulties of learning tasks, adopt positive and optimistic coping styles and seek solutions to problems.

In addition, curriculum ideological and political education should also focus on students' flow experience. The so-called flow refers to the sense of pleasure and satisfaction that an individual feels when fully engaged and concentrated in a certain activity. Flow is conceptualized as an experiential state characterized by a high degree of concentration on the activity, a loss of reflective self-awareness, a profound sense of control, a distorted sense of time experience, etc. (Keller et al., 2011). Positive psychology emphasizes the importance of cultivating flow



experience, focusing on helping individuals experience a flow state in activities by finding their interests and stimulating their enthusiasm. According to the flow theory, whenever an individual engages in a skill-related activity and perceives the fit between skills and task requirements, he/she will experience a positive flow state. Flow experience can enhance an individual's positive emotions and satisfaction, and promote the individual to maintain a positive mindset in life. And active participation means that an individual has a strong social interest, curiosity, concentration and determination and vitality in the process of pursuing goals. If students can actively participate in course learning, their positive psychological experiences will be enriched and their sense of self-efficacy will be enhanced. And enhancing self-efficacy can improve students' positive mindset and achievement motivation, and promote individuals to face challenges and achieve goals more actively. Positive psychology is a discipline that emphasizes cultivating individuals' well-being and positive behaviors. It encourages everyone to focus on their own strengths, strengthen positive experiences and use positive thinking styles to deal with challenges and difficulties in life. At the same time, curriculum ideological and political education aims to shape students' correct outlooks on life, values and worldviews, help them establish a positive mindset and promote their growth. The relationship between the two is reflected not only at the theoretical level but also complements each other in practice. Positive psychology can provide rich psychological theories and empirical research results for curriculum ideological and political education. Positive psychology emphasizes individuals' strengths and positive emotional experiences, which coincides with the goal of curriculum ideological and political education to shape correct outlooks on life, values and worldviews. This ideological commonality makes curriculum ideological and political education more scientific and practical while guiding students to establish a positive mindset. By integrating the theories of positive psychology into educational practice, especially curriculum ideological and political education, teachers can better guide students' growth. At the same time, according to the reinforcement theory in psychology, teachers should give timely feedback on students' learning behaviors in curriculum ideological and political education. This timely feedback not only reinforces students' positive behaviors but also has a positive incentive effect psychologically.

Cultivate Positive Values and Enrich Moral Accomplishments

To achieve the educational goals of curriculum ideological and political education, the correct value dimension should be selected. Positive psychology encourages people to maintain optimism, hope and positive thinking styles, and emphasizes cultivating positive emotions and emotion regulation abilities. From the perspective of positive psychology, every individual is regarded as having unlimited potential. This is completely different from the traditional psychological approach that focuses more on defect compensation and disease treatment. Positive psychology encourages individuals to explore their interests through continuous learning. By constantly learning and expanding skills, individuals can further explore and realize their potential. Therefore, in the process of cultivating students' positive values in curriculum ideological and political education, how to promote students' self-actualization is a question that requires in-depth consideration.



Every individual is a unique and valuable life entity with inherent self-worth and dignity. From the perspective of positive psychology, an individual's self-worth should not only be influenced by external evaluations but should be based more on an individual's positive acceptance and affirmation of himself/herself. Positive psychology advocates a concept that focuses on an individual's inherent strengths and potential, emphasizing promoting an individual's growth and development in various aspects by developing self-identity and self-esteem. Cultivating self-identity is a crucial step for an individual to realize self-worth. Self-identity is an individual's clear understanding of his/her own identity, role and core values, which is based on authenticity and positivity. The role of curriculum ideological and political education in promoting students' self-identity is particularly important because it can provide a platform for students to discover, understand and accept themselves. Through positive self-identity, students can face academic challenges more confidently and establish a thirst for knowledge, enthusiasm for learning and a vision for the future. This positive sense of identity not only promotes students' academic performance but also has a positive impact on their future work and interpersonal relationships. On the other hand, positive psychology focuses on cultivating an individual's self-esteem. Self-esteem is the affirmation and respect for one's own value. It does not depend on external praise or recognition but is based on internal self-values. In this regard, curriculum ideological and political education can help students establish and enhance positive self-esteem by encouraging them to build and develop a good self-image and positive self-evaluation in course learning. When dealing with problems in learning, life and work, a healthy self-esteem can make an individual more resilient and confident. Through curriculum ideological and political education, students can understand the relationship between failure and success and realize that failure does not mean a lack of individual value but is a part of learning and growth. This understanding helps reduce students' anxiety when facing challenges and stimulates their courage to actively deal with difficulties.

Self-awareness has a profound impact on shaping and maintaining moral behavior. Cultivating self-awareness means that an individual needs to scientifically and comprehensively understand his/her own values and moral principles and be consistent with them in daily behavior. Therefore, in the process of curriculum ideological and political education, students can be guided to deeply reflect on their learning behaviors to help them establish clear moral concepts. From the perspective of positive psychology, an individual's moral qualities are not the result of passively accepting external norms but are the products spontaneously formed through the cultivation and improvement of self-awareness. This active moral cognition and moral emotion help students become more sensible and firm when facing moral choices or moral decisions. Therefore, curriculum ideological and political education is by no means indoctrinating moral knowledge into students but focuses on stimulating students' thinking and judgment on moral issues. Existing research shows that an individual's moral awareness and values have an important impact on his/her behavior and decisions. Positive psychology recognizes the relationship between the individual and society and emphasizes an individual's social responsibility. It encourages individuals to actively participate in social affairs and contribute to society. It advocates social fairness and justice and pays attention to injustices and inequalities at all levels of society. Consistent with this, curriculum



ideological and political education also adheres to the principle of the unity of personal value and social value. In terms of personal value, it emphasizes the unity of knowledge and action, the combination of virtue and talent, and giving priority to virtue. In terms of social value, it emphasizes political identity and cultural inheritance and the unity of personal virtue and social virtue. Therefore, curriculum ideological and political education should combine the characteristics of courses and adopt diverse teaching methods to guide students to strengthen their sense of social responsibility. This is because a sense of social responsibility is an important moral accomplishment. It enables individuals to recognize and understand social problems and actively participate in social practice and public welfare activities.

In addition, positive emotions and feelings play a crucial role in cultivating an individual's moral qualities. Positive emotions and feelings such as happiness, joy and hope can improve an individual's moral judgment ability and moral behavior level. This means that the cultivation of positive emotions and feelings is one of the key ways to develop moral qualities. However, it should be emphasized that the cultivation of moral qualities is a continuous and complex process. Through continuous learning, thinking and growth, an individual gradually forms stable moral principles and behavior patterns. This means that cultivating moral qualities requires giving individuals sufficient time and opportunities and providing appropriate support and guidance in the educational environment. In curriculum ideological and political education, through well-designed courses, optimization of teaching methods and application of digital technology, students can be helped to better establish correct values and be guided to transform moral principles into specific actions in practice. Such a course learning environment can provide students with more opportunities to practice moral requirements and gradually develop good moral behavior habits.

Maintain Interpersonal Relationships and Attach Importance to Social Support

Different people have different perspectives and methods of viewing and dealing with interpersonal relationships. Positive psychology attaches great importance to maintaining interpersonal relationships and emphasizes constructing a positive social organizational system. Social support and interpersonal relationships have a significant impact on an individual's mental health and well-being. Providing support is beneficial not only to others but also has a positive effect on the provider himself/herself. An individual can establish reciprocal social relationships through supportive behaviors such as caring for others, providing help and listening.

Positive psychology emphasizes the importance of a positive attitude in interpersonal communication for maintaining good interpersonal relationships. Positive communication attitudes such as friendliness, concern, understanding and respect for others can help an individual establish good relationships with others and obtain more support from them (Huang et al., 2022; McMahon et al., 2020; Nie et al., 2022; Rasco et al., 2023; Sung & Kim, 2020). Therefore, cultivating a positive communication attitude is a key goal. In positive interactions, good communication skills and empathy play a crucial role. Effective communication can help an individual communicate and understand better with others. By cultivating listening skills, expressing one's own views and emotions and establishing good communication channels with others, an individual can improve interpersonal relationships and build closer and more lasting connections. In addition, empathy, as the ability to



understand and share the emotions of others, is essential for establishing intimate and supportive interpersonal relationships. Research has pointed out that the ability to communicate with others is one of the most important social functions of human beings, and shared identity is the key to effective communication, that is, communication with in-group members is more effective than that with out-group members (Greenaway et al., 2015). Therefore, in curriculum ideological and political education, attention should be paid to cultivating students' positive communication attitudes and guiding students to master communication skills and enhance empathy through a series of teaching links such as seminars, debates and cooperation. More interactive or practical situations should also be created for students to let them listen to others, understand others and express their own views and emotions in communication. In this process, students learn to understand the feelings and needs of others and learn to provide better support. This ability helps to increase the emotional connection between an individual and others and further enhance the quality and stability of interpersonal relationships.

Seeking social support is helpful for dealing with psychological problems (Chen & Zhang, 2021; Saltzman et al., 2020; Yıldırım & Aziz, 2023). Seeking help and bravely expressing one's own needs is an act of courage emphasized by positive psychology. Under this concept, an individual needs to cultivate the ability to seek support. It means that an individual should have the courage to identify his/her own needs and take the initiative to seek help and support from others. This is an ability. And the cultivation of this ability is a process that requires daring to express oneself and constantly overcoming difficulties. Curriculum ideological and political education can play an important role in this process. According to the theory of positive psychology, seeking support is an important part of life growth and individual development. In course learning and daily life, an individual may face various challenges and difficulties, and being able to actively seek help and support from others helps to overcome difficulties or solve problems more quickly and effectively. Therefore, in curriculum ideological and political education, teachers should guide students to realize that seeking help is not a sign of weakness but an act of a brave person. With the help of others, an individual can better understand problems and solve difficulties and then achieve personal growth and development. In the view of positive psychology, group identity is crucial for seeking support. As group identity increases, an individual's willingness to seek support also increases. Based on this, in curriculum ideological and political education, a learning community should be constructed to strengthen the connections among students, between students and teachers and between students and courses and enhance their sense of belonging and identity. Through activities such as cooperative projects, group discussions and flipped classrooms, promote teacher-student communication and student-student interaction and cultivate students' cooperative awareness and collective responsibility. The sense of participation and identity that students obtain in the community will inspire them to seek support more actively and also prompt them to understand the complexity and diversity of society more deeply. Of course, in addition to establishing a learning community, students can also be guided to pay attention to social problems from the perspective of the discipline or course and think about ways and methods to solve them. Through these ways, students can not only enhance their social identity but also stimulate their sense of social responsibility. If



students can perceive their own value to society, they will be more likely to actively seek support and also be more willing to be supporters of others. It can be said that cultivating a sense of social responsibility and the ability to seek support complement each other and jointly construct the resilience and social participation emphasized by positive psychology. This is not only beneficial to the healthy growth of an individual but also injects more positive and upward forces into society.

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