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Research on the Integration of Ideological and Political Education into Employment Education for College Students

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Abstract: College student employment is closely linked to public welfare and economic development, with job quality significantly impacting national talent strategies and global competitiveness. In the contemporary socio-economic landscape, many graduates face multifaceted challenges such as skewed employment perspectives, inadequate career planning, and profound social adaptation difficulties during their job search processes. These persistent issues not only hinder individual personal growth and professional trajectory but may also pose potential risks to broader social stability and economic productivity. Consequently, this study comprehensively examines the strategic integration of employment education with ideological and political education within higher education institutions. It systematically analyzes the critical role of combining practical employment training with robust ideological education, proposing concrete, actionable integration approaches tailored to modern academic environments. Furthermore, this research aims to guide students in establishing correct employment values, ethical perspectives, and a strong sense of social responsibility. The study focuses extensively on enhancing comprehensive competencies, cultivating core employability skills, and strengthening both ideological guidance and psychological resilience among graduates. By aligning these educational frameworks with overarching national strategic objectives and long-term talent development goals, this paper provides a sustainable model for universities. Ultimately, the proposed integrated educational paradigm seeks to empower college students to navigate the complex labor market successfully while contributing meaningfully to societal advancement and national prosperity.

Keywords: college students; employment education; ideological education; value guidance; career planning

1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of global economic restructuring and China's high-quality development drive, the employment of college graduates has evolved from a single individual livelihood issue into a core issue concerning talent supply, social stability, and national rejuvenation. The continuous expansion of college enrollment has led to a historic increase in the number of graduates, while the transformation of industrial structure has put forward higher requirements for the comprehensive quality of talents. Traditional employment guidance, which focuses too much on skill training and ignores value guidance, has been difficult to adapt to the new situation and new needs. At the same time, the impact of diversified social values has made some college students appear utilitarian, short-sighted, and even confused in their employment choices. Therefore, integrating ideological and political education throughout the whole process of college students' employment education is not only an inevitable requirement to implement the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education but also a key path to promote high-quality employment of college students and serve national development strategies [1]. This integration ensures that students are not only equipped with the necessary skills but also with a strong sense of social responsibility and ethical standards, which are crucial for their personal and professional growth.

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Amid increasingly severe employment challenges and a complex social environment, traditional career guidance models struggle to meet the developmental needs of college students. Concurrently, the diversification of values during societal transformation has significantly influenced students' career choices. Higher education institutions must guide students to establish sound employment perspectives, integrating personal growth into the broader national development framework [1, 2]. Incorporating ideological and political education into career training programs serves as an effective approach to enhance students' comprehensive competencies and promote holistic development. This practice also aligns with the fundamental mission of higher education to cultivate virtue and nurture talent. By embedding these educational elements, institutions can better prepare students to navigate the complexities of the modern job market, ensuring they possess not only technical skills but also the ability to critically assess and adapt to changing societal needs. This comprehensive approach fosters a generation of graduates who are well-rounded, adaptable, and ready to contribute positively to both their local communities and the nation as a whole.

2. Objectives and Content of Employment Education for College Students

China's higher education graduates have consistently maintained a high enrollment scale. According to data from the Ministry of Education, the 2025 cohort of graduates from regular universities nationwide is estimated at approximately 12.22 million, marking an increase of 430,000 compared to the previous year, highlighting concurrent employment pressures and structural challenges. This scale ranks as the highest in history, bringing dual pressures of total employment volume and structural mismatch. On the one hand, the growth rate of market jobs cannot fully match the expansion of graduate groups; on the other hand, there is a disconnection between professional setting, talent training, and social demand, resulting in difficulties in employment for some graduates and difficulty in recruiting suitable talents for enterprises. This situation necessitates a strategic approach to align educational outcomes with market needs, ensuring that graduates possess the skills and competencies required by employers. The challenge is not only to increase the number of available jobs but also to enhance the quality and relevance of education to meet the evolving demands of the labor market [3].

The objective of career education for college students is to guide them in developing scientific career development perspectives, enhancing their employability competitiveness and professional adaptability, ultimately achieving an organic integration of personal career aspirations with societal development needs. College career education encompasses multiple dimensions, aiming to equip students with the necessary tools and insights to navigate the complex job market. By fostering a deep understanding of career dynamics and encouraging proactive career planning, students can better align their personal goals with the broader economic and social landscape. This holistic approach not only prepares students for immediate employment but also lays the groundwork for sustained career growth and adaptability in a rapidly changing world.

Conceptual guidance involves implementing career planning education to help students develop self-awareness, environmental exploration, and goal-setting from early academic years. This process fosters correct employment concepts, career selection strategies, and talent development perspectives [4]. By instilling these foundational elements early on, students are better prepared to make informed decisions about their career paths. This guidance encourages them to critically assess their strengths and weaknesses, understand the external environment, and set realistic and achievable career goals. Such an approach not only enhances their immediate employability but also supports their long-term professional development.

Skill enhancement focuses on providing job-seeking training, including resume writing, interview techniques, workplace etiquette, and communication negotiation skills. Emphasizing practical experience acquisition through internships and project-based training strengthens operational capabilities and problem-solving abilities [5]. This comprehensive skill-building approach ensures that students are well-prepared to enter

the workforce with confidence. By engaging in real-world experiences, students can apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings, thereby enhancing their ability to adapt to various professional environments and challenges.

Knowledge services involve systematically interpreting national and local employment policies, laws, regulations, and social security systems. Collecting and precisely delivering market recruitment information, and establishing university-enterprise collaboration platforms, are crucial components. These services provide students with a clear understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks governing employment, as well as insights into current market trends and opportunities. By facilitating connections between universities and enterprises, students gain access to valuable networks and resources that can significantly enhance their career prospects [6].

Targeted support is crucial for establishing "one-on-one" assistance mechanisms for students from disadvantaged families, academic underperformers, those facing psychological challenges, and ethnic minority groups. Implementing customized guidance and resource allocation strategies ensures that these students receive the support they need to overcome barriers to employment. By addressing the unique challenges faced by these groups, educational institutions can promote inclusivity and equity, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed in their chosen careers. This targeted approach not only supports individual students but also contributes to a more diverse and resilient workforce.

Modern higher education employment education has broken through the limitations of short-term guidance for graduates and formed a comprehensive, whole-process education system covering four years of university. This system takes value guidance as the core, competence improvement as the main line, information services as the support, and humanistic care as the supplement, which runs through the whole process of college students' study and growth [7, 8]. It not only solves the immediate employment problems of students but also lays a foundation for their long-term career development and lifelong growth. By integrating these elements into the educational framework, institutions can create a supportive environment that nurtures students' potential and prepares them for the complexities of the modern workforce. This holistic approach ensures that graduates are not only equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge but also possess the resilience and adaptability required to thrive in a dynamic and ever-evolving job market.

3. The Significant Role of Integrating Employment Education into Ideological and Political Education for College Students

3.1. Guiding students to establish correct employment perspectives and values

Integrating ideological and political education into college students' career guidance programs is crucial for helping students align their life goals with contemporary societal demands and personal development. This integration aids students in developing employment perspectives and values that are not only beneficial for their personal growth but also for the broader community. During the job-seeking process, some students may fall into the trap of short-term thinking, developing a mindset that delays employment or shows reluctance to accept available positions. They often pursue jobs in major cities, state-owned enterprises, or high-paying institutions, overlooking opportunities in grassroots positions, emerging industries, and roles that align with national strategies. By addressing these issues through ideological education, students can be guided to make more informed and balanced career choices.

Ideological education tackles these challenges by employing comprehensive theoretical frameworks, analyzing exemplary cases, and interpreting both national and global contexts. This educational approach enables students to gain a profound understanding of the relationship between their personal goals, societal needs, and national development [9]. It encourages students to move beyond narrow, self-centered thinking patterns and shift their focus from "what can I gain" to "what can I contribute." By learning from role models who dedicate themselves to national development and

grassroots services, students can cultivate a more accurate view of career choices. This education helps them integrate their personal ideals with the broader goals of the country and nation, fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment to contributing positively to society.

3.2. Enhancing Comprehensive Competence and Core Employability Competitiveness

In today's highly competitive society, professional skills are considered essential assets in the workplace, while soft skills such as professional ethics, teamwork, and accountability are viewed as crucial factors that can significantly influence success. Modern enterprises increasingly value the moral quality and comprehensive abilities of their employees, recognizing that technical skills alone are insufficient to meet the evolving demands of employers. This shift underscores the importance of developing a well-rounded skill set that includes both technical expertise and interpersonal capabilities [3, 10].

The values emphasized in ideological education, such as integrity, legal awareness, dedication, and a commitment to national development, align closely with the professional qualities that are highly regarded by contemporary enterprises. By integrating these ideological elements into career planning, employment counseling courses, and specialized curricula, students can systematically cultivate professional ethics, enhance their communication skills, and develop effective problem-solving mindsets. This comprehensive approach enables students to understand that strong character and a sense of responsibility are fundamental competitive advantages in both job searching and workplace environments. Over time, the professional qualities shaped by ideological and political education become pivotal in helping college students establish themselves and advance in their careers.

3.3. Strengthening Ideological Guidance and Psychological Adjustment Capacity

College years represent a critical transitional phase where students shift from the structured environment of campus life to the broader and often more challenging societal context. During this period, many students encounter feelings of anxiety, confusion, and even frustration, largely due to the disparities they perceive and the competitive pressures they face. Surveys indicate that a significant portion of college students, over 40%, experience varying degrees of employment pressure and psychological confusion during their job search period. This highlights the need for effective support systems to help students navigate these challenges.

Integrating ideological and political education into career guidance programs can be instrumental in helping students apply philosophical frameworks such as dialectical materialism and historical materialism. This integration allows students to analyze employment trends critically, recognizing both the changes and consistencies within them. By understanding the phased characteristics and long-term trajectories of social development, students can avoid self-doubt that might arise from temporary setbacks. Education that focuses on life perspectives and resilience concepts within ideological programs enables students to view job-seeking successes and failures with objectivity. It also fosters perseverance and optimism. Educators can enhance this by combining psychological counseling with ideological guidance, offering personalized career strategies that help students identify their strengths and weaknesses. This approach encourages students to adjust unrealistic expectations and develop a rational self-awareness. Ultimately, this strengthens their mental resilience, allowing them to maintain composure under employment pressures and workplace challenges. By overcoming obstacles with positivity, students can transform challenges into opportunities for personal and professional growth.

3.4. Serving National Strategies and Talent Development Objectives

China is actively building a new development paradigm and advancing high-quality growth, creating an urgent need for talents who prioritize national priorities and demonstrate strong accountability. Major national strategies such as scientific and technological self-reliance, rural revitalization, and green development are in urgent need of a large number of high-quality talents with both professional ability and sense of mission [11].

Ideological and political education helps students comprehend the profound significance of major national strategies-including technological self-reliance, rural revitalization, and green development-while fostering a sense of mission that aligns personal career aspirations with the nation's destiny. Integrating this strategic perspective into career guidance encourages graduates to proactively seek opportunities in key national industries, frontline grassroots positions, and challenging remote regions. This approach not only alleviates structural employment disparities but also optimizes the nation's human resource allocation. From universities' perspective, such integration drives reforms in talent cultivation models, emphasizing the development of patriotic sentiments, responsibility awareness, and practical skills. This approach cultivates socialist builders and successors who possess both solid professional expertise and unwavering ideals and convictions.

4. Specific Approaches for Integrating Employment Education with Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Institutions

4.1. Establishing an Integrated Curriculum System of "Ideological and Political Education + Employment"

Higher education institutions should systematically restructure existing curricula to establish an integrated "Ideological and Political Education + Career Guidance" framework, achieving organic integration of knowledge transmission, skill development, and value orientation. When designing course content, educators should identify ideological-political education elements embedded in both specialized disciplines and career guidance programs. For instance, career planning instruction could incorporate national development strategies and industry trends to help students align personal career choices with national priorities. Practical courses such as resume writing and interview techniques should emphasize professional ethics, contractual integrity, and integrity awareness. The curriculum structure must achieve "vertical continuity and horizontal integration." Vertically, progressive course modules should span the entire academic journey: freshmen and sophomores should focus on career awareness and value cultivation through "Introduction to Majors + Ideological and Political Education" courses to foster patriotic dedication to industries; juniors and seniors should concentrate on employability and professional ethics, reinforcing social responsibility education during internships and job search guidance. Horizontally, interdisciplinary teaching teams comprising ideological-political theory instructors, subject matter experts, and career counselors should collaborate to develop modular case-based teaching resources, ensuring ideological education seamlessly integrates into every aspect of career education.

4.2. Building a Value-Led Employment Practice Platform

Higher education institutions should proactively collaborate with key industries and grassroots organizations to establish "off-campus practice bases for ideological and political education," integrating professional internships, social surveys, volunteer services, and national strategic priorities. For instance, students could participate in project-based initiatives focused on themes like "smart manufacturing" for rural revitalization. Through addressing real-world social challenges, students can deepen their understanding of national conditions and social dynamics while strengthening their sense of social responsibility. Platform development should emphasize "end-to-end integration," establishing a collaborative education mechanism involving schools, enterprises, and local communities. Under the coordination of university party

committees, this framework should unite career centers, faculty members, counselors, and corporate mentors to create synergistic guidance. During practical training, enhanced process supervision and reflection sessions are crucial. Ideological and political theory instructors or counselors should provide continuous support, guiding students to address value conflicts encountered during practice and analyze the balance between personal interests and collective goals, material pursuits and spiritual dedication. Additionally, industry role models and exemplary workers can serve as off-campus mentors, sharing their firsthand experiences to vividly illustrate the profound significance of professional commitment and perseverance.

4.3. Cultivating a Campus Employment Culture Atmosphere of "Striving for National Service"

To cultivate a campus culture of "striving for national service" through implicit education, universities should integrate sound career perspectives into daily campus life, fostering a collective ethos that values practical work ethic, encourages responsibility, and promotes selfless dedication. Institutions must strengthen exemplary leadership by highlighting outstanding alumni, industry pioneers, and grassroots role models who align personal aspirations with national endeavors. Through initiatives like "Stories of Strivers," "Alumni Outreach Sessions," and "Industry Leaders on Campus Tours," vivid narratives can demonstrate that "the most beautiful youth lies in perseverance," challenging narrow employment views focused solely on metropolitan areas, high salaries, or government positions [9, 12]. This approach helps students recognize vibrant career opportunities in western regions, grassroots communities, and strategic sectors. Campus cultural activities should incorporate patriotic themes into Party and Youth League events, student organizations, academic competitions, and artistic productions. Examples include essay contests on "Career Aspirations and National Needs," innovation competitions addressing critical technological bottlenecks, and theatrical productions depicting industry role models' journeys -- all of which facilitate gradual value transmission through immersive experiences. We continuously optimize the physical and digital campus environment by creating dedicated sections on bulletin boards, the campus network, and official social media platforms. These spaces showcase national development achievements, industry innovations, and graduates' accomplishments in key fields, making the ethos of "going where the country needs us most" a pervasive and tangible message across campus. Through this immersive experience, students naturally develop a positive mindset and patriotic spirit that drives them to contribute to their nation.

4.4. Strengthening Ideological Guidance and Psychological Support During Employment Processes

College students may experience ideological confusion, value conflicts, and psychological stress during career selection periods [13, 14]. Timely and targeted interventions are essential to ensure smooth transitions and healthy development.

For ideological guidance, a dynamic "one-person-one-policy" tracking mechanism should be established. Counselors, class advisors, academic mentors, and career guidance teachers must collaborate through daily conversations, career counseling, and themed class meetings to closely monitor students' employment intentions, progress, and emotional fluctuations. Regarding phenomena like "delayed employment" and "hesitant job-seeking," it's crucial to analyze underlying fear of challenges or dependency mentality, guiding students to adopt proactive employment attitudes. For students struggling with the gap between ideals and reality, assistance should focus on rational analysis of personal strengths versus societal demands, helping them find optimal solutions through balanced perspectives and fostering the belief that "every profession offers opportunities for success." In terms of psychological support, a three-tiered service system integrating prevention, intervention, and development should be implemented. At the foundational level, mandatory or elective courses and workshops on "employment psychological

adjustment" should be offered to teach stress management and resilience techniques. For targeted cases involving job-seeking setbacks or decision anxiety, individual counseling and group sessions should be provided to rebuild confidence and adjust expectations. At the developmental level, cultivating psychological resilience should be integrated into university-wide career education programs to enhance students' adaptability to future career transitions.

4.5. Incorporate value orientation into the employment work evaluation system

Traditional employment evaluations predominantly focus on quantitative metrics such as contract signing rates and starting salaries [15]. The post-reform evaluation system should shift from merely measuring employment rates to assessing the quality of employment-oriented education.

Evaluation criteria should not only include employment quantity indicators but also incorporate quality metrics related to value guidance. Examples include: the proportion of graduates employed in key national industries, critical sectors, grassroots positions, and challenging regions; professional ethics, social responsibility awareness, and career development potential demonstrated by graduates in their roles; and employer satisfaction ratings regarding graduates' moral integrity and sense of responsibility. Secondly, evaluation subjects must be diversified. The one-way assessment model should be replaced with multi-party evaluations involving graduates themselves, employers, and social practice organizations to comprehensively assess students' professional values, social adaptability, and long-term development prospects. Evaluation methods should integrate process-oriented and outcome-oriented approaches, focusing not only on graduation employment results but also on students' participation in value-guided courses and practical activities during their academic years, along with their growth trajectories [4, 10]. Personal "Ideological-Education-Employment" growth portfolios should be established to achieve comprehensive evaluation throughout the entire process. Evaluation outcomes must be scientifically utilized, with the effectiveness of value guidance serving as a critical benchmark for assessing college departments, relevant departments, and faculty performance. These results should be linked to resource allocation and merit-based awards to guide university-wide efforts in advancing employment-oriented education, fostering a sustainable virtuous cycle.

5. Conclusion

The current employment landscape for college students is complex and ever-changing. Integrating ideological and political education into career guidance programs serves as a crucial strategy to address challenges and ensure high-quality employment outcomes. This approach not only helps students develop sound career perspectives and values while enhancing their overall competencies and employability, but also strengthens their sense of social responsibility and mission, enabling them to better contribute to national development strategies.

Higher education institutions should take the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education as the guide, break the barriers between ideological and political education and employment education, and explore diversified integration paths. By establishing a comprehensive "ideological and political + employment" curriculum system, building a value-led practical education platform, creating a campus employment culture that serves the country, strengthening ideological guidance and psychological support, and improving the value-oriented employment evaluation system, colleges and universities can truly realize the all-round development of students and high-quality full employment, and provide solid talent support for national development and national rejuvenation. In the future, the integration of the two needs to be further innovated in combination with digital technology and new changes in the employment market, so as to continuously enhance the pertinence and effectiveness of education.

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