

Exploration and Research on Integrating Ideological and Political Content into Yoga Course

Zirui Miao*, Lina Ji

School of Physical Education, Zunyi Normal University, Zunyi, China

*Corresponding author: miaozirui2020@163.com

Abstract: With the deepening of ideological and political reform in higher education courses, physical education courses, as an important component of higher education, undertake the fundamental task of cultivating morality and nurturing people. Yoga class is one of the popular public basic courses among college physical education students, especially among female students. Yoga courses, as an important component of physical education courses in universities, not only have the function of strengthening the body, but also contain rich ideological and political elements. This article takes yoga classes as the starting point to explore how to integrate ideological and political elements into yoga teaching, and achieve the goal of cultivating morality through physical fitness and promoting physical education.

Keywords: Ideological and Political Content; Yoga Courses; Physical Education; Course Integration

1. Introduction

Due to the large number of college students and a lack of understanding of ideological and political education, it is very important to integrate ideological and political elements into various professional courses in universities^[1,2]. Universities in European and American countries do not have the exact same form of ideological and political education as in China, but they attach equal importance to cultivating students' values, morals, social responsibility, and civic awareness through various methods such as general education, ethics courses, civic education, campus culture, and professional ethics. In fact, there are also cases of curriculum ideological and political education in other countries^[3].

Sports and physical education are of great significance to both individuals and countries^[4,5]. The importance of individuals is reflected in promoting physical health, maintaining mental health, and cultivating good qualities. The importance to society is reflected in promoting social harmony, reducing social problems, and advancing social civilization. The importance of the country is reflected in improving the physical fitness and health level of its citizens, enhancing the country's soft power and international influence, and promoting the development of the sports industry. Moreover, sports are not only about physical exercise, but also carry rich spiritual connotations, such as the spirit of hard work, teamwork, fair competition, perseverance, and patriotism. Consequently, physical education courses are available at all school age stages.

In universities, public physical education courses account for a large proportion, and there are a variety of sports projects to choose from. Some foreign projects are also quite popular, such as yoga. However, the current curriculum design focuses on students' mastery of technical movements and improvement of skill levels, neglecting the implicit function of sports, namely the education function, and lacking the integration of ideological and political elements and infiltration. Due to its origin in India, yoga does not have a traditional Chinese cultural foundation^[6]. Therefore, it is particularly important to integrate ideological and political elements into yoga courses.

2. Curriculum Ideology and Politics

The head of the Higher Education Department of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China stated that the ideological and political content of the curriculum clearly defines five main aspects^[7]. They are cultivating and practicing the core socialist values, strengthening the education of excellent traditional Chinese culture, vigorously promoting the national spirit centered on patriotism and the spirit of the times centered on reform and innovation, deepening constitutional and legal education, deepening education on professional ideals and professional ethics, respectively.

The difference between ideological and political courses and curriculum-based ideological and political education. The full name of the former is College Ideological and Political Theory Course, which refers to a series of compulsory ideological and political courses specially offered by Chinese universities to cultivate students' Marxist theoretical literacy, ideal beliefs, patriotism, moral cultivation, and legal awareness. The latter refers to the organic integration of ideological and political education elements into the teaching of various professional courses, achieving an organic unity of knowledge imparting, ability cultivation, and value guidance. It is an important teaching reform concept vigorously promoted in the field of higher education in China in recent years, reflecting the educational policy of "educating everyone, the whole process, and all aspects" (i.e. "three pronged education"). It is not to offer a separate ideological and political course, but to integrate ideological and political education content into all courses (especially professional courses), so that all types of courses can play a role in educating people, especially in shaping values. Curriculum based ideological and political education mainly involves patriotism, social responsibility, professional ethics, cultural confidence, scientific spirit, and awareness of the rule of law. Moreover, it has significant implications in various aspects of higher education in the new era, mainly reflected in the following aspects.

(1) The core measures to implement the fundamental task of cultivating virtue and talent. The fundamental task of education is to cultivate students' moral character, values, and sense of social responsibility, rather than just imparting knowledge and skills. It extends values education to all courses, making each course a channel for nurturing students, and every teacher a guide for students' growth.

(2) It realizes the organic unity of knowledge transmission and value guidance ^[8]. Traditional professional courses often focus more on imparting knowledge and skills, and do not pay enough attention to guiding values. The course of ideological and political education emphasizes the natural integration of values such as ideals and beliefs, patriotism, social responsibility, and professional ethics while teaching professional knowledge, so that students can unconsciously establish correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values in the process of learning knowledge.

(3) Cultivating a new generation of the times who are responsible for the great mission of national rejuvenation. Through the integration of professional education and ideological and political education, guide students to integrate their personal development into the overall development of the country, and become socialist builders and successors with both moral integrity and comprehensive development.

(4) Promoting the comprehensive improvement of teachers' teaching and nurturing abilities. In curriculum design and teaching implementation, teachers need to deeply explore the ideological and political resources in professional courses, integrate values education into teaching content and methods, and thus enhance their own educational awareness, ideological and political literacy, and teaching ability.

3. Yoga Courses in Public Physical Education

3.1 Overview of Yoga

Yoga is suitable for many age groups and is gender neutral. Morning yoga can awaken the body in the morning, mainly through gentle stretching and breathing. Evening Wind Down Yoga helps release daily fatigue and promotes sleep. In addition, even in the office, it is possible to practice for a short period of time in a small space to alleviate the discomfort of shoulder, neck, waist, and back caused by prolonged sitting. Yoga, as an ancient way of physical and mental cultivation, has become widely popular worldwide in recent years, with a large number of practitioners participating in it whether in gyms, studios, or online platforms. The reason why yoga is popular is that, in addition to exercising the body, it can also reduce stress and relieve anxiety ^[9,10]. The following are the main reasons why yoga is popular:

(1) Promoting physical and mental health, meet the health needs of modern people. Yoga improves physical health, relieves psychological stress, enhances focus and inner awareness.

(2) Suitable for different groups of people and highly inclusive. Suitable for different ages and physical conditions, flexible exercise methods, no strong confrontation and high safety.

(3) Emphasizing the unity of body and mind, in line with modern health concepts. Focusing on overall health, advocating for a natural and balanced lifestyle.

(4) Cultural Charm and Spiritual Pursuit. Originating from ancient wisdom and possessing cultural appeal. Enhancing self-awareness and spiritual growth.

(5) Social and aesthetic values. Yoga has strong social attributes and can shape a graceful figure and

enhance temperament.

(6) Modern Promotion and Media Influence. The celebrity and internet celebrity effect, social media platforms and video dissemination, business promotion and course diversification.

Table 1 shows the classifications according to practice style and genre. In fact, there are not only these classifications of yoga, but also many other types ^[11].

Table 1: Yoga classified by practice style and genre.

Style	characteristic
Hatha Yoga	The most basic and traditional form of yoga, emphasizing the coordination of Asana and Pranayama, with a slower pace, suitable for beginners
Vinyasa Yoga	The movements and breathing are synchronized, and the postures are connected through smooth transitions. The rhythm is fast and dynamic.
Ashtanga Yoga	A high-intensity exercise with a fixed sequence, including a series of prescribed postures, emphasizing strength, flexibility, and endurance, with a fast and rigorous rhythm.
Yin Yoga	The posture lasts for a long time (usually 3-5 minutes), with slow and static movements, mainly stretching deep connective tissue, fascia, and joints.
Hot Yoga / Bikram Yoga	Practice 26 fixed or non fixed yoga poses in high temperature environments, approximately 38-40°C, sweating profusely
Iyengar Yoga	Emphasize precise positioning, use of assistive tools such as yoga tiles, yoga bands, chairs, etc., and pay attention to body alignment and safety.
Kundalini Yoga	Combining dynamic postures, breathing techniques, meditation, chanting, and energy control, to awaken the Kundalini energy within the body
Restorative Yoga	Using a large number of auxiliary tools such as pillows, blankets, yoga tiles to keep the body in a supported and relaxed state
Power Yoga	Strength and flexibility - these are the key points pursued by power yoga. There is no fixed posture arrangement, and each class can be different. People who do not like the repetitive posture sequence practice of Astanga find power yoga more attractive.
Forrest Yoga	The core focus is to enhance human strength and eliminate toxins through physical and mental healing. People who enjoy high-intensity training, pay attention to breathing, abdominal strength, and inverted three-dimensional exercises are particularly suitable for this genre.

3.2 Course Offerings

The public physical education course offered by the School of Physical Education at Zunyi Normal University has an option for yoga classes, which some students cannot choose before the start of each semester. From the course selection situation of our school, yoga courses are quite popular. Due to the inconvenience of counting the number of offline institutions offering yoga courses, we have listed some yoga courses on MOOC platforms ^[12,13]. In China, a well-known MOOC website is icourse 163 which is hosted by NetEase Corporation ^[14]. China University MOOC is an online education platform jointly launched by Higher Education Press and NetEase, undertaking the Ministry of Education's national high-quality open course task and providing MOOC courses from well-known Chinese universities to the public. Table 2 shows some yoga courses on MOOCs, four of which are national premium courses. Judging from the number of course participants, the courses are still very popular. In addition, there are more yoga classes available on commercial video websites.

Table 2: Case Study of Yoga Course Based on Chinese University MOOC Platform.

Course Name	Universities or Colleges	National Premium Course
Yoga and Health	Ningbo University	Yes
College Student Yoga	Peking University	Yes

Practice Yoga Step by Step	Shanghai Jiaotong University	Yes
Yoga	Jiangxi Science & Technology Normal University	Yes
Fitness Yoga	Beihang University	No
College Fitness Yoga	Beijing Institute of Technology	No
The Beauty of Yoga	Jinling Institute of Technology	No
Yoga and Physical and Mental Health	Nanjing Forestry University	No
Shape Up Yoga	Shanghai International Studies University	No
Yoga and Healthy Living	Jinling Institute of Technology	No
Sports Cube for Shape Shaping - Sports Dance and Yoga	Southwest Jiaotong University	No
Yoga	Yancheng Institute of Technology	No

It is rare to find yoga related courses on MOOC websites supported by well-known universities abroad, such as Coursera (www.coursera.org), edX (www.edx.org), FutureLearn (www.futurelearn.com) and Udacity (<https://www.udacity.com/>). The reason is that these MOOC platforms mainly focus on the dissemination of science and technology, allowing students to learn practical job skills. However, there are thousands of yoga related courses on commercial MOOC online platform Udemy (www.udemy.com)^[15].

4. Integrating Ideological and Political Content into Yoga Courses

At present, there is a lack of unified standards in the content of yoga courses in universities, as there are numerous yoga related movement designs that cannot be fully applied in teaching. Many contents do not conform to the construction of physical education courses in universities. Most of them simply copy the paid courses of commercial fitness centers or refer to yoga courses from other universities for compilation, without setting teaching content according to the needs of our school. The core problem in yoga course teaching is the failure to inspire students' aesthetics, shape their sensory cognition, cultivate their physical exercise ability, and guide their psychological problems. The following are the main integration points and specific explanations of yoga courses and ideological and political education courses.

Health awareness and life education. Yoga emphasizes the unity of body and mind, and emphasizes a healthy lifestyle. This junction is in line with the overall strategic policy of Healthy China. The integration of ideological and political education can be carried out from three aspects. This program aims to guide students toward correct health concepts through a focus on physical and mental balance and the development of healthy habits. By integrating the Healthy China 2030 strategy, it underscores the critical link between individual health management and broader societal well-being, empowering students to take ownership of their health. By practicing postures and regulating breathing, students can appreciate the importance of harmony between body and mind, and thus understand the value and meaning of life.

Self discipline and perseverance spirit, that is to say, cultivating willpower and character. The combining point is that yoga requires long-term practice, focusing on breath control and precise postures. The points of integrating ideological and political education include these aspects. To cultivate in students the qualities of perseverance, self-discipline, and self-improvement, and to temper their willpower through consistent practice. This guides them to recognize that success requires cumulative and persistent effort, enabling them to maintain a positive and driven attitude in all endeavors. Furthermore, by persevering through postural difficulties, we build their resilience to face challenges without succumbing to defeat.

Unity of body and mind and inner cultivation. This belongs to the excellent traditional Chinese culture. Yoga has similarities with traditional Chinese health culture such as qigong, tai chi, and traditional Chinese medicine, both emphasizing regulating the body, regulating breath, and regulating the heart. This study employs a comparative analysis of yoga and traditional Chinese health concepts, specifically examining the functional parallels between the operation of "qi" and the practice of "Pranayama" (yogic breath control). This comparative framework is designed to guide students toward a deeper understanding of foundational Chinese philosophical ideas, namely the "Harmony between Heaven and Man" and the "Unity of Internal and External Cultivation." The pedagogical objectives are to cultivate students' inner refinement, enhance their concentration and emotional self-regulation, and promote their holistic

personality development. Furthermore, this approach advocates for the application of Eastern wisdom—such as the principles of "overcoming hardness with softness" and "acting in accordance with natural trends"—to foster a strengthened sense of cultural confidence.

Respect and tolerance. This belongs to a multicultural and community with a shared future for mankind. It introduces the history and cultural origins of yoga, cultivates students' respect for various global traditions, and enhances their cross-cultural communication awareness. By learning from outstanding cultural achievements from abroad, students can enhance their international perspective and open mindedness, while establishing the concept of cultural mutual learning and shared beauty. This initiative advocates for the vision of a "community with a shared future for mankind" by highlighting the shared values—such as the universal pursuit of health, harmony, and inner peace—across diverse cultures.

Team atmosphere and collective consciousness. This belongs to the spirit of sociality and cooperation. During group exercises, students are guided to maintain focus and silence, demonstrating consideration for others and cultivating public awareness and etiquette. Through interaction and mutual support, their sense of teamwork and collective honor is enhanced. This fosters a classroom atmosphere of mutual assistance and harmonious coexistence, thereby developing effective interpersonal skills and a strong sense of social responsibility.

Emotional management and mental health. This belongs to the level of psychological education. Through yoga practice, students learn to regulate their emotions and calm their minds, thereby enhancing their self-awareness and emotional management skills. This discipline guides them to proactively care for their mental well-being, maintain inner peace amidst a fast-paced lifestyle, and build greater resilience to stress. Based on the current situation of psychological problems among college students, the course aims to convey positive attitudes towards life and psychological adjustment methods, and implement the goal of psychological education.

Table 3: The combination of yoga classes and the spirit of the Zunyi Meeting.

Dimension	Yoga elements	Spirit of Zunyi Meeting	Fusion target
Willpower	Perseverance, endurance, and breakthrough	Hard work and perseverance	Forge one's will and face difficulties head-on
Self-examination	Mind and body awareness, breath adjustment meditation	Seeking truth from facts and self correcting	Cultivate a pragmatic way of thinking
Goal belief	Internal determination and focus on the present moment	Firm faith, never forget the original intention	Remember the original intention and mission, focus on the goal
Team climate	Respect others and practice collectively	Unity and cooperation, considering the overall situation	Enhance collective consciousness and overall perspective
Inner strength	Independently complete the posture and self adjustTechnology	Independent and courageous in taking on responsibilities	Awaken inner subjectivity and sense of responsibility

It should be noted that Zunyi Normal University is located in the revolutionary city of Zunyi. The world-renowned Zunyi Meeting was once held here ^[16]. Therefore, it is very important to integrate the spirit of the Zunyi Conference into yoga classes and reflect ideological and political elements. Students will feel familiar after learning about these teaching cases because of the familiarity with Zunyi city and Zunyi Meeting. Table 3 shows the detail combination contents.

5. Conclusion

Sports play a crucial role in national development and national rejuvenation, and yoga, as an important option in public physical education courses in universities, needs to play an important role in nurturing talents. Yoga teachers should actively explore ideological and political elements and do a good job in curriculum construction during the educational process. This article provides an overview of the relevant content of ideological and political education courses and yoga courses. Afterwards, a fusion method of yoga and ideological and political education in the curriculum was proposed. Finally, we proposed to combine the ideological and political content of yoga courses with the local characteristics

of the city where the university is located. The design of these contents is aimed at cultivating diverse college students.

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