

# New Exploration of the Solution Mode of “Hollow Disease” Problem from the Perspective of Ideological and Political Education in Curriculum

Yachong Tian\*, Fengmei Chen, Lei Jia

Silicon Lake Vocational and Technical College, Kunshan 215300, Jiangsu Province, China

\*Corresponding author: Yachong Tian, tian20240703@163.com

**Copyright:** © 2024 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

**Abstract:** “Hollow disease” is a common psychological and mental illness among young people today. Similar to depression and easily misdiagnosed as depression, it is actually different from depression. On the basis of exploring the reasons for its formation, this article analyzes the current lack of education and proposes a solution to the problem: curriculum ideology and politics.

**Keywords:** Hollow disease; Course ideology and politics; Educating students; Young people; Psychological disorders

**Online publication:** October 25, 2024

## 1. The definition and manifestations of “Hollow disease”

### 1.1. The proposal for Hollow disease

In 2016, Dr. Xu Kaiwen from Peking University stated in a speech at a family education summit that a survey showed that many students at Peking University could not find the meaning of learning or had a negative attitude towards learning. Similar phenomena also existed in other universities, which he called the “hollow disease” of the times <sup>[1]</sup>.

### 1.2. Definition of “Hollow disease”

“Hollow disease” usually refers to psychological disorders caused by deficiencies in values, and is a phenomenon that some students in Chinese universities have faced or are currently experiencing in recent years. Mainly manifested as feeling very confused about life, not knowing the meaning of one’s existence, having a strong sense of loneliness, and exhibiting anxious psychology. Although students who experience such psychological problems do not suffer too much trauma during their growth process, they do not feel the meaning and motivation of survival <sup>[2]</sup>.

### **1.3. Analysis of the causes of “Hollow disease” formation**

The reason for the formation of hollow disease may be the result of psychological trauma caused by family, society, and school together:

- (1) In terms of family: disharmony in the family environment, neglect of children by parents, and children growing up in an environment lacking care may lead to personality and physical and mental distortions, psychological defects, and ultimately escape from reality.
- (2) In terms of education: For a long time, education has only focused on knowledge education and neglected students' physical and mental health, using exam scores as the measurement standard, causing huge learning pressure for students. Students' personalities and interests have not been fully developed, becoming numb and confused. Under the invisible pressure of political achievements, there is a common problem of emphasizing scientific research over teaching in higher education. Therefore, university teachers tend to focus more on improving student performance and do not have much time and energy to pay attention to students' inner needs.
- (3) Young people lack awareness of their psychological level or suffer psychological harm, self-exile, and cannot find direction.

### **1.4. Specific manifestations of “Hollow disease”**

There are mainly the following manifestations:

- (1) Often characterized by low mood, decreased interest, and lack of interest, similar to depression;
- (2) Strong feelings of loneliness and worthlessness, feeling that life is meaningless and living in a virtual world;
- (3) I handle interpersonal relationships well, but I am very concerned about how others perceive me, so I often feel exhausted;
- (4) Long-term confusion, feeling lost about the future, and not knowing where to strive;
- (5) Traditional psychological therapy and medication treatment have poor results<sup>[3]</sup>;

### **1.5. Core issues**

The core issue of “Hollow disease” is the lack of values that support students' sense of meaning and existence. Therefore, the question we need to consider is how adolescent hollow disease is caused. How to prevent and treat hollow diseases, as parents, schools, society, teenagers and other different roles, how to deal with hollow diseases<sup>[4]</sup>.

### **1.6. Reflection**

From the perspective of university education, blindly blaming basic education and neglecting the impact of university education on students' mental health is not conducive to solving the problem of hollow disease. Therefore, educators must start from themselves, think and reflect on whether their actions in educational work are beneficial to students' physical and mental health. Paying attention to students' physical and mental health in teaching activities is the most fundamental measure to avoid “Hollow disease.”

## **2. What is missing in education as the “Hollow disease” spreads?**

“Hollow disease” is manifested in young people, but the fundamental cause of the problem lies in education.

The purpose of education should not only be to cultivate knowledge but also to develop people's values and outlook on life. At present, the educational direction seems to have deviated, resulting in children thinking that they are living for others and following others' arrangements <sup>[5]</sup>.

Values determine a person's self-awareness, directly influencing and determining their ideals and beliefs. Different values determine different life goals and pursuit directions. A person with firm and upright values is definitely a sunny, cheerful, and positive person. Fragile values can easily lead to collapse. Teenagers are generally inexperienced in the world, longing for hope and having beautiful goals for the future. Once their values collapse, they are prone to confusion and anxiety. As the main place for teenagers to live and study, the quality of the learning environment in schools has a significant impact on the psychological health development of teenagers. It can be said that the occurrence of hollow diseases in adolescents is inevitably related to school education.

### **2.1. Free thinking and creativity**

The indoctrination of the idea of "knowledge changes destiny" has led young students to be influenced by their parents, teachers, and social environment, focusing on academic exams and improving exam scores. The free-thinking of teenage students is suppressed and constrained. When teenagers need creative thinking in their work, their thoughts have become fixed, causing them to lose their motivation and talent for innovation.

### **2.2. The joy of exploration**

The driving force behind scientific research and creative work comes from researchers' interest in their work, rather than simply pursuing benefits and wealth. Recognizing creative work is necessary, but if recognition of work is turned into an evaluation indicator, interest in creative work will also be greatly reduced, and creative thinking will also be reduced. For example, if a galloping wild horse is domesticated and raised, its wildness will also be greatly reduced. Turning the interest in exploration into a way to receive rewards, under the influence of this implicit environment, once the rewards are lost, there is no more joy in exploration.

### **2.3. Trust and integrity crisis**

The ancients said: Without trust, a person cannot stand firm; without trust, a career cannot prosper, without trust, a country will decline. But between students and education, many of the practices of schools are more like a form of prevention and regulation for students, such as cheating in exams. Although cheaters are punished by the system, they are not from personal introspection. In many schools, the student code of conduct has become the standard for judging students, but whether these rules and systems are reasonable is debatable and cannot become a moral code of conduct, exacerbating the crisis of trust between students and schools.

### **2.4. Life is above everything else**

Michel Pan said: Life is a difficult and narrow valley, only brave people can pass through it. In one's life, it is inevitable to encounter setbacks and failures that one cannot bear, making one feel that life is heading toward another state of despair. At this time, it is important to need to persevere and not give up easily. Because when you step out of the old horn tip, you will find that there is nothing. So, the bottom line of education that schools must instill in students is that life is above everything else.

## **2.5. Sincere care**

Education should not only be a strict requirement for students but also a care and assistance for their physical and mental health. Only by comprehensively coordinating the healthy development of students can we cultivate talents with sound personalities that meet the requirements of their positions in society. Successful education should teach students to have empathy, gratitude, and a sound personality. Only in this way can education become sustainable development.

## **3. The role of ideological and political education in preventing “Hollow diseases” in the curriculum**

Curriculum ideological and political education is a comprehensive educational concept that regards “cultivating virtue and nurturing people” as the fundamental task of education <sup>[6]</sup>. It was intended to emphasize the insertion of ideological and political elements into different courses while imparting knowledge to accomplish the dual task of ideological and political education. The new teaching form of ideological and political education in courses has a positive effect on fundamentally preventing “Hollow diseases.”

### **3.1. Enhance students’ abilities in both intelligence and wisdom**

The purpose of ideological and political education curricula is to cultivate students’ professional abilities in professional courses, while teachers should also pay attention to their physical and mental health. Through curriculum ideological and political education, teachers should adhere to the guiding position of ideology, strengthen cultural confidence, enhance students’ confidence, and achieve the ideal effect of ideological and political education. The combination of professional courses and ideological and political courses, working together and complementing each other, enhances students’ abilities in both intelligence and wisdom. Both professional courses and ideological and political courses can only improve one aspect of ability <sup>[7]</sup>.

### **3.2. Helps to cultivate interdisciplinary and composite talents**

The “ideological and political courses” in universities are not simply a combination of courses and ideological and political education, but a comprehensive discipline that integrates philosophy, political science, ethics, psychology, sociology, education, law, literature, history, and other professional knowledge. Its essence is to help college students better and actively engage in the study of professional course knowledge and adapt to society. Interdisciplinary education requires breaking down barriers between traditional disciplines, requiring teachers to integrate relevant traditional subject resources, and promoting the integration of basic and applied disciplines. Provide students with a broader academic perspective and richer learning experience.

### **3.3. The essence of ‘ideological and political education in the curriculum’ is a curriculum perspective**

Curriculum ideological and political education does not require the opening of a new course or the addition of an activity, but rather the appropriate use of ideological and political education elements in the knowledge transmission of subject-specific courses, and the function of “cultivating morality and nurturing people” in teaching activities. Curriculum ideological and political education is not the task of a certain subject or teacher, but the responsibility of all teachers to achieve the goal of educating students throughout the entire curriculum. After integrating “ideological and political elements” into professional or basic courses, rich and colorful

classroom presentations can be used to help students adjust their mentality, solve negative psychological obstacles encountered in the exploration process of professional courses, and thus help students transform their learning methods and improve the learning efficiency of professional course knowledge<sup>[8]</sup>.

### **3.4. The trinity of curriculum, teachers, and students is indispensable**

The target audience of course ideological and political education is students, and course ideological and political education is a means that reflects the transformation of the core concept of course construction. The implementation of course ideological and political education is the responsibility of all teaching staff. Whether the implementation of ideological and political education in the curriculum is successful depends on whether the curriculum has a “soul,” and whether the curriculum has a “soul” depends on whether the teaching teacher has a “soul.” Teachers need to “let people with faith speak of faith.” Therefore, in the process of teaching ideological and political education in the curriculum, the curriculum, students, and teachers are indispensable<sup>[9]</sup>. Only by doing a good job in ideological and political education can we achieve the fundamental task of cultivating morality and nurturing people.

### **3.5. The power of ideological and political education lies in shaking the human soul and guiding confusion**

“Curriculum Ideological and Political” originates from real life and is integrated into the essence of the spirit of the times. From the perspective of use, although it has no use value, it has the value of determining the direction. Its power lies in shocking the human soul and pointing out the maze<sup>[10]</sup>.

The primary issue in education is what kind of people to cultivate. To educate people, one must first cultivate morality. Without morality, one cannot stand firm. The fundamental aspect of educating people lies in cultivating moral character. Education should always adhere to the principles of building oneself, learning, and teaching with morality, strengthen the education and guidance of students’ worldviews, life views, and values, establish correct national, ethnic, historical, and cultural views for contemporary students, and cultivate more talents with comprehensive development in morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor for society.

The concept of “ideological and political education in courses” is different from the traditional teaching concept of ideological and political education. It regards all courses as the main channel for moral education and education integrates ideological and political elements into the teaching and reform of different courses, and effectively combines knowledge imparting with value guidance. It adheres to the principle that knowledge is power and value determines direction<sup>[11]</sup>.

### **3.6. Helps to strengthen the learning motivation of college students**

High ideals, firm beliefs, and tenacious perseverance are essential qualities for those who make achievements and climb the summit, which has been proven by countless great figures. Introducing ideological and political elements in the process of imparting professional knowledge, guiding students to form internal motivation, can greatly improve the teaching effectiveness of professional courses while enhancing students’ literacy<sup>[12]</sup>.

### **3.7. Helps to enhance the attractiveness of professional course teaching**

Although “ideological and political education in courses” emphasizes putting ideological values first, it does not “ideologize” professional courses, nor does it lower the training objectives of professional education, nor

can it replace the learning of professional knowledge<sup>[13]</sup>. The course “ideological and political education” is the integration of ideological and political elements with knowledge points in professional courses. It requires teachers to not only teach professional knowledge, but also explore the moral education connotation, break the obscurity and boredom of traditional professional courses, and make the subject content richer and more in-depth. In the process of implementing “ideological and political education in the curriculum,” teachers also need to innovate teaching methods based on the characteristics of the curriculum, integrate humanistic and emotional factors, make the imparting of knowledge more emotional, help enhance the attractiveness of professional course teaching, and improve classroom teaching effectiveness<sup>[14]</sup>.

## 4. Conclusion

Ideological and political education plays a guiding role in helping college students establish a correct worldview, life values and moral values. Course ideological and political education is the cornerstone of cultivating the psychological and ideological and political literacy of college students, which helps to cultivate their firm beliefs, tenacious will, and excellent character.

“Hollow disease” originates from inner emptiness and confusion. Course ideological and political education can help students recognize their value, receive sufficient feedback from those around them, and affirm their value. The value of a person can be reflected in two aspects: recognition of their abilities and service to others. It can also be understood as love and identification, which are intertwined and can bring a sense of value to people. Life will become more powerful, and the heart will naturally not be empty<sup>[15]</sup>.

## Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## References

- [1] Xu K, 2016, The Hollow Disease of the Times: The Disaster of Utilitarian Exam-Oriented Education, viewed August 18, 2016, <http://mt.sohu.com/20160818/n464793341.shtml>.
- [2] Hu B, 2023, What Is the “Hollow Disease” of Contemporary College Students? How to Adjust? *Adolescent Health*, 21(10): 56.
- [3] Nan F, Nan Y, 2024, Research on the Causes and Countermeasures of “Hollow Disease” Among College Students. *New West*, 2024(2): 119–122.
- [4] Tian W, Liu C, 2020, Psychological Health Education and Ideological and Political Education for College Students from the Perspective of “Hollow Disease.” *Modern Vocational Education*, 16: 13–16.
- [5] Ling X, Chen L, 2019, The Necessity and Value of Promoting Ideological and Political Education in Courses in Universities. *Western Journal*, 19(1): 34–38.
- [6] China Education News Network, 2021, How to Integrate Ideological and Political Concepts into Subject Education, viewed May 14, 2021, [https://m.sohu.com/a/466320304\\_243614](https://m.sohu.com/a/466320304_243614).
- [7] Liu X, Huang D, Yan J, et al., A Brief Discussion on the Same Direction of General Education Courses and Ideological and Political Theory Courses Under the Concept of “Course Ideology and Politics.” *Journal of Jiangsu Vocational and Technical College of Economics and Trade*, 160(2): 82–84.

- [8] Zhang Y, Jia Q, Yu M, et al., 2022, The Selection and Exploration of the Deep Integration Path Between Professional Basic Courses and Ideological and Political Courses. *Higher Science Education*, 162(2): 88–93.
- [9] Xiang B, Wu Y, Yang L, 2020, The “Four Dimensions” of Ideological and Political Construction in College Curriculum. *Heilongjiang Higher Education Research*, 38(4): 152–155.
- [10] Wang Y, 2023, Research on Teaching Innovation of Integrating New Concepts into University Ideological and Political Courses: Taking the Concept of “Widely Practicing Socialist Core Values” as an Example. *Time Report*, 2023(12): 146–148.
- [11] Zhang Y, Li C, 2023, College Students’ ‘Hollow Illness’ is Worrying, How Can Families and Schools Work Together. *China Youth Daily*, July 27, 2023.
- [12] Zhou T, Peng Y, Wang Y, et al., 2024, Exploration of Ideological and Political Education in Medical Microbiology Experimental Course Guided by Intrinsic Motivation. *University Education*, 2024(1): 122–125.
- [13] Feng L, Li L, Zhang L, et al., 2023, The Formation and Coping Strategies of the Phenomenon of “Hollow Disease” Among College Students: Based on the Perspective of Educational Utilitarianism. *Higher Education Journal*, 9(31): 15–18.
- [14] Jin Y, 2019, Research on the Influencing Factors of the Phenomenon of “Hollow Disease” Among College Students, thesis, Lanzhou University.
- [15] Shi C, 2023, Get Rid of “Hollow Disease” and Enhance the Sense of Meaning in Youth’s Lives. *Home Technology*, 2023(5): 13–14.

**Publisher’s note**

Bio-Byword Scientific Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.