Innovation and Optimization of the Blended Teaching Paradigm of the Open University: Based on the Perspective of Experiential Learning Theory

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Abstract

The scientific and advanced nature of the teaching paradigm of the Open University not only directly represents the overall appearance and actual level of teaching, but also essentially determines the quality of talent training in the university. Innovating and optimizing the blended teaching paradigm is an important way to improve the quality of university teaching, and it is an inevitable way for the Open University to complete the mission of high-quality development of lifelong education. This paper starts with the current situation and problems of the blended teaching paradigm of the Open University, and re-examines, innovates and optimizes the original blended teaching paradigm. With the goal of effectively improving the teaching quality of the Open University, and guided by the latest progress in teaching theory, it analyzes the basic logic and practical paths of the construction of the Open University's blended teaching paradigm based on experiential learning theory.

Key words: The blended teaching paradigm; Experiential learning theory; Innovation; Optimization

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, China's education policy has clearly pointed out that the country should build an education system that serves the lifelong learning of the whole people. The education system should make use of the advantages of online education and artificial intelligence, innovate education and learning methods, and accelerate the development of a more open and flexible education system suitable for everyone. This is not only a new requirement for education, but also a new mission of lifelong education of the Open University in the new era. As a university without walls dedicated to the deep integration of modern information technology and education, the Open University has always been working hard in Internet + education and has formed its own unique advantages. On January 12, 2016, the Ministry of Education issued a document on running the Open University well, and set clear goals for the teaching quality of the Open University. The document proposes that the Open University should further form an effective quality assurance system, promote the innovation of talent training models, strive to meet the diverse and personalized learning needs of the people, and make greater contributions to the construction of a flexible and open lifelong education system. Blended teaching is an inevitable trend in the development of higher education. Jing Degang, president of the Open University of China, said that the diversity trend of higher education in the future needs first-class open universities, and the development of universities in the future must be a hybrid teaching knowledge dissemination and innovation complex combining online and offline. Therefore, the innovation and optimization of blended teaching paradigm has become the logical premise and inevitable path for Open University to complete the mission of high-quality development of lifelong education. For the Open University, which is undergoing transformation and development, it is of great practical significance

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to use modern information technology to develop new achievements and high-quality educational resources, and to innovate and optimize the blended teaching paradigm. Based on the experiential learning theory put forward by David Kolb, this paper discusses the basic logic and practical path of innovation and optimization of blended teaching paradigm in Open University.

2. THE MAIN CONNOTATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT OF DAVID KOLB'S EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THEORY

2.1 The Main Connotation of Experiential Learning Theory

David Kolb, an American professor of organizational behavior, put forward the theory of experiential learning based on the research on experiential learning by John Dewey, Kurt Lewin and Jean Piaget. It believes that learning is the process of creating knowledge through the transformation of experience. It aims to directly gain specific experience through participating in specific activities. Then internalise the activities participated in into logical and abstract experience through review and reflection. At the same time, this experience is verified and used in new situations, so as to further comprehend and create new experiences, and realize the creation, comprehension and transformation of experience in the continuous process of continuous cycles. In other words, the experiential learning theory believes that learning is a continuous cycle of the acquisition of specific experiences, the conduct of reflection and observation, the generalization of abstract concepts, and the completion of active practice. Experiential learning is mainly to let learners fully participate in the learning process, making learners truly become the protagonist of the learning process. The role of teachers is no longer to impart knowledge unilaterally, but to make full use of flexible, diverse, intuitive and visual teaching methods to encourage learners to actively participate in the teaching process. It makes students have an urge to learn, and provide a prerequisite for voluntarily and wholeheartedly devoted to the learning process in the later period.

2.2 The Enlightenment of Experiential Learning Theory to the Blended Teaching Paradigm of the Open University

2.2.1 The Application of Experiential Learning Theory Is Conducive to Enhancing Learners' Interest in Learning

Experiential learning theory emphasizes that learning is present. Instructional design should focus on the penetration of experiential situations; strengthen the life experience of learners, the interaction between learners and the world, so as to create an experiential learning situation of returning to life and practicing. Experiential learning enables learners to establish the connection between their own experience and learning content, and achieve the purpose of concrete understanding of abstract cognition. This can greatly solve the biggest common problem of open education students for a long time: weak theoretical foundation, prominent contradictions between work and study, weak self-learning ability, etc. It can be more conducive to enhancing the learning interest of open education students.

2.2.2 The Application of Experiential Learning Theory Can Improve Learners' Ability to Apply What They Have Learned

Experiential learning uses a cooperative learning method, which is learner-centered, fully applies flexible and intuitive teaching methods, encourages learners to actively participate in the teaching process, and strengthens the information exchange between teachers and learners as well as between learners. Also, learners can deeply comprehend and master the knowledge they have learned, and can apply this knowledge to practice. This can attract students' participation and create a flexible and attractive teaching environment, stimulate students' potential to think and practice in online classrooms and practical teaching, and enhance learners' ability to apply what they have learned.

2.2.3 Experiential Learning Is More in Line With the Cognitive Preferences of Open University Learners

Experiential learning emphasizes that learning is a changing, interactive process, and that learning activities are designed and supported differently at different stages. Teachers set up a scaffold for the entire self-learning process of learners, and provide guidance and support for experiential learning at different stages. In the teaching process, teachers should consider whether the tools or resources provided are valuable, whether learners are willing to use the resources, whether the evaluation methods are dynamic and diverse, and whether they perceive the emotional experience of learners. Instructional design also includes learning activities in which learners interact with the environment, and at the same time considers whether they can stimulate learners' interest in active participation, whether they can mobilize learners' enthusiasm and practice reflection, and whether learners' active participation can promote their development. This is more in line with the cognitive preferences of Open University learners.

3. PERSPECTIVE ON THE PRESENT SITUATION AND PROBLEMS OF THE TEACHING PARADIGM OF OPEN UNIVERSITY

3.1 Definition and Types of Teaching Paradigms of the Open University

Paradigm is essentially a theoretical system and theoretical framework. The theories, laws, and laws of

the paradigm within the framework of this system are generally accepted by people. Paradigm is the coordinate, frame of reference and basic way to carry out scientific research, establish scientific system, and apply scientific thought. Teaching paradigm is the pedagogical term announced in 2013, which is the most basic definition or basic explanation of teaching. The Open University teaching paradigm refers to the sum of theories, models, methods and experiences gradually formed during the development of the Open University. It reflects the Open University practitioners, especially teachers and managers, on the nature and supporting theories of Open University education. The teaching paradigm abstracts and structures the educational practice experience of the Open University, and finally forms an independent Open University teaching paradigm that is different from other universities.

From the level, the open education teaching paradigm is divided into three levels: the first level is the world view level, which mainly refers to the theoretical orientation and value orientation of the open education teaching paradigm. The second level is the methodological level, which mainly refers to the basic methodological principles that must be adhered to in the development of open education teaching. The third level is the specific operation method of practice, which mainly refers to the specific method and operation mode used in the teaching process of open education. Scientifically distinguishing the types and levels of open education teaching paradigms is the basis and premise for us to clearly and objectively determine the problems existing in the current open education teaching paradigms.

3.2 The Main Problems Existing in the Teaching Paradigm of the Open University

The Open University of China (formerly known as China Central Radio and Television University) was established in February 1979. It is a new type of institution of higher learning established according to the national conditions of China at that time and fully absorbing the educational philosophy and teaching paradigm of the Open University of the United Kingdom's distance education. The school has created a precedent for flexible education, and established a higher education system with long-distance teaching such as television, radio, and correspondence.

After more than 40 years of development, China's Open University has developed rapidly, and people's understanding and practice of the basic categories and basic laws of open education have gradually improved. More importantly, through continuous exploration and innovation, China has formed some unique teaching paradigms of open education, such as the government-led paradigm, the social adaptation paradigm, and the attempted integration of teaching and modern educational technology. It is the influence and dominance of these paradigms that constitute the actual status and problems

of China's open education. The following is my reflection and analysis of the current open education teaching paradigm according to the three levels of paradigm theory.

3.2.1 The Main Problems of the Teaching Paradigm of Open Education at the Level of Worldview

The first is that the open education teaching paradigm is not accurate, scientific and systematic in understanding the world outlook and value issues such as the status and nature of the Open University as a new type of university. Due to various historical and objective reasons, the top-level design of the Open University is simple and extensive. The state's policy support for the Open University is not strong enough, and the funding for running schools is insufficient. The majors and curriculum of open education courses are unscientific, the training of teachers, technology and management of the Open University is lagging behind, and there is a lack of high-level, subject-leading teachers.

The second is the theoretical orientation and research depth of open education. The lack of in-depth research on the educational practice of the Open University, the insufficient summarization and generalization of the laws of running schools and teaching, and the lack of learning, absorption and application of modern advanced education and teaching theories lead to insufficient theoretical guidance for the practice of the Open University. Therefore, the due role of the Open University in the process of my country's modernization construction has not been fully and effectively played.

The third is that the theoretical research and innovation of open education cannot keep up with the times and the rapid development of cognitive science, and the development of the Open University is not fully integrated with modern educational technology, social development, rural grassroots, and the market economy. This leads to a series of problems such as the superficialization of technology application and the separation of training goals from the actual needs of society and learners.

3.2.2 The Main Problems of the Teaching Paradigm of Open Education at the Level of Basic Methodology

Compared with western developed countries, China's Open University has the characteristics of late start, short history but large scale of development. Therefore, there are many problems in the basic methodological level of the Open University teaching paradigm. First, the methodological paradigm dominated by the government positions the Open University as a supplementary higher education in addition to the mainstream higher education, with little participation from all social forces. Secondly, the methodology with the rapid improvement of higher education qualifications as the main goal has led to the infinite expansion of the Open University in scale. However, deep-seated problems such as teaching scenarios, teaching processes, and the quantity and quality

of teachers have seriously affected the teaching quality of the Open University. To a certain extent, it has resulted in a huge waste of human resources and social capital of the country and society. Third, the methodology based on the theory of in-service personnel's social adaptation has caused open education to be in a passive state for a long time, and the subjective initiative of students has not been greatly released. Fourth, the methodology based on autonomous learning and online learning makes the quality of offline teaching worrying. At the same time, there is a lack of online learning resources construction and sharing mechanisms, and insufficient support services for students' learning, which makes students' autonomous learning and online learning tours a mere formality. Fifth, the methodology based on the principle of a single discipline ignores the highly overlapping nature of modern education disciplines and the society's development needs for comprehensive talents, resulting in serious problems such as low comprehensive application ability of students and low social adaptability.

3.2.3 The Main Problems at the Educational Method Level of the Teaching Paradigm of Open Education

Due to the influence of factors such as the controllability of the modern teaching paradigm and the expansion of the Open University's scale, there are many problems in the specific teaching method paradigm of the Open University. First, the single teaching method is still the main teaching method of the Open University, whether it is online education or offline teaching education. This leads to the lack of individualized education and the lack of level education in the Open University. Second, although the concept of students' autonomous learning advocated by the Open University teaching is generally in line with the development trend and requirements of modern education, it needs to be pointed out that the realization of autonomous learning has an impact on learners' cognitive foundation, learning motivation and requirements. Learning support requirements are relatively high. However, due to the fact that the Open University actually implements the admissions policy of open school operation and loose entry and strict exit, the learning motivation and cognitive foundation of Open University learners often deviate from the requirements of autonomous learning. In addition, it is indeed difficult for the Open University to fully provide various learning support services that students need for autonomous learning, which makes it difficult for the Open University to ensure and control the quality of teaching. Third, because of various practical and subjective reasons, the knowledge instillation method is still the basic teaching method insisted on by the teachers of the Open University. This leads to students' low interest in learning and low active participation in the activities in the teaching process, thus affecting the smooth realization of teaching goals.

4. THE BASIC LOGIC OF CONSTRUCTING MIXED TEACHING PARADIGM IN OPEN UNIVERSITY BASED ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THEORY

The Open University has changed from the radio and television era to the Internet era, during which it has accumulated important practical experience in the development of higher education, which is not only forced by the iteration of advanced means of communication, but also the need of the transformation and development of the Open University, and the necessity of adapting to future education. Open universities should strengthen the top-level design, change the practice of imitating or copying ordinary universities in education and teaching, and earnestly change from academic compensation to knowledge compensation, from diploma improvement to ability improvement, and from online learning to online and offline integration.

4.1 Logical Starting Point: The Realistic Dilemma of the Blended Teaching Paradigm of the Open University

In response to the idea of the transition of online and offline blended teaching, there are a series of practical difficulties in the internal teaching of the Open University, such as weak quality awareness, unadvanced information technology, insufficient learning resources, and unprominent teaching staff.

4.1.1 The Quality Awareness Is Not Strong

Quality is the lifeblood of education and the foundation of the Open University's survival. From 2020, the Open University has started to tackle the phenomenon of "three chaos" and launched a quality defense war in the whole system. However, the concept of "paying attention to quality is courting death, and not paying attention to quality is waiting for death" is deeply ingrained in the thinking of some faculty members. The problems of not paying attention to teaching, tutoring, homework and examination often occur. Homework coping, cheating in exams, low level of papers and other phenomena often occur. For Open University, the quality of education is not only a development problem, but also a survival problem. Different from ordinary colleges and universities, under the condition of low student foundation and limited study time, what means to improve teaching quality is currently encountered in reality.

4.1.2 Information Technology Is not Advanced

Information technology is the fundamental ability of Open University, and the deep integration of modern information technology and education is the foundation for Open University to settle down. Although the Open University always adheres to the integration of

technology and education, and has always used advanced means of communication to carry out teaching, the rapid development of information technology, the backward popularization and application technology of online learning for teachers and students, the low bandwidth, the slow speed and the complex transformation are outstanding problems. At the same time, there are too many systems, the proliferation of apps, the separation of departments, the isolation of data and other issues are intertwined, creating a large number of information obstacles by means of information technology. If the application of technology can't play a leading role and become the national "Internet plus" education center, it will be difficult for the Open University to form a comparative advantage and fulfill the duties and missions entrusted by the state.

4.1.3 Learning Resources Are Not Abundant

Online education needs high-quality online learning resources. There are many learning resources in the Open University (there are more than 700 network core courses, 67,000 high-quality courses and 37,000 5-minute courses in the headquarters), but there is a serious shortage of learning resources that can be called excellent products, recognized by the market and welcomed by the masses. For schools with 238 majors, there are obviously too few network core courses, and some courses are not systematic, forward-looking, academic and applicable. There are also some problems in the 5-minute course, such as numerous and jumbled, chaotic classification and weak systematicness.

4.1.4 The Teaching Staff Is not Outstanding

The Open University system currently has 62,000 full-time teachers and 34,000 part-time teachers, a huge number. However, compared with teachers in ordinary colleges and universities, most of the teachers of the Open University do not face students directly, and most of their teaching and tutoring are online or in groups. "Managing" the class instead of teaching it directly has the problems of insufficient classroom teaching practice, less communication with students, poor targeting of teaching practice, neglect of scientific research and low teaching level.

4.2 Logical Basis: Experiential Learning Theory Empowers the Construction of the Open University Blended Teaching Paradigm

Experiential learning theory emphasizes that learning is present, connected, and interactive. Experiential learning should reflect that learning is a changing and continuous process. Therefore, teachers should have the ability to optimize and combine multimodal situational resources and advanced retrieval and analysis, and should pay attention to the dynamic generation of teaching methods, teaching materials and teaching evaluation. The teaching platform must have the function of providing a high-quality resource library for teachers to call. In the

teaching process, teachers should consider whether the provided tools or resources are valuable, whether learners are willing to use the resources, whether the evaluation methods are dynamic and diverse, whether they perceive the learners' emotional experience, and whether they can s

4.3 Logical Purpose: To Deeply Integrate the Theory of Experiential Learning With the Blended Teaching Paradigm of the Open University

As far as the Open University is concerned, the integration of experiential learning and blended teaching paradigm must do the following three points: first, to build an experiential learning environment assisted by artificial intelligence; second, to scientifically design experiential learning teaching and practical activities according to teaching objectives , and the third is to fully develop and utilize experiential learning resources and related tools. Its ultimate goal is to create an experiential learning environment with real experience, deep interaction and intelligent support services for learners. To this end, we must promote the upgrading of school informatization infrastructure, accelerate the construction of artificial intelligence equipment and smart education service platforms, strengthen the training of teachers on the application of modern technology, and continuously improve teachers' ability to carry out experiential learning and cognition teaching.

5. THE PRACTICE PATH OF INNOVATION AND OPTIMIZATION OF THE BLENDED TEACHING PARADIGM OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

5.1 Reconstructing Course Teaching Content and Teaching Activities According to Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential learning theory advocates that teaching activities should allow learners to feel the teaching objectives in real or near-real situations. Teachers need to reconstruct, discover, design, experience teaching content that matches the learning objectives in advance, and construct appropriate teaching activities, so that learners can feel familiar situations or known content and stimulate learning motivation. The presentation of content should conform to the laws of students' cognition and combine their perceptual and rational thinking.

5.2 Guided by Experiential Learning Cognition, Innovate and Optimize the Intelligent + Teaching of the Open University

The blended teaching paradigm can integrate the advantages of online learning, mobile learning and offline learning, and make full use of the power of industry experts to promote the occurrence of high-quality teaching. When the three elements of social presence,

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teaching presence, and cognitive presence reach a sufficient level, deep and meaningful learning can occur. In the specific operation, it is necessary to implement a blended teaching mode with online as the leading role and offline as the cooperation, so that offline face-to-face tutoring, offline practical teaching, online AI teaching, and online platform teaching can be distinguished from each other and promote each other. The blended teaching of online and offline integration should give learners a clear role or identity in teaching, and carry out practical activities that are unified with their learning goals, creating a truly highly-participated and personalized learning experience for students.

5.3 Using Modern Teaching Technology to Make Experiential Learning Cognition Run Through Blended Teaching

The creation of the teaching paradigm of experiential learning in the Open University is inseparable from the comprehensive application of modern teaching intelligence technology. We should make full use of modern multimedia cutting-edge technology and man-machine interaction technology to create experiential teaching environment, teaching resources and learning activities in Open University. Human-machine collaboration to optimize the learning experience can help learners reduce emotional anxiety in the learning process. Learning technologies such as ICALL, MALL, and CMC can provide strong technical support for teachers' instructional design. At the same time, Moodle platform, MOOC, cloud classroom, rain classroom, etc. can effectively improve the efficiency of classroom teaching. Modern teaching intelligence technology can accurately test the effectiveness of teaching, record and represent the learning process and results, and provide learners with full-process learning support.

5.4 Take Students as the Center and Firmly Grasp Students' Learning Needs and Cognitive Changes

Experiential teaching method is a kind of cooperative teaching. In the process of implementing experiential teaching, teachers should ensure students' leading role, encourage learners to actively participate in the teaching process, and stimulate students' potential of thinking and practice in online classroom and practical teaching, so as to realize the perfect connection between students' knowledge and ability. Experiential teaching is student-centered, but it is also inseparable from teamwork. In team learning, different students will have different understandings of the same problem, and these differences are the best way to brainstorm ideas and exchange knowledge. Students can deepen their understanding of knowledge, develop pioneering thinking and teamwork spirit, and enhance teamwork skills through group study, discussion and debate.

5.5 Improve the Level of Teachers' Blended Teaching Design by Using Experience Theory

In the practice of experiential teaching, instructional design should include experiential learning content, situational penetration and whole process learning support services based on big data. Teachers can design a work that is layered, constantly being refined, and can be further explored. It is also possible to provide learning content, establish a learning support community, and analyze and monitor student behavior data on a one-semester timeline. AI teachers, online and offline teachers can accompany and support learners together. They provide learners with personalized and intelligent learning services, always respond to the state of learners, and lead learners to self-directed learning.

6. CONCLUSION

Under the background that blended teaching has become an inevitable trend in the development of open education, the innovation and optimization of the blended teaching paradigm based on experiential learning theory has become the prerequisite for the Open University to complete the mission of high-quality development of lifelong education. However, the continuous reform and innovation of the teaching paradigm of open education is always a dynamic and long-term process. In practice, we must keep pace with the times, provide students with hierarchical and extensive activity situations and sufficient direct experience or alternative experience, and reconstruct course teaching content and teaching activities. At the same time, let students experience the whole process of participation, reflection, internalization and other learning activities, and timely feedback, evaluate, and use the experience gained in the process. We can innovate and optimize the intelligent teaching of the Open University, and use modern teaching technology to make experiential learning cognition run through blended teaching. Through the Internet, a huge and efficient technical tool and platform, effective teaching activities can be carried out, so as to achieve the optimization of learning performance.

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