Research on the Practice and Implementation Effect of General Education Reform in Private Universities under the Digital Background

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Abstract: The rapid development of digital technology is driving an urgent transformation of general education in private universities, a reform crucial for enhancing the quality of talent cultivation. This reform is influenced by internal factors such as institutional positioning and faculty quality, as well as external factors like policies and societal demands. It currently faces challenges including insufficient teacher digital capabilities, uneven distribution of teaching resources, and superficial integration of curriculum and technology. In practice, private universities are advancing reforms through measures such as constructing digital curriculum systems and innovating teaching models, which have already shown positive outcomes: improved comprehensive competencies of students, optimized teaching abilities of faculty, and upgraded resource governance levels within institutions. For the future, it is necessary to clarify positioning, enhance the digital literacy of teaching staff, and improve resource support to deepen the reforms.

Keywords: Digitalization; Private Universities; General Education; Reform Practice; Implementation Effect

1. Introduction

The vigorous development of the digital economy is propelling the education sector into a period of intelligent transformation. The deep integration of technologies such as big data, artificial intelligence, and blockchain with education and teaching is reshaping the talent cultivation models in higher education.

General education, serving as a core vehicle for cultivating students' comprehensive quality, interdisciplinary thinking, and lifelong learning abilities, has reform outcomes directly related to the enhancement of talent cultivation quality in private universities. Leveraging their flexible operational mechanisms, private universities are actively exploring digital reforms in general education. However, constrained by factors such as resource endowment and faculty structure, they still face numerous practical difficulties.

The "14th Five-Year Plan for Digital Economy Development" clearly proposes to "promote the in-depth integration of digital technology and education, and empower the high-quality development of education", pointing out the direction for the reform of general education in private universities.

Currently, general education in private universities not only needs to adapt to the trend of digital transformation but also solve problems existing in traditional education such as fragmented courses, single teaching models, and rigid evaluation systems based on their own positioning. Therefore, systematic research on the practical paths and implementation effects of general education reform in private universities under the digital background is of important theoretical value and practical significance for promoting the connotative development of private higher education[1].

2. Overview of General Education Reform in Private Universities Under the Digital Background

Under the wave of digitalization, the reform of general education in private universities is based on digital technology, focusing on cultivating students' digital literacy, interdisciplinary thinking, and comprehensive abilities, and systematically reshaping the curriculum system, teaching models, and evaluation mechanisms of general education. This reform highlights the core characteristics of technology empowerment, student-centeredness, interdisciplinary integration, and personalized development, aiming to break the temporal and spatial limitations and disciplinary barriers of traditional

general education, realize the optimal allocation of educational resources, and improve teaching quality and efficiency.

At present, digital technology is constantly reshaping the ecological environment of higher education. The traditional general education model can no longer meet the diverse learning needs of students nor the social expectations for compound talents. Meanwhile, general education in private universities has long been plagued by weak teacher strength, shortage of teaching resources, and unreasonable curriculum settings. Digital technology just provides an effective path for integrating high-quality resources and innovating teaching models, which can effectively make up for the resource shortcomings of private universities.

The digital era has set higher standards for talents' digital literacy and interdisciplinary collaboration capabilities. The digital reform of general education can promote the precise alignment of students' knowledge structure and ability quality with the needs of the times. Through this reform, students can not only adapt to the development requirements of the digital era but also effectively enhance their employability and long-term development potential, forming a positive interaction between personal growth and social development.

3. Influencing Factors of General Education Reform Practice in Private Universities under the Digital Background

3.1 Internal Influencing Factors

1) School Orientation and Talent Training Objectives: The school-running orientation of private universities determines the direction of general education reform. The orientation centered on applied talent training requires general education reform to emphasize practice orientation and digital skills training. Some private universities have vague positioning, leading to the disconnection between general education and professional education, and the lack of clear goal guidance for digital reform.

2) Quality and Structure of Teachers: Teachers are the core force of the digital reform of general education, and their digital literacy directly affects the reform effect. Surveys show that many general education teachers in private universities lack systematic digital teaching training, and some teachers cannot proficiently use digital resources such as online teaching platforms and AI-assisted tools. At the same time, the teacher structure is unbalanced: teachers in the humanities and social sciences have weak willingness for digital transformation, while teachers in science and engineering have insufficient interdisciplinary teaching capabilities, which restricts the in-depth advancement of the reform.

3) Level of Teaching Resource Allocation: Digital teaching resources are the basic support for the reform, including online courses, virtual simulation experiment platforms, and digital textbooks. Private universities have obvious deficiencies in resource investment. Most private universities have not yet built specialized digital resource libraries for general education, and many rely on external platform resources, lacking pertinence and adaptability. Some universities have outdated digital teaching facilities and incomplete network coverage, affecting the smooth development of teaching activities.

4) Students' Learning Needs and Digital Literacy: Students are the beneficiaries of general education reform, and their learning needs and digital literacy affect the progress of the reform. The student groups in private universities show diverse learning needs, including the urgent expectation for the improvement of digital skills and the inherent demand for the cultivation of humanistic literacy. However, surveys found that some students have low digital literacy and lack the ability to independently use digital tools for learning, making it difficult to adapt to the personalized and autonomous digital teaching models.

3.2 External Influencing Factors

1) Policy Guidance and Education Reform Trends: National education policies provide macro guidance for the digital reform of general education in private universities. The "Ministry of Education's Guiding Opinions on Strengthening General Education in Universities in the New Era" explicitly proposes "promoting the digital transformation of general education and building high-quality digital education resources," urging private universities to intensify reform efforts[2]. Simultaneously, the overall trend of digital reform in higher education compels private universities to accelerate their transformation pace to avoid falling behind in educational competition.

2) Societal Demands and Job Market Orientation:

In the digital era, enterprises increasingly demand higher levels of digital literacy and interdisciplinary abilities from talent. Changes in job market demands directly influence the focus of general education reform in private universities. Research indicates that most employers list digital skills as an important criterion in recruitment, requiring graduates to possess capabilities such as data processing and online collaboration. This drives private universities to add digital-related courses in general education.

3) Technological Development and Resource Supply Environment: The rapid iteration of digital technology provides technical support for general education reform. The application of technologies such as AI teaching assistants, virtual simulation, and big data analysis enriches teaching methods and approaches. However, the application cost of some cutting-edge digital technologies is high, making it difficult for private universities to afford them. Furthermore, high-quality digital resources are mostly concentrated in public universities and well-known educational institutions, with limited access channels for private universities, affecting the pace of reform.

4. Practical Paths of General Education Reform in Private Universities Under the Digital Background

4.1 Construct a Digital General Education Curriculum System

1) Reconstruction of Curriculum Content: Focusing on the cultivation of digital literacy, add courses such as "Fundamentals of Digital Technology", "Data Thinking and Application", and "Ethics of Artificial Intelligence". Promote interdisciplinary integration, develop interdisciplinary courses such as "Digital Humanities" and "Science, Technology and Society", and break disciplinary barriers. At the same time, set up modular courses according to the needs of students in different majors, including basic modules, professional adaptation modules, and expansion modules, to meet students' personalized development needs.

2) Digital Construction of Curriculum Resources: Integrate high-quality internal resources to build a digital resource library for general education, including online courseware, video tutorials, and virtual simulation experiments. Actively introduce high-quality external resources, cooperate with MOOC platforms and well-known universities to share high-quality course resources[3]. Encourage teachers to develop digital teaching resources, transform traditional textbooks into interactive digital textbooks, and enhance the interestingness and effectiveness of teaching.

4.2 Innovate Digital Teaching Models

1) Promotion of Blended Teaching Models: Adopt the "online + offline" blended teaching model. Online, carry out activities such as preview of knowledge points, online discussions, and homework submission through teaching platforms; offline, focus on links such as case analysis, group collaboration, and practical operations, giving full play to the convenience of digital technology and the interactivity of offline teaching. The blended teaching model has significantly improved students' course participation and learning satisfaction.

2) Construction of Personalized Teaching Models: Use big data technology to analyze students' learning behaviors and knowledge gaps, construct personalized learning profiles, and push customized learning resources and learning paths for students. Introduce AI teaching assistant tools to realize the intelligence of links such as answering questions and correcting homework, improving the accuracy and efficiency of teaching[4].

3) Interdisciplinary Collaborative Teaching: Break the temporal and spatial limitations with the help of digital platforms, organize teachers from different disciplines to carry out joint teaching, design teaching projects around real problems, and cultivate students' interdisciplinary thinking and collaboration capabilities. For example, carry out the interdisciplinary project "Digital Technology Empowers Rural Revitalization", integrate resources from disciplines such as economics, information technology, and sociology, and guide students to solve practical problems using multi-disciplinary knowledge.

4.3 Improve the Digital Evaluation Mechanism

1) Diversification of Evaluation Subjects: Construct a diversified evaluation system of "teacher evaluation + student self-evaluation + peer evaluation + platform data evaluation". Teachers focus on the evaluation of teaching processes and learning outcomes; students

enhance their subject awareness through self-evaluation and peer evaluation; platform data objectively reflects students' learning behaviors and progress.

2) Comprehensiveness of Evaluation Content: Break through the limitations of traditional single knowledge evaluation, and include digital skills, interdisciplinary collaboration capabilities, and innovative thinking into the evaluation index system. Emphasize process evaluation, and comprehensively reflect students' learning processes and comprehensive quality by recording students' online learning duration, quality of discussion speeches, and project completion through learning platforms.

3) Digitization of Evaluation Methods: Utilize technologies like big data analysis and artificial intelligence to develop digital evaluation tools, enabling automatic collection, analysis, and feedback of evaluation data, thereby improving the efficiency and scientific nature of evaluation. Establish a student growth profile database to dynamically track students' learning progress and ability enhancement, providing data support for subsequent teaching optimization.

4.4 Strengthening the Digital Capacity Building of the Teaching Staff

1) Conduct Systematic Training: Formulate a digital training plan for teachers, regularly organize teachers to participate in special training on digital teaching methods, online platform operations, and AI tool applications. Encourage teachers to participate in domestic and foreign digital education exchange activities to learn advanced experience and broaden their teaching horizons.

2) Improve Incentive Mechanisms: Incorporate digital teaching achievements into the teacher assessment and professional title evaluation system, and commend and reward teachers who have performed outstandingly in digital course construction and teaching model innovation. Establish a community of teachers' digital teaching, carry out teaching seminars and experience sharing activities, and form a good atmosphere of mutual assistance and common progress.

3) Optimize the Teacher Structure: Recruit interdisciplinary talents with digital teaching capabilities to enrich the general education teaching team. Encourage internal teachers to engage in interdisciplinary exchange and learning to enhance their interdisciplinary teaching capacity, building a "digital + professional" general education teaching team.

5. Implementation Effects of General Education Reform in Private Universities under the Digital Background

5.1 Student Level

1) Digital Skills Have Been Effectively Strengthened: After participating in the digital reform of general education, most students can proficiently use digital tools for learning and practice, many have mastered basic data processing and analysis capabilities, and their digital skills have improved significantly compared with before the reform.

2) Enhanced Interdisciplinary Thinking and Innovative Capabilities: Through interdisciplinary course learning and project practice, students' knowledge integration ability and innovative thinking have been effectively improved. The number of awards won in various disciplinary competitions has increased significantly compared to before the reform. Students' autonomous learning awareness has markedly increased, with most students able to use digital resources to independently plan their learning paths, fostering good lifelong learning abilities.

5.2 Teacher Level

1) Significant Improvement in Digital Teaching Capabilities: After systematic training, the vast majority of teachers can proficiently use digital teaching tools, many can independently develop digital teaching resources, and teachers' teaching concepts and methods have been updated, realizing the transformation from "teacher-centered" to "student-centered".

2) Improved Teaching Efficiency and Quality: The digital teaching model has effectively reduced teachers' repetitive work, significantly improving lesson preparation efficiency. By analyzing students' learning data with big data, teachers can accurately grasp the key and difficult points of teaching, adjust teaching strategies in a targeted manner, and the course teaching satisfaction has been significantly higher than before the reform.

5.3 School Level

1) Digital Upgrading of Resource Integration and Governance: By building a digital resource library for general education and promoting

resource sharing among universities and with enterprises, private universities have made up for the shortcomings of traditional resources and realized the intensive use of educational resources. With the help of big data technology, they accurately analyze the use of resources, provide scientific basis for decision-making, avoid waste, and promote the digitalization and refinement of management links such as academic affairs and teaching evaluation, improving the effectiveness of allocation and governance level.

2) Precise Alignment of Talent Training Quality with Needs: After the digital reform of general education, students have solid digital skills, interdisciplinary thinking, and comprehensive literacy, which are in line with the core needs of the employment market, effectively improving the quality of talent training and social recognition.

6. Optimization Paths for General Education Reform in Private Universities under the Digital Background

6.1 Precise Positioning, Strengthening Top-Level Design of Reform

Private universities should base themselves on their own positioning and talent cultivation objectives to formulate special plans for the digital reform of general education, clarifying the phased goals, key tasks, and safeguard measures of the reform.

Strengthen the collaborative connection between general education and professional education, construct a "general education + professional" digital talent training system, and ensure that the reform direction does not deviate from the core of talent training[5].

6.2 Multiple Measures to Enhance Teachers' Digital Literacy

1) Construct a Tiered and Classified Training System: Conduct tiered training—basic skills training, advanced capability enhancement, innovative application workshops—tailored to the needs of teachers of different age groups and disciplines, improving the relevance and effectiveness of the training.

2) Build Practice and Exchange Platforms: Cooperate with public universities and digital enterprises to establish teacher practice bases, organizing teachers to participate in the research, development, and practice of digital teaching projects to accumulate teaching experience. Regularly hold activities such as digital teaching competitions and seminars to promote exchange and mutual assistance among teachers.

6.3 Integrate Resources and Improve the Digital Teaching Support System

1) Increase Resource Investment: Set up a special fund for the digital reform of general education to update digital teaching facilities, build resource libraries, and conduct technological research and development. Broaden resource acquisition channels through university-enterprise cooperation and university-university cooperation to reduce the cost of resource construction[6].

2) Build Characteristic Digital Resource Libraries: Combine the school's characteristics and students' needs to develop a number of targeted digital courses and resources, focusing on the construction of characteristic resources such as virtual simulation experiments and interdisciplinary project cases, so as to improve the adaptability and practicality of resources.

The digital reform of general education in private universities under the digital background is an inevitable choice to comply with the times, solve their own difficulties, and improve the quality of talent training. Through practical paths such as constructing digital curriculum systems, innovating teaching models, improving evaluation mechanisms, and strengthening teachers' team construction, it can effectively improve students' comprehensive quality and digital literacy, optimize teachers' teaching capabilities, and strengthen the school's competitiveness.

7. Conclusion

The digital reform of general education in private universities under the digital background is an inevitable choice to comply with the development of the times and solve their own development dilemmas. Through constructing a digital curriculum system, innovating teaching models, improving evaluation mechanisms, and strengthening the construction of teaching staff, the reform has achieved remarkable results in enhancing students' digital literacy and comprehensive abilities, optimizing teachers' teaching levels, and upgrading the school's resource governance. In the future, private universities need to further clarify the reform

orientation, strengthen the cultivation of teachers' digital capabilities, and improve the resource support system, so as to promote the in-depth development of the digital reform of general education and provide solid support for cultivating compound talents who meet the needs of the digital era.

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