

Integrating Ideological and Political Education into Junior High School Music and History Courses — An Interdisciplinary Exploration under the Framework of "Ideological and Political Big Class"

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Abstract

Against the background of deepening reforms in China's socialist education system and the comprehensive promotion of "Ideological and Political Big Class" construction, this study focuses on the interdisciplinary integration of ideological and political education with music and history courses at the junior high school level. Based on interdisciplinary integration theory, a "Music-History" dual-dimensional teaching model was constructed. Through methods such as situational setting, music appreciation, and historical explanation, classic red music works were closely integrated with the curriculum of modern Chinese history, guiding students to experience the essence of ideological and political education within the interplay of music and history. The study adopted a quasi-experimental design, selecting two seventh-grade classes for a comparative experiment. Using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), a comprehensive quantitative evaluation was conducted across three dimensions—knowledge mastery, emotional attitude, and ideological identification—to assess the experimental class and the control class. The results showed that the experimental class significantly outperformed the control class across all dimensions ($p = 0.0078 < 0.05$). This indicates that the "Music-History" interdisciplinary teaching model can effectively enhance the effectiveness of ideological and political education, providing empirical support and theoretical foundations for the innovative development of ideological and political education in the new era.

Keywords

Ideological and Political Big Class; Interdisciplinary Integration; Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP).

1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of deepening reforms in China's socialist education system, the state has placed high strategic importance on constructing the "Ideological and Political Big Class". The document Opinions on Deepening the Reform and Innovation of Ideological and Theoretical Courses in Schools in the New Era clearly proposes the important principle of "insisting on the unity of explicit education and implicit education," aiming to promote the deep integration of ideological and political education with multi-disciplinary collaborative education.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, under the strong leadership of the Central Committee of the CPC, significant achievements have been made in the construction of ideological and political courses. The educational environment and ecosystem have undergone systematic reshaping, and the effectiveness of cultivating students with Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era has been significantly enhanced. Huang (2022), taking Xi'an Qujiang No.1 Middle School as an example, constructed a

"school-family-society collaborative education" model and a "learning-thinking-practicing-reflecting" integrated teaching system, effectively strengthening students' cultural identity [1]. Wang (2021) focused on Jimei High School in Xiamen and, centering on the "Jiageng Spirit," achieved innovative integration of ideological and political education through curriculum reform and expansion into broader social contexts [2]. However, current school-based ideological and political education still faces several structural challenges: uneven regional and inter-school development remains prominent; some educational stakeholders lack understanding of the "Ideological and Political Big Class" strategy, resulting in inefficient resource coordination; standardization of curriculum and textbook systems lags behind; and the teaching staff faces dual challenges in both scale and quality. Additionally, mechanisms linking classroom instruction with practical social experiences are lacking, and the integration of ideological and political education across primary, secondary, and higher education has yet to form an effective closed loop. The second classroom's educational function is often weakened, tending toward formalism, and course-based ideological education shows signs of superficiality or "surface-level integration."

Moreover, disciplinary fragmentation is especially evident in junior high school education. This fragmented mode of knowledge transmission severely restricts the formation of students' holistic cognitive structures and undermines the effectiveness of ideological and political education. Notably, the global field of education is undergoing a profound paradigm shift, with the rise of innovative models such as STEAM education and project-based learning marking interdisciplinary integration as a core theme in global educational reform. Li et al. (2020) explored the aesthetic educational value of red music culture and proposed strategies for interdisciplinary integration [3]. Yang (2022) emphasized the transferability and experiential value of interdisciplinary thematic learning, offering new insights into resolving the issue of fragmented ideological and political education [4]. Zhang (2020) focused on the integration of high school ideological and political courses with moral education, advocating for practice-oriented teaching and co-education systems to promote students' unity of knowledge and action [5]. These studies collectively indicate that traditional cultural education within the framework of the "Ideological and Political Big Class" is shifting from single-course delivery to multidimensional collaboration and from theoretical indoctrination to immersive, multi-layered engagement—providing crucial support for fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue and nurturing talent.

In this context, music education—as a key vehicle for aesthetic and values-based education—demonstrates a notable complementary effect when combined with history education due to its unique emotional cultivation function and the latter's capacity for value shaping. This study, grounded in an interdisciplinary integration theoretical framework and employing literature analysis and case study methods, systematically explores pathways for organically integrating modern Chinese history courses with classic red music works. By constructing a "Music-History" dual-dimensional teaching model, it achieves a paradigm shift in ideological and political education—from abstract theory to concrete experience. This immersive educational model not only expands the theoretical boundaries of the "Big Ideological and Political Class" but also forms a replicable model for curriculum development in practice.

The theoretical contribution of this research lies in deepening the intersectional study of art education and ideological and political education, proposing a new educational mechanism of "aesthetic immersion-value internalization." Its practical significance is reflected in providing actionable teaching solutions for cultivating youth political identity and offers important implications for the innovative development of patriotic education in the new era.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Research Methods

2.1. Research Design

To deeply explore the effectiveness of an interdisciplinary teaching model that integrates ideological and political education into junior high school music and history courses, this study selected two seventh-grade classes from a middle school in a certain city as research subjects. These two classes were comparable in terms of students' foundational knowledge, learning abilities, and gender distribution, with no significant differences observed.

The experimental class adopted an interdisciplinary "Music-History" teaching model, integrating classic red music works with the course content of modern Chinese history. Through methods such as situational setting, music appreciation, and historical explanation, students were guided to understand the essence of ideological and political education through the interweaving of music and history. In contrast, the control class followed a traditional teaching approach, delivering ideological and political education solely through conventional history instruction. After one semester of instructional practice, this study evaluated the effectiveness of ideological and political education in both classes using a comprehensive assessment system, aiming to verify the practical value of the "Music-History" dual-dimensional teaching model. Specifically, based on the ideological and political education effectiveness evaluation framework, detailed assessment indicators were established through written tests, questionnaires, classroom observations, and interviews. These tools allowed for a quantitative evaluation of ideological and political education outcomes in both classes.

Subsequently, descriptive statistical analysis was employed to process the data from the experimental and control classes, identifying specific differences in educational outcomes between the two groups. To test whether the "Music-History" interdisciplinary teaching model could significantly enhance students' ideological and political education effectiveness, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the differences in educational outcomes between the two teaching approaches.

Through the above research design, this study scientifically assesses the effectiveness of the "Music-History" interdisciplinary teaching model in junior high school ideological and political education, providing empirical support for the promotion of interdisciplinary teaching approaches.

2.2. Theoretical Foundations and Hypothesis Testing

Multiple Intelligences Theory, proposed by American psychologist Howard Gardner, posits that human intelligence is not a single dimension but consists of at least eight relatively independent types: linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, musical intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, and naturalistic intelligence. Each type of intelligence has its own unique value and varies across individuals. Gardner emphasized that these intelligences are not isolated but interconnected and mutually influential. Their collaborative activation can promote students' comprehensive understanding and mastery of knowledge.

In this study, music is integrated with history teaching. By introducing musical elements, the auxiliary role of musical intelligence in history learning can be fully exerted. Taking modern and contemporary Chinese history as an example, when students learn about the history of the Long March, the song *Crossing the Snowy Mountains and Grasslands* is introduced. Its stirring, forging ahead yet hardship-laden melody enables students to instantly, by virtue of musical intelligence, deeply comprehend the difficulties and obstacles faced by the Red Army soldiers during the Long March, as well as their unyielding revolutionary will. This kind of feeling further stimulates students' spatial intelligence, making them construct vivid images in their minds of the Red Army's arduous journey across snowy mountains and through grasslands, as

if they were personally in that magnificent historical scene. This cross-intelligence learning path breaks the bottleneck of single intelligence development in traditional teaching, promotes the coordinated development of students' multiple intelligences, and significantly improves learning effectiveness.

In history education, situational teaching is particularly important. Historical events are inherently past and irreproducible, making it difficult for students to directly perceive and understand them. Music, as an art form with strong emotional expression and scene-setting capabilities, provides powerful contextual support for history instruction. For instance, when learning the history of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, playing classic anti-Japanese songs such as Guerrilla Song and Defend the Yellow River can quickly bring students into the historical context of the nationwide resistance against Japanese aggression. The lively and fighting rhythm of Guerrilla Song shows the flexible and resourceful fighting style of the guerrillas; while the majestic chorus of Defend the Yellow River conveys the determination of the Chinese nation to unite as one and fight to the death against the enemy. Through the emotional rendering of music, students can not only master historical facts but also resonate emotionally, deepening their understanding of the nationwide nature and arduousness of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

Based on the above theoretical foundations, this study aims to test whether the "Music-History" interdisciplinary teaching model can significantly improve students' ideological and political education outcomes. An independent samples t-test was used to examine differences in educational effectiveness between the two teaching models. The specific hypotheses are as follows:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in ideological and political education effectiveness between the experimental and control classes; that is, the average effects of the two teaching methods on students' ideological and political education are equal.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference in ideological and political education effectiveness between the experimental and control classes; that is, the average effect of the "Music-History" interdisciplinary teaching model on students' ideological and political education is significantly higher than that of the traditional teaching method.

Through the above research design, this study scientifically evaluates the effectiveness of the "Music-History" interdisciplinary teaching model in junior high school ideological and political education, offering empirical support for the promotion of interdisciplinary teaching approaches.

2.3. Learning Outcome Evaluation System

This evaluation system is centered on three primary indicators—knowledge mastery, emotional attitude, and ideological identification—with each indicator being comprehensively assessed through detailed secondary indicators, as illustrated in Figure 1. In terms of knowledge mastery, "historical knowledge understanding" aims to test students' grasp of key historical events, figures, and backgrounds in the modern Chinese history curriculum through written exams, thereby measuring their depth of historical comprehension. "Musical knowledge understanding" assesses students' cognitive level regarding the creative background, stylistic characteristics, and artistic value of classic red music works by combining composition analysis reports with in-class Q&A sessions. "Interdisciplinary knowledge integration," evaluated through interdisciplinary thematic assignments and knowledge presentations, examines students' ability to organically integrate music and history knowledge into a comprehensive cognitive framework, reflecting the effectiveness of interdisciplinary teaching in cultivating integrative thinking.

Within the dimension of emotional attitude, "learning interest" utilizes questionnaires and classroom observations to gauge students' interest in the integrated teaching of music and

history, reflecting how this instructional approach stimulates learning motivation. "Class participation" quantitatively evaluates students' initiative and engagement during lessons based on teachers' records of student questions, responses, and group discussion involvement. "Emotional resonance" involves analyzing students' in-class reflections and post-class writings, along with organizing emotional sharing sessions, to deeply explore their emotional experiences with musical works and historical events, highlighting the positive impact of teaching on students' emotional development.

At the level of ideological identification, "value identification" employs questionnaires and interviews to understand students' alignment with core ideological and political concepts such as the socialist core values and patriotism, demonstrating the role of ideological education in shaping personal values. "Cultural identity" evaluates students' sense of identification with and pride in China's excellent traditional culture and revolutionary red culture by observing their performance in cultural identity-themed activities and analyzing expressions of cultural interest in daily life, reflecting the cultivation of cultural confidence through instruction. Lastly, "social responsibility" assesses students' awareness and willingness to take on social responsibilities through situational simulation tasks and social practice activities, illustrating the effectiveness of ideological education in fostering civic consciousness.

Table 1. Evaluation Index System for Ideological and Political Education Effectiveness

Primary Indicator	Secondary Indicator	Nature
Knowledge Mastery	Understanding of Historical Knowledge	+
	Understanding of Musical Knowledge	+
	Interdisciplinary Knowledge Integration	+
Attitude and Emotion	Learning Interest	+
	Classroom Participation	+
	Emotional Resonance	+
Ideological and Political Recognition	Value Endorsement	+
	Cultural Identity	+
	Sense of Social Responsibility	+

The Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) is a multi-criteria decision-making method that combines qualitative and quantitative analysis. It provides a scientific basis for comprehensive evaluation by constructing judgment matrices and calculating the weight values of each indicator. In this study, AHP is used to assign weights to the evaluation indicators, and the specific steps are as follows:

Step 1: Constructing the Judgment Matrix

Experts in the field of education are invited to conduct pairwise comparisons of the importance of the three first-level indicators and nine second-level indicators, based on which a judgment matrix is constructed. Taking the first-level indicators as an example, suppose experts compare the importance of the three indicators—knowledge mastery, emotional attitude, and ideological identification—and construct the following judgment matrix A:

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1/2 & 1/3 \\ 2 & 1 & 1/2 \\ 3 & 2 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Step 2: Calculating the Weight Vector

Based on the judgment matrix A, the weight vector W of each indicator is calculated. The formula for computing the weight vector is:

$$W = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n a_{ij}}$$

where n is the number of indicators. For the first-level indicators, the calculation results are as follows:

$$W = [0.1634, 0.2970, 0.5396]$$

This indicates that the weight of "knowledge mastery" is 0.1634, the weight of "emotional attitude" is 0.2970, and the weight of "ideological identification" is 0.5396. Similarly, judgment matrices are also constructed for the second-level indicators under each first-level indicator, and their respective weights are calculated.

Step 3: Consistency Check

In the Analytic Hierarchy Process, a consistency check must be performed on the judgment matrix to ensure its logical coherence. The formula for the consistency check is:

$$CI = \frac{\lambda_{\max} - n}{n - 1}$$

In this context, λ_{\max} represents the maximum eigenvalue of the judgment matrix, and n is the order of the judgment matrix. The calculated Consistency Index (CI) value divided by the average Random Index (RI), denoted as $CR = \frac{CI}{RI}$, should be less than 0.1. In this study, the CR value was found to be 0.0079, indicating that the consistency of the judgment matrix is acceptable.

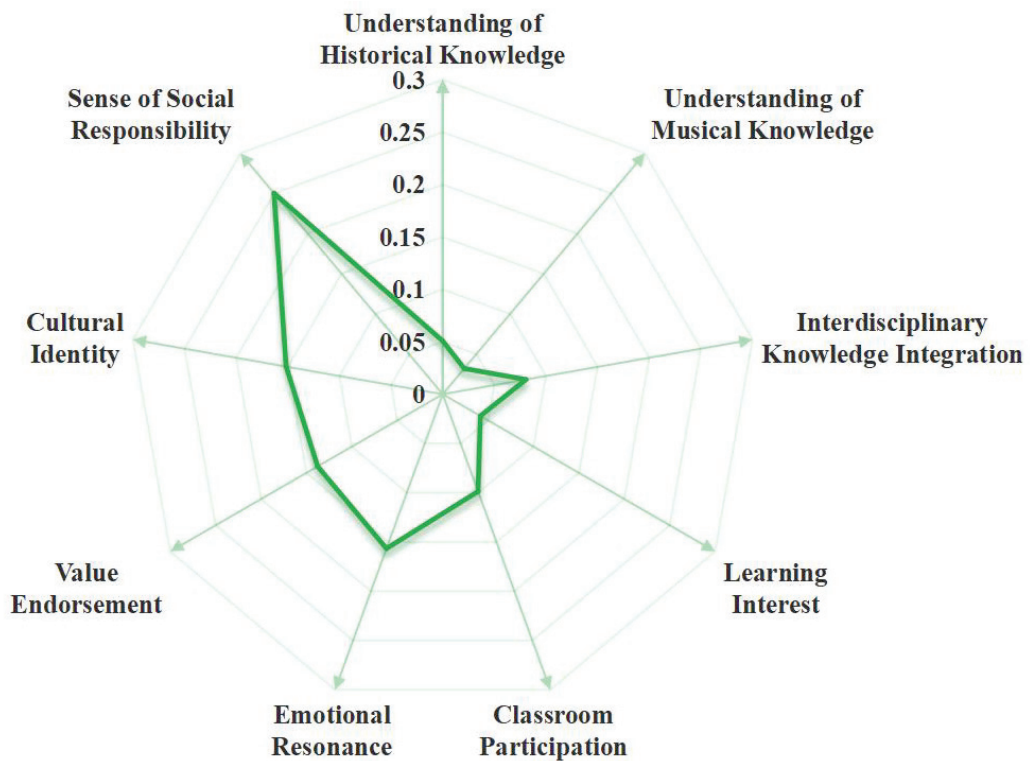
Through the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), this study successively determined the weights of the primary and secondary indicators, providing a scientific basis for subsequent comprehensive evaluations.

3. Results

According to the evaluation results in Table 2, the experimental class demonstrated significantly better performance than the control class across all dimensions. In terms of knowledge acquisition, the experimental class scored 6.6 points, 12.8 points, and 9.5 points higher than the control class in historical knowledge comprehension, music knowledge comprehension, and interdisciplinary knowledge integration, respectively. This indicates that the interdisciplinary teaching model effectively enhances students' in-depth understanding and integration of knowledge. In the emotional attitude dimension, the experimental class outperformed the control class by 11.2 points, 11.2 points, and 9.8 points in learning interest, classroom engagement, and emotional resonance, respectively. These results suggest that this teaching approach significantly boosts students' learning motivation and emotional involvement. Regarding ideological-political identification, the experimental class achieved 11.2 points, 13.2 points, and 13.3 points higher than the control class in values identification, cultural identity, and social responsibility, respectively. This demonstrates that the "Music-History" interdisciplinary teaching model has a distinct advantage in cultivating students' correct values, cultural confidence, and sense of social responsibility. In conclusion, this interdisciplinary teaching approach not only strengthens students' knowledge mastery and comprehension but also significantly improves their performance in emotional attitudes and ideological-political identification. It provides robust support for the effective implementation of ideological and political education.

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis Results

Evaluation Dimension	Experimental Class	Control Class	Difference
Understanding of Historical Knowledge	85.2 ± 4.1	78.6 ± 5.3	6.6
Understanding of Musical Knowledge	88.1 ± 3.7	75.3 ± 6.2	12.8
Interdisciplinary Knowledge Integration	82.3 ± 4.9	72.8 ± 5.8	9.5
Learning Interest	90.4 ± 2.8	79.2 ± 4.6	11.2
Classroom Participation	87.6 ± 3.2	76.4 ± 5.1	11.2
Emotional Resonance	83.9 ± 4.5	74.1 ± 5.9	9.8
Value Endorsement	89.1 ± 3.1	77.9 ± 4.8	11.2
Cultural Identity	86.7 ± 3.8	73.5 ± 6.0	13.2
Sense of Social Responsibility	84.5 ± 4.3	71.2 ± 6.4	13.3

**Figure 1.** Radar Chart of Weight Distribution for Ideological and Political Education Evaluation Indicators**Table 3.** Weighting of Evaluation Indicators for Ideological and Political Education Effectiveness

Evaluation Dimension	Weight	Evaluation Dimension	Weight
Understanding of Historical Knowledge	0.0508	Emotional Resonance	0.1567
Understanding of Musical Knowledge	0.032	Value Endorsement	0.1377
Interdisciplinary Knowledge Integration	0.0806	Cultural Identity	0.1516
Learning Interest	0.0415	Sense of Social Responsibility	0.2503
Classroom Participation	0.0987		

Table 3 presents the weight distribution of evaluation indicators for ideological and political education effectiveness. Among these, social responsibility carries the highest weight (0.2503), indicating it is considered the most crucial indicator in the evaluation system. This is followed by emotional resonance with a weight of 0.1567. Values identification and cultural identity hold weights of 0.1377 and 0.1516 respectively, demonstrating their significant importance in ideological and political education. The weights for learning interest (0.0415) and classroom participation (0.0987) reflect the role of student engagement and interest in the educational process. Comparatively, historical knowledge comprehension (0.0508), music knowledge comprehension (0.032), and interdisciplinary knowledge integration (0.0806) receive relatively lower weights. This weight distribution highlights the multidimensional characteristics of ideological and political education evaluation, emphasizing that beyond knowledge acquisition, emotional development, values cultivation, and social responsibility play pivotal roles in students' holistic development. The results underscore the comprehensive nature of effective ideological and political education, where affective and value-based dimensions are weighted more heavily than pure knowledge metrics.

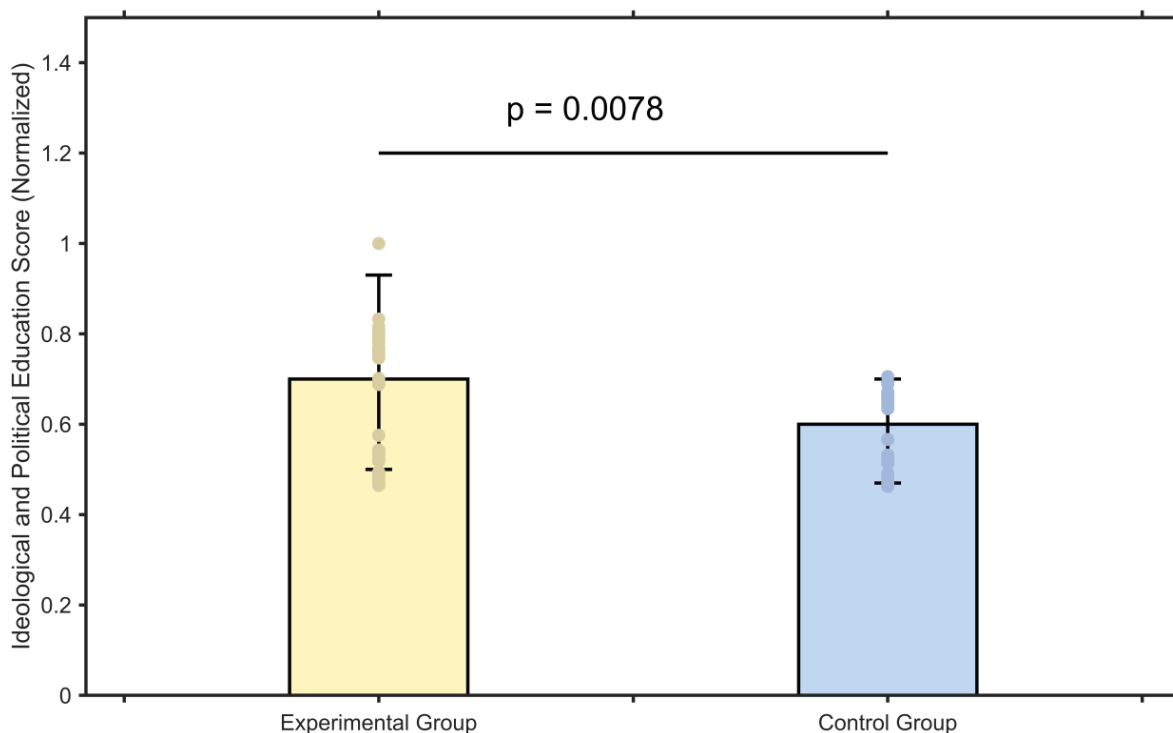


Figure 2. Bar Chart of Ideological and Political Education Effectiveness with t-test Results

Figure 2 presents a comparative analysis of ideological and political education effectiveness between the experimental and control classes, along with t-test results. The experimental class demonstrated significantly higher scores than the control class, with a p-value of 0.0078, indicating statistically significant differences between the two groups. Specifically, the experimental class's mean score was substantially higher than that of the control class, demonstrating the efficacy of the "Music-History" interdisciplinary teaching model in enhancing students' ideological and political education outcomes. This pedagogical approach proves more effective in advancing students' ideological and political cultivation, deepening their comprehension and identification with the educational content. The low p-value (less than 0.05) provides robust evidence that the observed differences between the experimental and control classes are not random occurrences, but rather attributable to the distinct teaching methodologies employed. These findings validate the significance of integrating ideological and

political education with middle school music and history curricula through interdisciplinary exploration, confirming its capacity to deliver more impactful learning experiences for students.

4. Conclusions

This study focuses on the interdisciplinary integration of ideological and political education into middle school music and history courses, aiming to address the current fragmentation of disciplines in ideological and political education and enhance its effectiveness. By constructing a dual-dimensional "Music-History" teaching model that organically combines classic red music with modern history curriculum, the study validates the effectiveness of this interdisciplinary teaching approach. The experimental results demonstrate that the experimental class significantly outperformed the control class in three dimensions—knowledge acquisition, emotional attitude, and ideological-political identification ($p = 0.0078 < 0.05$), indicating that the "Music-History" interdisciplinary teaching model effectively enhances the outcomes of ideological and political education.

In current ideological and political education practices, disciplinary fragmentation remains a prominent issue. This compartmentalized knowledge delivery model not only hinders the formation of students' holistic cognitive structures but also diminishes the effectiveness of ideological and political education. To address this problem, this study proposes an interdisciplinary integration approach—namely, the "Music-History" dual-dimensional teaching model—which breaks down disciplinary barriers and combines music and history instruction. Through methods such as situational creation, music appreciation, and historical explanation, students are guided to comprehend the essence of ideological and political education through the interplay of music and history, achieving a paradigm shift from abstract theory to experiential learning. This immersive educational model not only deepens students' understanding and integration of knowledge but also significantly enhances their learning motivation and emotional engagement, thereby improving the effectiveness of ideological and political education.

This study provides empirical support and theoretical foundations for the innovative development of ideological and political education in the new era, while also suggesting new directions for future research and practice. First, the scope of interdisciplinary integration could be expanded further—for example, by integrating ideological and political education with additional disciplines (such as fine arts and literature) to explore more diverse teaching models. Second, future research could investigate the variations in implementing interdisciplinary ideological and political education across different regions and school types to optimize teaching strategies and improve generalizability and practicality. Furthermore, with the continuous advancement of educational technology, exploring how digital tools and platforms can enrich the content and forms of interdisciplinary ideological and political education will be a key direction for future research.

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