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Research on the Construction and Reform of Practical Teaching in Business-related Disciplines of Private UndeRgraduate Universities in the Context of the Digital Economy

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Abstract

Guided by Outcome-Based Education (OBE), this paper analyzes the problems and contradictions in practical teaching by using the survey data collected from 233 business teachers of private undergraduate universities, 479 in-service students and 265 enterprise staff. Subsequently, it constructs a four-in-one OBE practical teaching framework covering objectives, courses, platforms and evaluation, and clarifies a three-level learning outcome anchoring mechanism, which includes digital tool operation, interdisciplinary project implementation and enterprise problem-solving, as well as team collaboration and innovative design. Furthermore, it puts forward reform paths such as dynamic curriculum update, interdisciplinary teacher training and school-enterprise collaborative education. This study provides a reference for the practical teaching of business majors in private undergraduate universities to adapt to the digital economy and achieve a closed loop of teaching, competence and job positions.

Keywords

Digital Economy
Business Majors in Private Undergraduate Universities
OBE (Outcome-Based Education)
Practical Teaching Reform

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1. Introduction

The 14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of the Digital Economy clearly identifies promoting the in-depth integration of digital technology and the real economy as a core task. This orientation not only drives enterprises to shift their demand for business talents from traditional professional capabilities to a composite structure of "digital literacy + practical ability" but also defines the core direction for the reform of practical teaching in business disciplines.

In the exploration of business practice teaching reform driven by the digital economy, academia has formed a series of focused achievements. Author Li Hua[1] proposes the need to strengthen the deep integration of digital technology with business education, cultivating students' cross-border innovative thinking through

interdisciplinary collaboration. Authors Liu Ying et al.[2] point out that current digital talent cultivation in universities suffers from dual shortcomings: an incomplete educational philosophy system, fragmented top-level design, and a lack of operational mechanisms in industry-education integration. Author Li Haiting[3] further clarifies that reforms must embed "digital genes" into practical teaching systems while utilizing AI and big data to optimize scenario-based management. Authors Huang Bo et al.[4] establish a five-dimensional framework for new business education practice systems, encompassing curriculum, teaching content, organization, resources, and evaluation.

Simultaneously, three core challenges persist in current business practice teaching:

1.1. Misalignment between positioning and curriculum systems:

- Author Shao Xianwu[5] notes that practical teaching fails to integrate effectively into talent cultivation goals.
- Author Zhu Liang[6] further confirms that business courses generally lack practical design, leading to graduates' inadequate employability and entrepreneurial skills.

1.2. Weak resource allocation and faculty development:

- Author Li Mingliang[7] emphasizes the dual dilemma of insufficient investment in practical teaching and faculty's lack of hands-on experience.

1.3. Outdated teaching content:

- Author Zheng Feiyun[8] highlights that traditional content no longer matches industry digitization trends.
- Author Li Haiting[3] adds that outdated teaching scenarios further exacerbate the gap

1.4. The necessity of reform stems from the demand for digital economy-talent alignment:

- Author Shao Xianwu[5] argues that practical teaching is critical for deepening theoretical understanding.
- Author Li Mingliang[7] underscores its role in fostering innovation and cultivating interdisciplinary talents.
- Authors Chen Yun[9] et al. advocate for rethinking practice models in private universities to adapt to digital economies.
- Author Li Haiting[3] emphasizes leveraging digital technologies to enhance teaching efficiency.

1.5. Reform pathways focus on building a "technology integration + industry-education synergy" curriculum system:

- Author Cai Yayuansuggests vocational colleges integrate data analysis and AI applications to emphasize practical orientation.
- Author Li Hua[1]recommends adding modules combining emerging technologies with business disciplines.
- Authors Liu Ying et al.[2] stress the need for government-enterprise collaboration to establish industry-education integration platforms.

1.6. Strengthening industry-academia collaboration remains pivotal:

- Authors He Shan et al.[10] propose creating high-quality internships through corporate partnerships.
- Author He Yajie[11] highlights joint industry-academia projects to enhance innovation capabilities.
- Authors Liu Ying et al.[2] advocate aligning industry-academia initiatives with clear cultivation objectives.

Although existing studies have established a basic analytical framework for the reform of business practical teaching under the background of the digital economy, there are obvious limitations, with the core being gaps in the specific fields of research content. Most existing achievements focus on the design of macro reform paths, while rarely involving the segmented fields of practical teaching in digital scenarios, making it difficult to fully address the micro pain points in practice. Accordingly, this paper explores the above-mentioned shortcomings and strives to make certain contributions to filling the gaps in this segmented field.

2. Analysis of Problems in Practical Teaching of Business Disciplines in Private Undergraduate Universities

2.1. Statistics on Core Problems

As shown in **Table 1**, there are four types of core problems in the practical teaching of business disciplines in private undergraduate universities, including outdated curriculum content, insufficient digital capabilities of teachers, insufficient depth of school-enterprise cooperation, and mismatched evaluation systems.

2.2. Analysis of Key Contradictions

2.2.1. Contradiction between Demand and Supply

91.85% of enterprises list data analysis capabilities as core requirements, yet only 14.82% of students believe that practical courses contain a large amount of digital content, resulting in a mismatch between curriculum supply and enterprise demand.

2.2.2. Contradiction between Concept and Practice

60.94% of teachers agree with a practical teaching system of 4 or more levels (Foundation + Application + Innovation + Integration + Excellence/Flexibility), but only 13.99% of students state that the school has implemented this system in most courses, meaning the hierarchical concept has not been put into practice.

2.2.3. Contradiction between Resources and Goals

74.95% of students hope that the school will provide specialized practical training platforms, however, 51.15% of private undergraduate universities struggle to update digital equipment due to insufficient funds, and resource constraints restrict the achievement of practical teaching goals.

Table 1. Statistics on Core Problems

Problem Dimension	Teachers' Perception (%)	Students' Feedback (%)	Enterprise Evaluation (Average Score)
Outdated Curriculum Content	91.42% (Lagging technical skills)	54.07% (Content fails to reflect digital characteristics)	3.46 (Low alignment with enterprise needs)
Insufficient Digital Capabilities of Teachers	68.24% (Need to improve interdisciplinary skills)	35.28% (Inadequate guidance from teachers)	3.28 (Graduates lack required skills)
Insufficient Depth of School-Enterprise Cooperation	83.69% (Inadequate enterprise resources)	64.51% (Practical projects are disconnected from enterprises)	3.53 (Low depth of cooperation)
Mismatched Evaluation System	59.66% (Need to reconstruct evaluation criteria)	46.76% (Unreasonable evaluation system)	3.36 (Low matching degree between supply and demand)

Note: The enterprise evaluation adopts a 1-5 Likert scale, where 1 = extremely low and 5 = extremely high.

Table 2. Analysis Table for Reverse Design of Curriculum System

Curriculum Level	Core Objective	Digital Tools/Content	Corresponding Learning Outcome
Basic Level	Master basic operation of digital tools	Basic Excel Application, Basic ERP	Proficiency in tool operation
Application Level	Simulate enterprise digital operation	Virtual Simulation Platform, Tableau Visualization	Data-driven decision-making capability
Innovation Level	Complete incubation of innovation and entrepreneurship projects	AI Writing Tools, Low-Code Platform	Innovative scheme design capability
Comprehensive Level	Implement interdisciplinary projects	Python + Business Analysis, Supply Chain Visualization Simulation	Interdisciplinary collaboration capability
Excellence Level	Solve real enterprise problems	Real Enterprise Data, Customized Projects	Career adaptability capability

3. OBE-Oriented Construction Framework for Practical Teaching of Business Disciplines in Private Undergraduate Universities

3.1. Anchoring of Core Learning Outcomes

A three-level learning outcome anchoring mechanism is established. Among them, the core competency objective of core outcomes is innovative scheme design; the core competency objectives of key outcomes are the implementation of interdisciplinary projects and the solution to real enterprise problems; the core competency objectives of basic outcomes are team collaboration and digital tool operation[12].

3.2. Reverse Design of Curriculum System

Table 2 is the analysis table for the reverse design of the curriculum system. As shown in **Table 2**, the core objective of the basic level is to master the basic operation of digital tools; the core objective of the application level is to simulate the digital operation of enterprises, corresponding to data-driven decision-making capabilities; the core objective of the innovation level is to complete the incubation of innovation and entrepreneurship projects; the core objective of the comprehensive level is the implementation of interdisciplinary projects; the core objective of the excellence level is to solve real enterprise problems.

3.3. Construction of a Diversified Evaluation System

Under the OBE orientation, there is a closed-loop logical system for practical teaching covering evaluation, improvement, objectives, and competencies. This mechanism first conducts process evaluation on students' learning processes and outcome evaluation on the results of teaching output; these two types of evaluation jointly generate three-dimensional evaluation scores. Based on these scores, continuous improvement is promoted, and feedback is used to optimize courses or practical platforms. Then, guided by the goal of enterprise needs, core competency indicators are anchored. Thus, a complete cycle from evaluation to competency development and then to continuous optimization is established, ensuring that practical teaching is deeply aligned with enterprise needs and competency objectives[13].

Student Learning Process → Process Evaluation → Three-dimensional Evaluation Scores → Continuous Improvement and Feedback → Enterprise Demand Goals → Core Competency Indicators → Digital Skills

Student Learning Process → Process Evaluation → Three-dimensional Evaluation Scores → Continuous Improvement and Feedback → Enterprise Demand Goals → Core Competency Indicators → Project Achievements

Teaching Output Achievements → Achievement Evaluation → Three-dimensional Evaluation Scores → Continuous Improvement and Feedback → Enterprise Demand Goals → Core Competency Indicators → Career Adaptability

4. OBE-Oriented Reform Paths for Practical Teaching

4.1. Dynamic Update of Curriculum Content

In the optimization of curriculum development, it is suggested to add core courses such as Digital Business Analysis and AI Business Applications, and integrate the curriculum content with real enterprise scenarios like live-streaming e-commerce and intelligent investment consulting. A digital economy case library with semi-annual updates should be established, incorporating hot cases such as cross-border e-commerce algorithm operation and AI customer service optimization. For the implementation of hierarchical courses, universities that have not yet established a hierarchical system may first launch pilots in their advantageous majors, and then gradually promote hierarchical courses to all business disciplines[14].

4.2. Interdisciplinary Training of Teaching Staff

In terms of teaching staff development, on the one hand, cooperation with local internet enterprises should be carried out to cultivate "dual-qualification teachers" (teachers with both academic expertise and industry experience), promote school-enterprise cooperative practical training, and require teachers to complete at least 2 digital skill certifications within 3 years. On the other hand, interdisciplinary teaching teams integrating "business + computer science + law" should be formed to jointly develop courses such as Digital Business

Compliance. Meanwhile, local entrepreneurs should be invited to serve as part-time teachers to conduct on-campus teaching[15].

4.3. Deepening School-Enterprise Collaborative Education

In the construction of the practical training system, customized order-based practical training projects can be co-built with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), allowing students to participate in the actual work of enterprises throughout the process. At the same time, the hierarchical construction of practical training bases should be advanced: Level-1 bases need to co-build digital business laboratories with leading regional enterprises to share enterprise data and tools, while Level-2 bases should establish project cooperation databases with SMEs to provide short-term practical training positions. In addition, the certification mechanism for cooperative achievements needs to be improved: enterprise practical training achievements should be included in course credits, and enterprise evaluations should account for a certain proportion of the scores of practical courses.

5. Conclusion

From the perspective of the digital economy, the reform of practical teaching for business disciplines in private undergraduate universities needs to take OBE as the core focus, and solve the problem of supply-demand mismatch through reverse curriculum design, interdisciplinary resource integration, and closed-loop evaluation and improvement. Practical teaching should focus on core outcomes such as digital tool operation and interdisciplinary project implementation, and give priority to meeting the high-demand capabilities of enterprises. Moreover, the flexibility advantage of private universities can be transformed into reform momentum: resource constraints can be reduced through cooperation with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). At the same time, it is necessary to establish a tripartite feedback mechanism involving universities, enterprises, and graduates, and adjust curriculum content and evaluation criteria every academic year based on changes in enterprise needs and tracking data on graduates' capabilities.

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Disclosure statement

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