

# Research Hotspots and Trends in the Teaching of Ideological and Political Courses in Universities

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## ABSTRACT

The study used all Chinese articles titled "Teaching of Ideological and Political Courses in Colleges and Universities" included on CNKI in the past 10 years as data sources, and used CiteSpace bibliometric visualization software for data analysis. Research has found that in the past decade, there have been many research achievements and increasing attention in the academic community on this topic. The research focus has been on "curriculum construction promoting the effectiveness of educational reform", with the main research topics being "era background", "educational subject", and "teaching mode". According to graph analysis, the recent use of new technologies to promote innovation in ideological and political teaching methods, examine the construction of ideological and political courses from a new era perspective, and integrate various resources into ideological and political courses are research trends. In response to the existing research issues, suggestions are proposed to strengthen the basic theoretical research of ideological and political courses in universities, grasp the relationship between content integrity and method innovation, and coordinate the relationship between ideological and political courses and other courses.

**Keywords:** *Teaching ideological and political courses in universities, CiteSpace, Visual analysis.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As a key course to achieve the fundamental task of cultivating moral character in universities, the teaching of ideological and political courses has become a hot topic and focus in the field of ideological and political education in recent years. Teaching plays a central role in school education. The teaching of ideological and political courses in universities covers aspects such as teaching philosophy, teaching process, teaching organization, teaching methods, and teaching evaluation. Seizing the key process of ideological and political education teaching and continuously promoting the improvement of quality and efficiency in ideological and political education teaching in universities is a major and urgent issue of the times that universities are facing.

## 2. RESEARCH DESIGN

Only by further discussing, examining, and reflecting on the existing research on "ideological and political course teaching in universities" can we

expand the longitude and dimensions of existing research. Existing research has conducted multi-level and multi-angle analysis on the theme of "ideological and political education in universities", but there is very little research examining this topic from a panoramic perspective. In order to more objectively and comprehensively grasp the evolution process, hot issues and development trends of the academic research on "ideological and political course teaching in colleges and universities", and systematically sort out the existing achievements, this research uses CiteSpace, a visual knowledge mapping analysis software in the field of scientific metrology, to conduct metrology statistics on the literature related to the research on "ideological and political course teaching in colleges and universities" in the past 10 years, Presenting the knowledge structure and research patterns of research in the form of data and knowledge graphs, supplemented by qualitative analysis of relevant literature, in an attempt to identify problems and carry out forward-looking research prospects on this basis, in order to promote the continuous deepening of theoretical research on

"ideological and political education in universities" and help improve the quality and efficiency of ideological and political education in universities.

## **2.1 Research Tools**

Kuhn, the American philosopher of science, proposed that the focus of scientific research changes with time, and scientific development is a complex dynamic process.[1] After long-term research, Price and other historians of science have found that the process of scientific development can be obtained from published documents through their footprints. CiteSpace is a multivariate, time-sharing and dynamic citation visualization analysis software that focuses on analyzing the potential knowledge contained in scientific literature and is gradually developed in the context of scientific metrology, data and information visualization.[2] The visualized graphs obtained through this method are called "scientific knowledge maps" (MKD). It can analyze the co citation of literature and discover knowledge clustering and distribution in the citation space, providing co-occurrence analysis functions between other knowledge units. This study relies on CiteSpace (version 5.8. R3) to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the research on "ideological and political course teaching in universities".

## **2.2 Data Collection and Processing**

CNKI can search for over 8500 Chinese academic journals, making it the most complete and continuously dynamically updated full-text database of academic journals in China. This study takes Chinese academic journal data collected from the CNKI CNKI database as the direct source, and focuses on the academic achievements of the academic community in the past 10 years. In the "Advanced Search" section on the homepage of CNKI, enter the title=(Ideological and Political Course Teaching) or include=(Ideological and Political Theory Course Teaching) and include=(University), publication year=(2013-2022), literature source=(all journals), excluding non academic literature such as foreign conference papers, topic solicitation notices, and news reports. A total of 4606 valid academic papers were retrieved. After exporting it in Reworks format, renaming the Reworks format file, preprocessing, loading, and converting data in the CiteSpace

system, setting various CiteSpace parameters, and running visualization, the system can generate relevant data and graphs such as keyword statistical tables.

## **3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

By using Cite Space software to track and analyze imported papers, and analyzing content such as Betweenness centrality and Burst detection, the following characteristics of ideological and political education in universities have been demonstrated in the past 10 years.

### **3.1 Research Overview**

From the available data exported by CNKI, it can be seen that there are a large number of related research papers with prominent hotspots. But there are still many problems in terms of research topics, research directions, and research quality.

#### **3.1.1 There Are Many Research Achievements and the Attention Continues To Rise**

This article selects 4606 Chinese academic papers on this topic from the academic community in China since 2013 as the research object. In terms of the number of publications in effective academic journals, as shown in Figure 1, there is a trend of increasing year by year. In 2013, a total of about 400 papers were published, and by 2021, more than 600 papers were published. It is expected that more papers will be published in 2022. This indicates that the research on this topic involves a large number of studies, and the academic community has maintained a relatively high level of attention and research enthusiasm for this topic.

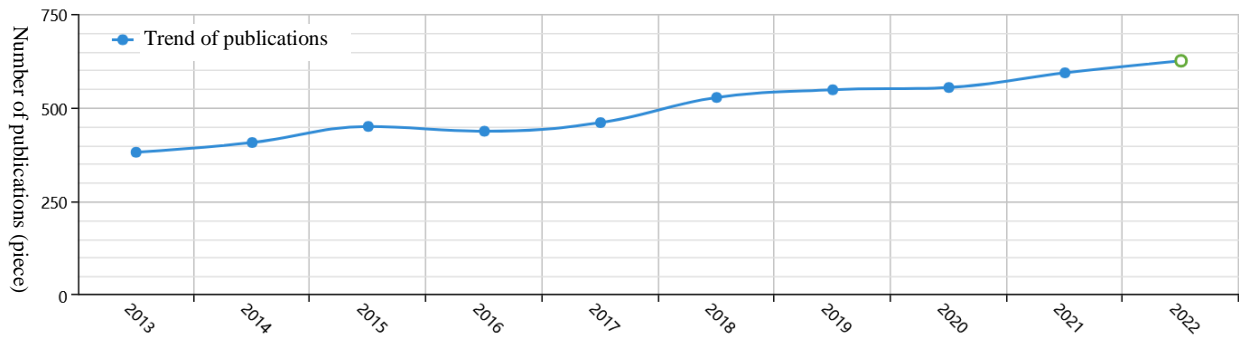


Figure 1 Trend of the number of publications in the teaching and research of ideological and political courses in universities.

According to “Figure 1”, in the past 10 years, journals such as "Introduction to Ideological and Theoretical Education" and "School Party Building and Ideological Education" have become the focus of academic papers on "Ideological and Political Course Teaching in Universities". These two journals are core Chinese journals that play an important leading role in the field of ideological and political research, and have made contributions to the deepening of ideological and political teaching research.

### 3.1.2 Collaborative Research and Academic Connections Are Not Close

In “Table 1”, Yin Tieyan (13 papers) has the highest number of published papers on this topic,

Table 1. Statistics of high-frequency authors in the past 10 years

Institution	Frequency	Author	Institution	Frequency	Author
13	1	Yin Tieyan	5	0	Ye Rongguo
9	1	Jiang Nan	5	1	Liu Wei
8	1	Liu Fang	5	1	Xu Rong
6	0	Ren Yonghui	5	1	Zhang Yan
6	0	Wen Xinrong	5	1	Liu Yang
5	3	Zhou Wencui	5	1	Liu Li

followed by Jiangnan (9 papers) and Liu Fang (8 papers). The network density is low, the number of connections is relatively small, and overall, there are few connections and collaborations between most scholars. There is no obvious research team formed, and the academic connections between researchers are not close. Similarly, “Table 2” shows that the School of Marxism at Wuhan University, the School of Marxism at Guizhou Normal University, and the School of Marxism at Guangxi Normal University are high-frequency publishing institutions. However, according to the co-occurrence graph of institutional cooperation, the connections between publishing institutions are weak, with less communication and cooperation, and there is no cooperative network formed.

Table 2. Statistics of high-frequency publishing institutions in the past 10 years

Institution	Frequency	Linkability	Institution	Frequency	Linkability
22	2	School of Marxism, Wuhan University	12	0	Guizhou Normal University
18	0	School of Marxism, Guizhou Normal University	11	1	School of Marxism, People's University of China;
15	2	School of Marxism, Guangxi Normal University	10	0	School of Marxism, Northeastern University
14	2	School of Marxism, Beijing Normal University	10	0	School of Marxism, South-Central Minzu University

### 3.2 Hot Topics in the Teaching and Research of Ideological and Political Courses in Universities

The researchers use CiteSpace visualization analysis to obtain a list of keyword frequency and centrality values. CiteSpace uses centrality to discover and measure the importance of selected parameters, a centrality greater than 0.1 indicates that this keyword is a research hotspot. Therefore, it is clear which keywords are most prominent, reflecting the hot topics in the field of ideological and political education research in universities.

Word frequency refers to the extraction of keywords, abstracts, and other title information from selected literature to explain the research hotspots in a certain field over a period of time. Based on the set threshold, this article extracted all literature keywords and found a total of 356 high-frequency keywords, forming 386 lines. The co-occurrence graph of hot keywords in the literature is shown in "Figure 2". The size of the nodes and text in "Figure 2" represent the frequency of keyword occurrences. The connections between nodes represent connections established during different periods, and the thickness and density of the connections indicate the intensity of keyword co-occurrence. It can be seen that "ideological and political courses", "ideological and political course teaching", and "ideological and political courses in

universities" have a high frequency of occurrence and are research hotspots. Teaching reform, teaching effectiveness, ideological and political education, teaching methods, teaching models, and teaching paths are research hotspots. The academic community has conducted research on various elements and links related to the construction of ideological and political courses. The researchers focus on both research on innovative teaching methods and exploration of teaching effectiveness.

The mediating centrality of keywords is an important basis for judging scholars' focus, and literature on mediating centrality in high school is usually the key to connecting research fields. From "Table 3", which represents the mediating centrality indicators of node promotion, it can be seen that there is strong communication between "ideological and political education in universities", "introduction courses", and "teaching effectiveness" with other hot keywords, indicating that they are high-frequency terms used to link other keywords and promote mutual citation relationships between related thematic literature. This indicates that the academic community often takes ideological and political courses such as "Introduction" and "Ideological and Political Training" as examples, with the "Ideological and Political Classroom" as the main battlefield, and promotes teaching activities through "integration" such as "red cultural resources" to enhance "teaching effectiveness". [3]

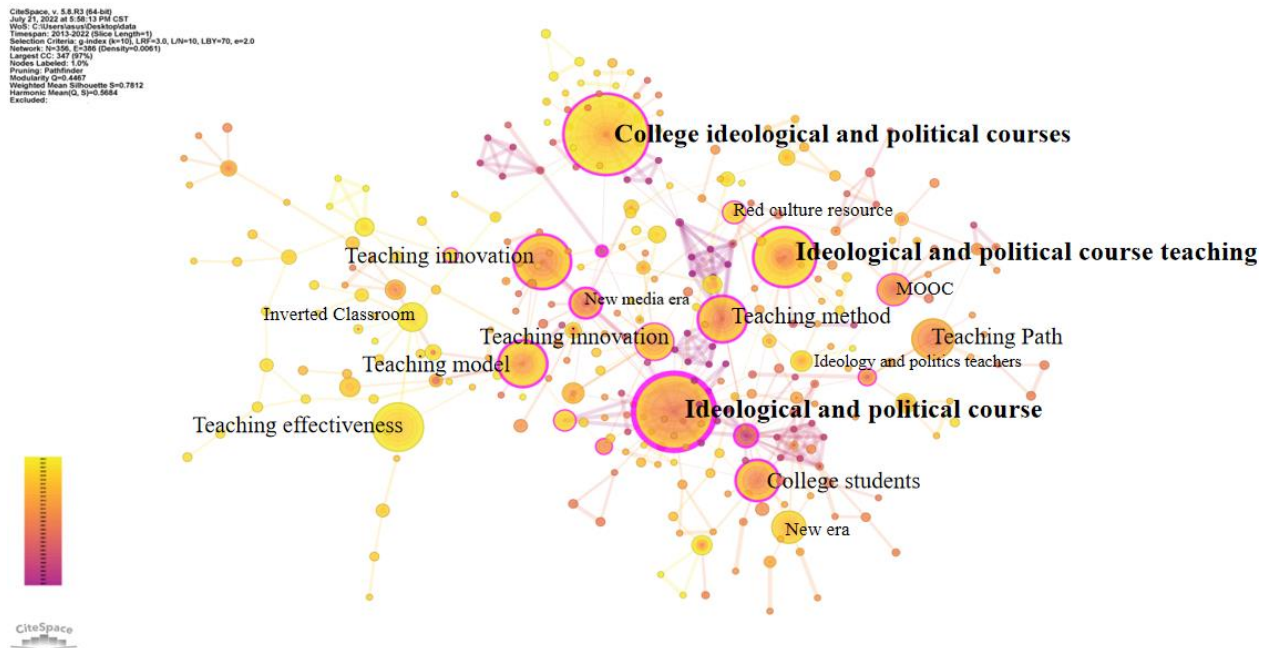


Figure 2 Keyword co-occurrence graph.

Table 3. Top 10 keyword centrality (sorted by intermediary centrality)

ranking	keywords	frequency	intermediary	centrality	keywords	frequency	intermediary
1	Ideological and political education in universities	75	0.57	6	Ideological and Political Classroom	8	0.37
2	Introduction Course	30	0.4	7	Red Cultural Resources	62	0.37
3	Teaching effectiveness	46	0.38	8	Higher vocational colleges	79	0.36
4	Ethnic areas	6	0.38	9	Ideological Training Course	22	0.35
5	Value realization	2	0.37	10	Integration	70	0.34

### 3.3 The research Topics Mainly Involve the Background of the Times, Educational Subjects, and Teaching Models

The keywords of academic papers themselves serve as a concise summary of their themes, reflecting to a large extent the research hotspots in related fields. Based on this, applying CiteSpace software and LLR (Logarithmic Likelihood Ratio) algorithm to perform keyword co-occurrence clustering analysis can more intuitively reflect the research topic. The presented keyword clustering view is shown in Figure 3, where the color block

represents the clustering area, and the color block contains clustering key words inside. From Figure 3, it can be seen that the Q value=0.8611>0.3 indicates a good clustering effect of the network structure, while the S value=0.9536>0.5 indicates high homogeneity and good clustering division among different clusters. "Figure 3" presents the top ten clusters. The average clustering year of hot topics in "ideological and political course teaching in universities" is around 2015-2016, indicating that the research is mature during this period. The hotspots between each cluster in the figure intersect, mainly involving three hotspots.

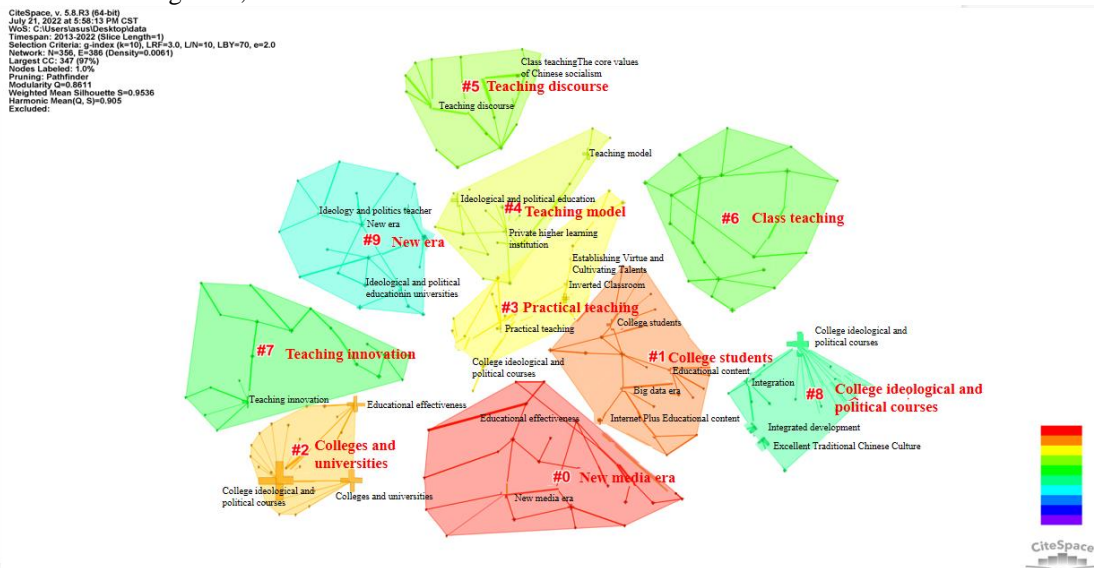


Figure 3 Keyword clustering graph.

#### 3.3.1 Paying Attention to Reality

"Figure 3" shows that the "New Media Era" (#0) cluster is the largest, indicating that it is the most representative under this cluster. Under the theme

of new media environment, research mainly focuses on: new media, effectiveness, artificial intelligence, teaching methods, and universities. The era background is the objective environment that ideological and political education must face, and it

is the practical foundation for carrying out teaching content and implementing teaching activities. How to effectively utilize new technologies to carry out teaching and innovate existing teaching methods is an important proposition for ideological and political workers in various universities.[4] #9 is the "New Era", which is a new starting point for ideological and political courses since the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2017. Based on this, "new changes have taken place in various aspects such as teaching content, teaching methods, and teaching objectives.[5] Scholars focus on how "ideological and political education in universities" can respond to the challenges of the new era, and how "ideological and political course teachers" can grasp the characteristics of the new era and teach ideological and political courses well.

### 3.3.2 *Highlighting the Main Body of Education*

With the deepening of educational reform, the theory of ideological and political education continues to deepen, and the definition of the educational subject becomes clearer. Students (# 1) are both the object and subject of ideological and political education, and the relationship between teachers and students is characterized by "inter subjectivity or otherness". [6] The teaching concept of ideological and political courses has undergone a transformation, no longer focusing solely on teachers and textbook learning, but rather "student-centered", emphasizing students' actual needs and sense of achievement, and conducting process evaluations of students. As an important subject of ideological and political education, universities (# 2) have always been a hot research topic on how to make good use of ideological and political courses as the main channel of ideological and political education, effectively carry out ideological and political education, and improve the effectiveness of teaching. [7]

### 3.3.3 *Focusing on Teaching Mode*

The teaching mode includes the comprehensive application of teaching methods and teaching strategies#3. #8 focuses on "practical teaching", "moral education and talent cultivation", "flipped classroom", "ideological and political courses in universities", "teaching reform", etc. Classroom

teaching is the main battlefield of ideological and political education, but practical teaching is an important component of ideological and political education, and is a powerful tool for implementing the moral education task of cultivating morality and cultivating people. In 2018, the Ministry of Education issued the "Basic Requirements for the Teaching of Ideological and Political Theory Courses in Higher Education Institutions in the New Era", which "made clear requirements for practical teaching of ideological and political courses in the form of credits." Since then, the academic community has conducted relatively concentrated research on how to "fully demonstrate the fundamental value of practical teaching" and "the relationship between practical teaching and classroom teaching ." [8] #4, #5, #6, #7 focus on "teaching mode", "ideological and political education", "private universities", "timeliness", "teaching evaluation" and other contents. Starting from the essence of ideological and political education, research should be conducted on different educational subjects, with a greater emphasis on the quality and process of ideological and political education teaching, and the development of "collaborative aggregation".

## 4. RESEARCH HISTORY AND TRENDS

"Figure 4" shows the top 20 keywords with the strongest suddenness in the research field of "ideological and political course teaching in universities" in the past 10 years. The starting year in the table is the year when the frequency of the corresponding keyword begins to surge, while the ending year is the time when the frequency of the keyword tends to stabilize. The emergence intensity represents the degree to which the frequency of the keyword suddenly increases during the emergence time, usually accompanied by research enthusiasm. The red bar corresponds to the duration of the word that should appear.



## Top 20 Keywords with the Strongest Citation Bursts



Figure 4 Keyword emergence (top 20 intensity).

### 4.1 The Application of New Technologies To Promote Innovation in Teaching Methods of Ideological and Political Courses Has Always Been a Hot Topic of Concern in the Academic Community

Hybrid teaching, online teaching, VR technology, artificial intelligence, big data, and integrated media have become new trends in recent research on teaching methods. In "Figure 4", the "New Media Era" has become a hot research topic in 2013. As time progresses, the keywords include "timeliness", "information age", "innovation in teaching methods", etc. This cluster mainly focuses on the research evolution of ideological and political education methods in the new media era. As shown in "Figure 4", as teaching methods, "Mu Ke" and "Micro Ke" are also keywords with high prominence. Online teaching, VR technology, and artificial intelligence have been active since 2020, while blended learning has been popular since 2018, indicating that its current position is still a research hotspot. From the "use" of new media technology in ideological and political education to the "integration" of new media technology and ideological and political education [9], it has been a topic that scholars have been paying attention to and exploring.

### 4.2 The Pattern of Ideological and Political Course Construction Is Constantly Expanding

"New era", "moral cultivation", "COVID-19" and "integrity and innovation" are new research hotspots. [10] According to the emergence intensity of prominence words in Figure 4, the emergence intensity of "New Era" (Strength=20.95), "Stride to Cultivate People" (Strength=14.42), and "COVID-19" (Strength=13.4) is very high, which shows that their research is very popular until now. To sum up, the "new era" has put forward new requirements for the ideological and political course. "Building morality and cultivating people" is the mission and responsibility of the ideological and political course in the new era. The normalization of the "COVID-19" has posed new challenges to the teaching method of the ideological and political course. How to build a "long-term mechanism for mixed teaching" under the epidemic and achieve "integrity and innovation"[11] is a new topic that needs to continue to explore.

### 4.3 Integrated Development Is an Important Feature of the Development of Ideological and Political Education

Recent research hotspots include "craftsmanship spirit", "historical drama", "revolutionary culture", and "four history" education. From the duration of

the emergence of key words in "Figure 4", it can be seen that the emergence of "integrated development" is relatively long, indicating that it has been a hot topic in ideological and political teaching research for a considerable period of time. From the time span shown in Figure 4, it can be seen that "ideological and political courses in universities", "teaching reform", and "teaching effectiveness" appeared earlier. However, recently, key words such as "craftsman spirit", "historical drama", "revolutionary spirit", and "four history education" have emerged, which may become a new direction for future research on the integration and development of ideological and political course teaching. Under the guidance of the "Four Confidences", the academic community is paying more attention to the integrated development of ideological and political education. For example, "Revolutionary culture is not only the inheritance and promotion of China's excellent traditional culture, but also has profound educational significance for the improvement of contemporary youth's ideological literacy.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTS

This paper is the first attempt to outline the research hotspot and evolution path in this field in the past 10 years by combining metrology analysis with CiteSpace visual analysis, and attempts to provide reference and reference for researchers to grasp the research in this field as a whole in an objective quantitative form and visual way to a certain extent. Meanwhile, based on existing research, the following conclusions and suggestions are proposed.

### 5.1 Research Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the evolution of research trends and research themes mentioned above, it can be found that there are still certain shortcomings in the depth and breadth of research in ideological and political education in universities. Using the scientific measurement software Citespace, a knowledge graph analysis of the achievements in the field of ideological and political education in universities over the past 10 years is conducted, and the following conclusions are drawn.

#### 5.1.1 A Point-to-Point Study Was Conducted on the Teaching Process

Improving the quality of ideological and political education in universities is closely related to the implementation of the fundamental task of cultivating morality and talents. Through visual econometric analysis of the theme of "Teaching Ideological and Political Courses in Universities" on CNKI in the past 10 years, Scholars have conducted extensive research on various elements of the teaching process, including educators, learners, teaching content, and teaching methods. For example, "Figure 4" shows that scholars have paid high attention to the "post-95s", "post-00s", and "ethnic minority students" among college students. They have conducted extensive research on ideological and political teachers in universities, as well as on higher vocational colleges, ethnic colleges, and private universities among them. The main focus of teaching content is on "integration" As a connecting point, expanding the breadth of teaching content with the times, integrating "innovation and entrepreneurship", "red culture", "anti epidemic spirit", scientist spirit, and poverty alleviation spirit into ideological and political education. The research on teaching methods has achieved the most results, including both changes in methods and new applications of teaching technology, inheritance of methods, and innovation in teaching models and methods.

#### 5.1.2 The Research Hotspots Are Widely Dispersed But Not Deep Enough

From a time perspective, scholars' research on "ideological and political course teaching in universities" has maintained a continuous increase in quantity. The trend evolution of the research on "ideological and political course teaching in universities" shows a widespread and sustained feature, and the research content involves all the constituent elements of the teaching process. Some studies, such as educational technology, continue to deepen, and research on "practical teaching", "teaching evaluation", and "integrated development" have always been the focus of attention in the academic community. On the other hand, the research content is not yet in-depth enough. Firstly, from the perspective of authors and research institutions, in the past decade, only 12 authors have published no less than 5 articles on this topic, and only 8 institutions have published 10 or more articles. Most researchers and research institutions have not conducted systematic research



in this field; There is no research cluster formed between authors or institutions, which affects the expansion of research depth. Secondly, out of the 4606 retrieved thematic papers, 479 were core journals, accounting for about 10%, indicating that the current high-level research results on "ideological and political course teaching in universities" are far from sufficient and the research quality needs to be further improved.

## 5.2 Research Prospects

Although the research on ideological and political education in universities has achieved fruitful results, further strengthening of theoretical research depth and effectiveness of teaching practice is needed in future research. Based on the above research conclusions and combined with recent policy hotspots, it is summarized that future research on ideological and political education reform should focus on the following aspects.

### 5.2.1 Prospects for the Construction of Ideological and Political Courses

With the determination of the historical direction of the new era, the construction and reform of ideological and political courses have also opened a "new chapter". The new curriculum teaching concept of "student-centered", fully considering students' needs, and enhancing students' sense of acquisition in learning, has gradually become a consensus. The construction of ideological and political courses will focus on solving the difficulties in the aspects of modernity and inheritance, political and academic rationality, affinity and influence, and achieve integrity and innovation.

### 5.2.2 Research Trends in Teaching Models of Ideological and Political Courses

With the normalization development of the COVID-19 and the technical support of big data and online teaching platform, how to improve the effectiveness of online and offline hybrid teaching will become the focus of teaching model reform. Since 2020, there has been a surge in online teaching research, which is both a practical need and a future research trend.

### 5.2.3 Prospects for Research on the Effectiveness of Ideological and Political Course Teaching

How to enhance the pertinence and effectiveness of ideological and political courses has been the focus of scholars' attention. In Figure 4, key words such as teaching effectiveness, effectiveness, and teaching evaluation were hot topics in 2013. The timeline of keywords in Figure 4 shows that in the past two years, new technologies such as VR technology and artificial intelligence will become powerful ways to enhance the attractiveness of ideological and political courses. At the same time, integrating practical teaching resources, the spirit of the times, excellent traditional Chinese culture, revolutionary culture, etc. into ideological and political courses is also a development trend to enhance the infectivity of ideological and political courses, enhance the pertinence and effectiveness of the courses.

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