Teaching Reform of E-business Theory and Practice Course in Universities Based on OBE Concept

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Abstract: This article aims to investigate innovative teaching strategies for the e-business theory and practice course, grounded in the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) framework. Our goal is to enhance the quality of education and nurture e-business professionals who align with contemporary societal demands. We initiate by examining the current landscape of e-business education, identifying challenges such as a mismatch between coursework and industry requirements, outdated teaching practices, and inadequate practical training. To address these challenges, we propose an OBE-inspired teaching reform. This entails clarifying reform objectives, revitalizing course content, modernizing teaching methodologies, and reimagining the teaching evaluation system. As we embark on this reform journey, we underscore the significance of a structured implementation process, faculty development, the integration of diverse educational resources, and a streamlined teaching management system. To assess the impact of these reforms, we introduce a multifaceted evaluation approach that combines various assessment methods. Through empirical analysis, we validate the efficacy of our teaching reforms. This study offers valuable insights and a practical roadmap for advancing educational reforms in higher education, elevating the caliber of professional training, and fostering the sustained growth of the e-business sector.

1. Introduction

Amidst the swift progression of information technology and the widespread adoption of e-business, the need for skilled e-business professionals has escalated [1]. Universities, as the breeding ground for talent, play a pivotal role in shaping the quality of e-business education, which in turn, impacts the effectiveness of talent cultivation [2]. Nevertheless, current e-business curricula in universities face challenges, including a disconnect between theoretical knowledge and practical applications, outdated teaching techniques, and a uniform evaluation system, making it difficult to align with the real-world demands for e-business expertise [3].

Consequently, implementing teaching reforms in e-business theory and practice courses, grounded in the OBE paradigm, emerges as a critical imperative [4]. The OBE approach underscores student-centered learning, focusing on outcomes that prioritize students' practical skills and foster an innovative entrepreneurial mindset. This philosophy resonates with the practical and innovative nature of e-business education, offering fresh perspectives and strategies for curricular transformation [5].

This study aims to delve into the strategies for reforming e-business theory and practice courses through the lens of the OBE concept. Its objective is to elevate the quality of e-business education and nurture a new generation of e-business professionals attuned to societal needs. This research not only enriches the theoretical landscape of e-business education but also provides pragmatic guidance for universities embarking on e-business teaching reforms. Furthermore, it holds significant implications for advancing educational reforms, enhancing the quality of talent development, and propelling the sustained growth of the e-business sector.

2. OBE education concept overview

2.1. OBE definition and core features

OBE is an educational concept oriented to students' learning achievements. It emphasizes that the education process should be organized and implemented around students' final learning achievements, pay attention to students' subjectivity and practicality, and pay attention to students' all-round development and personality development [6]. The core features of OBE education concept include: student-centered, learning achievement-oriented, focusing on the cultivation of practical ability and innovation and entrepreneurship, and emphasizing the continuous improvement and optimization of teaching process.

2.2. OBE application in universities

OBE education concept has been widely applied and popularized in universities since it was put forward. With the deepening of education and teaching reform, more and more universities have begun to try to apply OBE education concept to curriculum teaching reform [7]. For example, Tsinghua University, Peking University and other domestic first-class universities have introduced the OBE education concept into some courses, and improved the teaching quality and students' satisfaction by reconstructing the course system, optimizing the teaching content and reforming the teaching methods [8]. At the same time, some local universities also actively explore the path and mode of curriculum teaching reform based on OBE concept in combination with their own actual situation and school-running characteristics.

3. Analysis of the current situation of e-business courses

Currently, the e-business curriculum in universities typically encompasses fundamental theories of e-business, e-business technologies, e-marketing, and e-business laws and regulations [9]. While these courses aim to furnish students with a holistic understanding of e-business, challenges often arise in practical implementation, including an overemphasis on theory and a delay in updating course content. Furthermore, despite the swift evolution of the e-business industry, emerging fields and trending topics like big data, cross-border e-business, and social e-business remain underrepresented in the curriculum, leading to a mismatch between educational content and industry demands.

Integrating theory with practice is crucial in e-business education to bolster students' hands-on skills and foster innovation and entrepreneurship [10]. Nevertheless, many universities still prioritize theoretical instruction over practical exercises in their e-business courses. Even when practical components are included, they often suffer from issues like limited scope, inadequate time allocation, and restricted resources. This hinders students' ability to translate theoretical concepts into practical solutions and address real-world challenges. A comprehensive overview of the prevalent issues in e-business teaching is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Comprehensive analysis table of teaching status of e-business course

Problem category	Specific problem description
Course content	It is out of touch with the needs of the industry and fails to reflect the latest development and trend of the e-business industry in time.
Teaching method	Old, lack of innovation and interaction, it is difficult to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning.
Practice Teaching	The links are weak, which can't meet the students' training needs for practical ability and innovation and entrepreneurship.
Teaching evaluation	The system is single, paying too much attention to the assessment of theoretical knowledge and ignoring the evaluation of students' practical ability and comprehensive quality.

4. Teaching reform design under OBE concept

(1) Reform objectives

The goal of teaching reform of e-business course based on OBE concept is to cultivate e-business talents with solid theoretical foundation, strong practical ability and innovative and entrepreneurial spirit. Specific objectives are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Teaching reform target table of e-business course based on OBE concept

Reform target category	Description of specific reform objectives
Curriculum content system	Optimize the course content, closely meet the needs of the industry, and reflect the latest development and trend of e-business.
Teaching methods and means	Innovating teaching methods and means to improve students' interest and participation in learning.
Practical teaching link	Strengthen practical teaching to improve students' practical ability and problem-solving ability
Teaching evaluation system	Reconstruct the teaching evaluation system and comprehensively evaluate students' knowledge, ability and quality.

(2) Enhancing Teaching Content

To enhance teaching content, we must first revisit and refine the current curriculum framework, eliminating obsolete and redundant material while incorporating fresh, relevant topics from emerging fields. Secondly, it's crucial to continually update and expand course content, reflecting the latest advancements and trends in the e-business sector. Additionally, we should focus on integrating and streamlining curricular elements, bridging disciplinary gaps, and fostering interdisciplinary knowledge innovation.

(3) Innovating Teaching Methodologies

In innovating teaching methods, we must move away from traditional rote-learning and one-size-fits-all approaches, embracing more adaptable and varied teaching techniques. Case studies, project-based learning, and flipped classrooms are examples of methods that can ignite students' interest and engagement. Leveraging modern technologies like multimedia, online platforms, and mobile devices can further enrich teaching resources, enhancing the learning experience and overall effectiveness.

(4) Reimagining the Teaching Evaluation System

In reimagining the teaching evaluation system, we must shift away from singular assessment practices towards a more diversified approach. Firstly, we should balance process and outcome evaluations, considering both students' achievements and their learning journeys. Secondly, to achieve evaluation diversity and comprehensiveness, we can introduce multiple evaluation sources beyond teacher assessments, such as student self-reflections, peer reviews, and industry feedback. Besides assessing theoretical knowledge, we must also emphasize practical skills, innovation, and overall student development. Lastly, it's essential to provide timely feedback on evaluation results, guiding students in their continuous improvement and growth.

5. Implementation and guarantee of teaching reform

5.1. Implementation steps

The implementation of teaching reform needs to follow certain steps to ensure its smooth progress. Figure 1 shows the implementation steps of teaching reform.

According to Figure 1, we should gradually implement the teaching reform plan, summarize and improve it while implementing it, and ensure that the reform is effective.
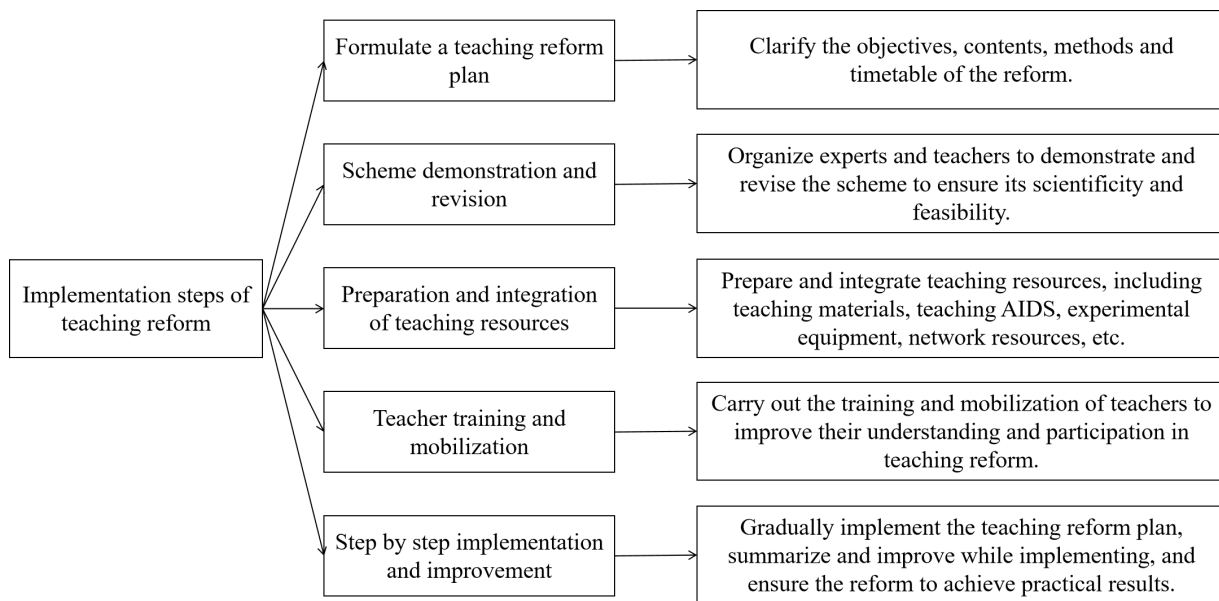
Figure 1 Implementation steps of teaching reform

5.2. Teachers and training

Teachers play a pivotal role in driving educational transformation. Therefore, during the reform process, emphasis must be placed on cultivating and empowering educators. Firstly, it is imperative to identify and involve teachers who possess extensive teaching expertise and an innovative mindset, leveraging their leadership and example. Secondly, efforts must be made to enhance teachers' professional development through diverse training and learning opportunities, thereby elevating their teaching proficiency. Additionally, implementing an incentive system is crucial to motivate teachers to engage actively in the reform process and achieve outstanding outcomes.

5.3. Integration of teaching resources

Teaching resources are the material basis of teaching reform. In the process of teaching reform, we should pay attention to the integration and utilization of teaching resources. First of all, we should conduct a comprehensive inventory and evaluation of the existing teaching resources to understand the types, quantity and quality of resources. Secondly, according to the needs of teaching reform, we should formulate the integration scheme of teaching resources and make clear the integration objectives, methods and timetable of resources. Then, we should actively strive for the support and input from all sides and increase the total amount and types of teaching resources. Finally, we should strengthen the management and maintenance of teaching resources to ensure the effective utilization and sustainable development of resources.

5.4. Teaching management system

Teaching management system is the institutional guarantee of teaching reform. In the process of teaching reform, we should pay attention to the perfection and innovation of teaching management system. First of all, we should comprehensively sort out and evaluate the existing teaching management system, and understand the advantages and disadvantages and adaptability of the system. Secondly, according to the needs of teaching reform, we should formulate the revision plan of teaching management system, and make clear the revision goal, content and timetable of the system. Then, experts and teachers should be organized to demonstrate and revise the system to ensure its scientificity and feasibility. Finally, we should strengthen the implementation and supervision of the teaching management system to ensure the effective implementation and continuous improvement of the system.

6. Teaching reform effect evaluation

6.1. Evaluation method

The evaluation of teaching reform effect is an important link to test the effectiveness of teaching reform. In the process of evaluation, a comprehensive evaluation should be carried out by combining various methods. This article holds that students' feedback and suggestions on teaching reform can be collected by questionnaire survey; Test method can be used to test students' knowledge mastery; Observation can be used to observe and record students' classroom performance and practical ability; Expert appraisal method can be used to comprehensively evaluate the teaching reform scheme and implementation effect.

6.2. Empirical analysis

Empirical analysis serves as a means to ascertain the impact of educational reforms through the systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of real-world data. When conducting such analyses, it is essential to prioritize data authenticity and reliability to guarantee scientifically rigorous and precise outcomes. By comparing student performance, satisfaction levels, and post-graduation employment rates before and after the implementation of reforms, stakeholders can effectively assess their practical efficacy. Furthermore, case studies enable a more nuanced understanding of both the successes achieved and challenges encountered in teaching reform efforts.

6.3. Problems and reflections

Some problems and shortcomings may be found in the evaluation process, which need timely reflection and improvement. Relevant personnel should objectively analyze and evaluate the evaluation results and find out the existing problems and reasons; Put forward specific improvement measures and suggestions for the problems; It is also necessary to strengthen the tracking and supervision of improvement measures to ensure that problems are effectively solved and the effect of continuous improvement is achieved.

7. Conclusions

After an extensive examination and deliberation on the teaching reform of the e-business theory and practice course grounded in the OBE concept, this study arrives at notable conclusions. The adoption of the OBE approach hasproven beneficial in enhancing the overall quality of e-business instruction. By refining course curricula, introducing innovative teaching techniques, bolstering practical applications, and overhauling the teaching evaluation framework, the reform efforts in e-business education can be successfully propelled.

The execution of these reforms demands meticulous planning, a concerted effort in faculty development, the amalgamation of educational resources, and a revamped teaching management system. A holistic evaluation of the reform's effectiveness can be achieved through a blend of assessment methods, enabling timely reflections and necessary adjustments.

While this study offers notable insights, there remain areas for further enhancement and expansion. Future research can broaden its scope, prioritize empirical investigations and comparative analyses, and delve deeper into both the triumphs and challenges encountered in teaching reforms. This comprehensive approach can offer invaluable guidance for advancing educational reforms in higher education institutions.

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