

EXPLORING TEACHING INNOVATIONS OF THE “DUAL-GUIDANCE MODEL” IN THE *PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT* COURSE FOR UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract: The *Principles of Management* course is a foundational professional course designed for first-year undergraduate students in economics and management programs. However, several challenges persist in its teaching process: students often lack management experience and face difficulties in internalizing theoretical knowledge; it is challenging to sustain students' strong curiosity and motivation for learning throughout the course; the course materials emphasize theory over practice, diminishing the practical nature of management; and the assessment methods are overly focused on grades, embodying a “performance-only” evaluation system. To address these issues, the dual-guidance teaching model, informed by the self-determination theory and aimed at cultivating application-oriented talent, offers an effective reform strategy. This model addresses the aforementioned challenges by integrating teacher guidance with student autonomy, emphasizing practical engagement alongside theoretical learning. By implementing these reforms, the course not only resolves key pain points but also fosters innovative outcomes and equips students with skills for real-world application.

Keywords: *Principles of Management*; Dual-guidance model; Undergraduate universities; Teaching innovations

1 INTRODUCTION

In the traditional assessment of the *Principles of Management* course, there has been an overreliance on written exams and final grades as the primary means of evaluation. This single-dimensional approach focuses predominantly on theoretical knowledge, often neglecting the assessment of students' practical abilities, innovative thinking, and applied skills, which are essential for success in real-world scenarios [1]. Such an evaluation model fosters a test-oriented learning environment, encouraging students to prioritize short-term exam preparation over meaningful engagement with course content. Consequently, many students fail to internalize management concepts or develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary to connect classroom knowledge with practical applications, significantly hindering both their academic growth and professional readiness.

To address these limitations, educational reforms have introduced a diversified assessment system aimed at providing a more comprehensive evaluation of students' learning outcomes. This system combines traditional theoretical assessments with evaluations of classroom participation, teamwork on group projects, practical skills in operational tasks, and project management execution. By incorporating these additional dimensions, the assessment framework incentivizes students to actively engage in classroom discussions, which improves their communication and presentation abilities. Group projects and collaborative exercises help develop teamwork and leadership skills, while hands-on tasks and simulations bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application [2]. Moreover, internships with companies and employer feedback further enhance the assessment process by providing a real-world perspective on students' performance, highlighting their readiness to apply management principles in professional settings and identifying areas for improvement.

This diversified assessment model also addresses the common habit of neglecting consistent study during the semester and relying on last-minute cramming before exams. By distributing evaluations across multiple activities and emphasizing continuous engagement, the system encourages students to adopt sustained learning habits and develop a deeper understanding of course materials. Through active participation, regular assessments, and practical exposure, students are better equipped to internalize management theories and apply them effectively in complex, real-world scenarios [3]. Ultimately, this comprehensive approach not only enhances academic outcomes but also prepares students to thrive in dynamic professional environments, laying a strong foundation for cultivating application-oriented management professionals with practical expertise, innovative thinking, and the adaptability to meet modern workplace challenges.

2 MAJOR PROBLEMS IN TEACHING *PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT*

2.1 Students' Lack of Management Experience and Difficulty in Internalizing Theoretical Knowledge

Most students taking the *Principles of Management* course lack practical management experience and have limited direct exposure to business operations and management practices. This lack of experience makes it challenging for students to grasp abstract management theories and understand their deeper meanings and applications. As a result,

students often resort to rote memorization of concepts without being able to connect them to real-world management activities, which hinders the effective internalization of theoretical knowledge into practical skills. This issue is particularly evident among freshmen, who, without practical exposure, struggle to comprehend and master the core principles and concepts of management. Their understanding remains superficial, making it difficult to appreciate the relevance and applicability of management theories in real-life scenarios.

2.2 Challenges in Sustaining Students’ Strong Desire for Knowledge

While freshmen initially exhibit enthusiasm and curiosity about university-level learning, the complex and abstract nature of the *Principles of Management* course content often poses challenges. Without effective guidance, students may feel confused and frustrated, which can diminish their interest and motivation as the course progresses. Furthermore, many students lack effective strategies for studying management principles, leading to a sense of difficulty and discouragement when faced with complex theoretical concepts. This highlights the urgent need for teaching approaches that maintain students' interest and curiosity throughout the course, providing clear learning pathways and strategies to help them navigate the subject effectively.

2.3 Emphasis on Theory Over Practice, Undermining the Practical Nature of Management

Although the *Principles of Management* course aims to develop students’ theoretical knowledge and practical abilities, the current teaching approach often prioritizes theoretical explanations while neglecting the importance of practical learning. This theoretical bias results in students having limited exposure to the practical applications of management concepts, making it difficult for them to understand how these theories operate in real-world management contexts. Additionally, existing textbooks and case studies often focus heavily on theoretical explanations and fail to integrate current management practices. This disconnect hinders students' ability to relate their learning to actual management challenges, ultimately affecting their development of practical skills.

2.4 Single-Dimensional Assessment Methods Creating a “Cramming Before Exams” Mentality

Traditional assessment methods, which primarily rely on final exam results, foster an overemphasis on grades. This “grade-only” approach encourages students to adopt unhealthy learning habits, such as cramming before exams while neglecting regular study and comprehensive understanding. Many students believe that last-minute exam preparation is sufficient to achieve satisfactory grades, leading to a lack of consistent effort and deep engagement with the course material. This not only impedes their long-term retention and understanding of management principles but also fails to develop essential skills such as independent learning and problem-solving. Reforming assessment methods to encourage continuous learning and proper study habits is therefore crucial for enhancing the overall quality of teaching and fostering better learning outcomes.

3 DUAL-GUIDANCE TEACHING AND ITS THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

3.1 Theoretical Foundations of the Dual-Guidance Teaching Model and Intrinsic Motivation

The theoretical foundation of the dual-guidance teaching model is primarily derived from Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Constructivist Learning Theory [4-5]. SDT emphasizes the importance of supporting intrinsic motivation, where students engage in learning activities because they perceive them as valuable, meaningful, or enjoyable [6]. In the dual-guidance model, the teacher's guiding role and the student's active role are combined to drive the teaching process collaboratively.

This model encourages students to establish their learning paths based on their interests and goals under the teacher’s guidance, thereby fostering intrinsic motivation. Teachers support students' autonomous learning by providing abundant learning resources, creating meaningful learning experiences, and offering timely feedback. This approach facilitates the transition from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation, enhancing the perceived value of learning activities and strengthening students' self-efficacy and self-determination. Such a transformation is crucial for lifelong learning and career development.

3.2 Relationship Between the Dual-Guidance Teaching Model and Autonomous Learning

The relationship between the dual-guidance teaching model and autonomous learning lies in its ability to promote active participation and self-motivation among students. Autonomous learning emphasizes students' self-drive and self-regulation during the learning process, which aligns with the dual-guidance model’s philosophy of collaborative teaching design and implementation by teachers and students.

In this model, students are no longer passive recipients of knowledge; they become co-constructors of learning through group discussions, collaborative practices, and other activities. The dual-guidance model offers diverse learning resources and activities tailored to different learning styles and needs, thereby enhancing students' capacity for

autonomous learning. Students are also provided with opportunities for self-reflection and self-assessment, which are critical for developing metacognitive skills and autonomous learning abilities.

3.3 Practical Advantages of the Dual-Guidance Teaching Model

The dual-guidance teaching model demonstrates significant advantages in building efficient and effective classrooms by fostering collaboration and interaction between teachers and students. This model better meets diverse learner needs while enhancing classroom efficiency and teaching quality. For example, the “dual-guidance and dual-direction” teaching approach integrates teacher-student collaboration in class design and implementation, aligning with the philosophy of “guided learning and practice, with learning and practice combined.” This method not only enriches students' learning experiences but also expands opportunities for teachers' professional development, equipping them with adaptive skills for modern educational challenges.

The implementation of the dual-guidance model transforms traditional learning into a dynamic and interactive process. With teacher guidance, students actively engage in learning, boosting motivation and fostering deeper involvement. This engagement cultivates a sense of ownership over their educational journey, transitioning students from passive knowledge recipients to active contributors. The model's emphasis on real-time feedback and continuous assessment enables teachers to adjust instructional strategies promptly, ensuring the learning process remains student-centered, responsive, and effective. This adaptability addresses diverse student needs, creating a more inclusive and impactful learning environment.

Additionally, the dual-guidance model encourages self-directed learning through activities such as independent research, peer evaluation, and reflective journaling. These elements not only enhance academic outcomes but also instill lifelong learning habits, fostering students' ability to assess their strengths and identify areas for growth. The emphasis on autonomy and reflection equips students with metacognitive skills essential for personal and professional development. By engaging in hands-on tasks, students gain practical experience that bridges theoretical concepts with real-world applications, enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. This process nurtures innovators and leaders capable of adapting to complex scenarios and devising creative solutions.

Ultimately, the dual-guidance teaching model redefines classroom dynamics by blending theoretical rigor with practical application, promoting both academic excellence and skill development. Its successful implementation relies on the collective efforts of teachers, students, and educational institutions, ensuring the model's potential is fully realized. Through this collaborative approach, the dual-guidance model contributes to the development of learners who are not only academically capable but also ready to thrive in diverse professional environments.

4 TEACHING IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES BASED ON THE DUAL-GUIDANCE MODEL

4.1 Shifting from Teacher-Centered to Teacher-Student Dual-Guidance: Empowering Students as Owners of Learning

In traditional teaching, the teacher acts as the sole authority, and students acquire knowledge primarily through passive listening. However, with the rapid development of the internet and advancements in corporate brand management practices, this knowledge-transmission model is no longer suitable for cultivating innovative talent. The dual-guidance model, where teachers guide and students take the lead, enables a more dynamic learning process. Teachers pose thought-provoking questions following theoretical explanations, encouraging students to use online resources, analyze cases, deliver presentations, engage in discussions, and summarize insights to acquire knowledge independently. By participating actively in the learning process, students develop problem-solving abilities and enhance their motivation for learning through critical thinking and inquiry.

4.2 Transitioning from Monologue Lectures to an Integration of Industry, Academia, and Research: Empowering Students as Educators and Innovators

Traditional teaching methods often rely on lecture-based monologues, where the teacher is the sole source of information. This approach is frequently criticized for being monotonous and uninspiring, limiting students' engagement and resulting in knowledge acquisition that is heavily theoretical and narrow in scope. Under the dual-guidance approach, blended learning combines online course development, student-led case studies, expert-led workshops, classroom simulations, field investigations, and management project formulation. This integration of industry, academia, and research helps students simultaneously learn theory and explore practical management issues. Students analyze and address real-world problems, consolidating their knowledge into theoretical insights through research outputs. This process develops their ability to apply theories, analyze challenges, and derive solutions, ultimately enabling them to construct innovative management frameworks.

4.3 Shifting from Theory-Centric to Student-Centric Learning: Empowering Students as Corporate Leaders

The curriculum design of *Principles of Management* traditionally relies heavily on classic textbooks, emphasizing theoretical transmission. However, the introduction of a “strategic planning” module transforms students into corporate managers tasked with devising annual plans for companies. This approach not only strengthens students' understanding and application of management theories but also deepens their reflection on and comprehension of corporate needs. It

enables students to explore management strategies from a practical perspective, providing them with a stronger foundation for future career planning and development.

4.4 Moving from Exam-Based to Practice-Based Assessment: Empowering Students as Owners of Achievements

Traditional assessments in the *Principles of Management* course have overly relied on written exams and final grades, often neglecting students' practical abilities, innovative thinking, and applied skills. Such a narrow focus fosters a test-oriented learning culture, impeding students from effectively applying their knowledge in real-world scenarios. To address this issue, the dual-guidance model proposes a diversified assessment system designed to comprehensively evaluate students' learning outcomes.

This system includes traditional theoretical assessments as well as evaluations of classroom participation, teamwork, practical skills, and project execution. By incorporating these diverse dimensions, students are motivated to actively engage in discussions, enhancing their communication and presentation skills. Team projects nurture collaboration and leadership, while hands-on activities strengthen their project management and problem-solving abilities. Additionally, internships and feedback from employers provide an authentic assessment of students' performance in workplace settings.

This multi-faceted evaluation approach encourages students to move away from last-minute cramming and adopt continuous learning and deep understanding. It lays a solid foundation for cultivating management professionals with practical capabilities and innovative thinking, equipping them to meet the demands of dynamic and complex business environments.

COMPETING INTERESTS

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