



**THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT IN  
POLITICAL COURSE THROUGH INQUIRY METHOD  
OF GRADE 9 STUDENTS IN CHINA**

**BY  
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### Abstract

The study aimed to compare grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course before and after using the inquiry method and to investigate their satisfaction. The study employed a cluster random sampling of 30 grade 9 students from nine classes with mixed gender and learning abilities. The quantitative data were collected through learning achievement tests (pre-test and post-test) and were analyzed using paired sample t-test. In addition, a questionnaire was used to collect data to examine the students' satisfaction with the use of inquiry method, while qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews for supporting the ideas which was analyzed using mean and standard deviation.

The research result showed that the learning achievement in political course improved significantly, the post-test scores ( $\bar{x} = 37.90$ ,  $SD = 2.58$ ) were significantly higher than the pre-test scores ( $\bar{x} = 27.10$ ,  $SD = 3.51$ ). Additionally, the obtained p-value was .000, which was less than .05 ( $p < .05$ ), indicating a statistically significant improvement in learning achievement. Furthermore, the data collected from the students' satisfaction questionnaires showed that all items received in the highest ratings from the participants (Part A: Interest and Motivation;  $\bar{x} = 4.35$ ,  $SD = 0.87$ , Part B: Engagement;  $\bar{x} = 4.37$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ , Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning;  $\bar{x} = 4.39$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ ), and all the data of semi-structured interviews presented strongly supports for the students' satisfaction, indicating that the students were satisfied with the inquiry method.

Therefore, this study clearly demonstrated that the application of inquiry method could improve the students' learning achievement in political course and their satisfaction.

(Total 139 pages)

Keywords: Inquiry Method, Political Course, Students' Satisfaction, Grade 9 Chinese Students

Student's Signature ..... Thesis Advisor's Signature .....

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter talks about the background and rationale of the study, research questions, research objectives, scope of the study, research terminologies, significance and limitations of the study.

### 1.1 Background and Rationale of the Study

Education is very important for the development of a country or a society and is the fundamental way to cultivate innovative talents. Entering the 21st century, the Ministry of Education in China has initiated the eighth reform of the basic education curriculum, which incorporates and reflects upon the theoretical and practical experiences gained from previous educational reforms (Wang, 2019). Many traditional educational ideas and teaching models are being updated, reinforcing the central role of the classroom and increasingly emphasizing the initiative of learning (Gong, 2022). We need to change the conventional pedagogical approach of "teacher-centered instruction" in order to facilitate educational reform, and align with the demands of societal progress and talent cultivation.

The 9th-grade political course is a comprehensive course designed to guide and enhance the ideological and moral development of junior high school students, based on their unique experiences and needs. It is very essential for cultivating students' ideology, morality, and awareness of the rule of law. Comprehensiveness is a major feature of the 9th-grade political course, which should keep pace with the times in teaching and reflect student-centered thinking (Wang, 2015). However, traditional educational concepts cannot adapt to the needs of students' development, and it is difficult to achieve the teaching effectiveness and education goals of political course.

The exploration of a teaching method suitable for the current stage of educational development is of utmost urgency.

At present, some educators are using some new teaching methods, such as immersion, experiential, mixed, and other methods to guide and educate students step by step. These teaching methods all have elements of inquiry, but there are still many problems in the application of political course in grade 9. For example, Xu (2020) mentioned that blended teaching must combine offline and online learning. However, there are no certain standards for the specific allocation of online and offline teaching, and it is difficult to control the allocation of time; Ye (2020) mentioned that experiential teaching starts with students' own cognitive characteristics and growth rules, and learning about knowledge and competences around them through their own practice. Although some students will show enthusiasm, it may not necessarily translate into learning outcomes; Li (2022) mentioned that what immersion teaching advocates is to create a long-term and continuous process.

The implementation of the inquiry method in classroom teaching affirms students' subjectivity, effectively mobilizes their learning enthusiasm, fosters proactive learning behavior, and facilitates a genuine realization that knowledge is personally acquired (Pan, 2019). In the process of inquiry learning, students can actively interact with teachers and classmates through cooperation and communication, which is conducive to building a good teacher-student relationship and making the classroom atmosphere more harmonious (Li, 2022). Therefore, the application of the inquiry method can not only effectively transform the teacher-centered education mode in traditional teaching but also fosters comprehensive student development.

Based on the new changes in the content of the textbooks compiled by the Ministry, the Ministry of Education in China implemented a revision to the nomenclature of political textbooks used in junior high schools in 2016. A new design has been carried out on the layout of the teaching materials and knowledge content, and the "exploration and sharing" module runs through the teaching materials (Wang, 2021). The learning process of the inquiry method is consistent with the writing and production

of teaching material, so the inquiry method has great advantages in the course of politics (Zhang, 2021). The setting of many content modules in the new textbook requires students to discuss and explore to complete. The changes in the content of the textbook provide a carrier for the implementation of the inquiry method. It can be seen that political course in middle schools pay more and more attention to cultivating students' thinking ability and ability to apply knowledge to solve practical problems.

Combining practical experience in actual teaching in the past and the conversation with experienced old teachers, it is found that there are still some problems in the process of political teaching. On the one hand, some teachers still use more traditional teaching methods, teachers give lectures and pay no attention to the process of exploring the conclusions in the knowledge structure. On the other hand, the content of 9th-grade political course involves lots of abstract concepts and theories, such as national system, law, civil rights, and obligations, etc., which are difficult for students to understand and lack interest in learning and pay no attention to the learning process. Therefore, the inquiry method teaching combines the theory and teaching practice of the political course, and caters to the cognitive law and thinking development law of the 9th-grade students.

The inquiry method can allow students to form self-experience and self-perception of knowledge through active participation, independent learning, and cooperative discussion, and cultivate students' innovative spirit and practical ability (Pabu, 2013). Students develop strong curiosity through various forms of inquiry-based activities to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and foster emotional learning experiences (Xu, 2018). The inquiry method is important for students to make decisions or find answers related to their guidance. In finding answers to problems, students need to use their thinking skills to find relevant evidence to conclude. (Ganesan, Balakrishnan, Khairi, Baskaran, & Manimara, 2020). The application of inquiry method can effectively solve the problems existing in the current 9th-grade political course.

In addition, the entire pedagogical concept of the inquiry method aligns with the objectives of the new curriculum reform, indicating that inquiry method will play a pivotal role in the future development of political education at junior middle schools (Yang, 2019). On the one hand, it can break the constraints of the traditional education model and improve the teaching theory of political course. On the other hand, it not only facilitates students in acquiring, collecting, processing, applying and practically utilizing political knowledge and fundamental skills but also fosters their intrinsic motivation for learning while fully realizing the educational efficacy of junior high school political education.

At present, the research on inquiry method in junior high school political course is relatively small compared with other subjects. The existing application of inquiry method in political teaching in junior high schools, such as Sun (2018), Wang (2018), Wang (2019), Zhang (2020), etc. These studies point out the problems existing in the teaching process of the inquiry method, and put forward the methods to solve the problems, but most of them are theoretical researches which are not comprehensive enough. Grade 9 is the last academic year of junior high school, and it is necessary to periodically help students review for the senior high school entrance examination, which cannot provide a long-term and continuous environment for immersion teaching. To sum up, the teaching of inquiry method can play its role to the maximum extent in the 9th-grade political course, improve the teaching effect, and better achieve the teaching goals.

From the mentioned above, the researcher believed that the inquiry method could have the potential to enhance student's learning achievement. So that, the researcher designed the inquiry method into 5 steps for teaching 1) Engagement 2) Exploration 3) Explanation 4) Elaboration and 5) Evaluation aimed to improve learning achievement and satisfaction of grade 9 students in a Chinese public school of the political course. The use of inquiry method could also further increase the effectiveness of other learning and create a more engaging and effective learning environment.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

1.2.1 Would there be any improvement of grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course after the application of the inquiry method?

1.2.2 What would be grade 9 Chinese students' satisfaction in political course towards the inquiry method?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

1.3.1 To compare grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course before and after using the inquiry method.

1.3.2 To explore grade 9 Chinese students' satisfaction in political course towards the inquiry method.

## **1.4 Research Hypothesis**

1.4.1 There would be an improvement in grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course after the application of inquiry method.

1.4.2 There would grade 9 Chinese students be satisfied in political course towards learning with the application of inquiry method.

## **1.5 Scope of The Study**

### **1.5.1 Location of the Study**

The research was initiated at a public middle school in the Yunnan province of China. The school has favorable conditions to apply the inquiry method to the political course. The school was composed of grades 7 to 9. By 2023, the school has about 1300 registered students and 106 teachers. The school was located in a semi-urban area. Figure 1.1 shows the location of the research school.



Figure 1.1 Location of the Research School

Source: Wikipedia, 2023

### 1.5.2 Population and Sample

**Population:** The population of the research included 9 classes of grade 9 with a total of 405 students. They were between 14 and 16 years old, and their gender and ability to study political course were different.

**Sample:** The researcher used a cluster random sampling to select a class from the population that mixed-ability to form an experimental class included 30 students in the experimental class.

### 1.5.3 Content of the Study

In this study, the researcher designed four lesson plans in a month to conduct the study in the experimental class of grade 9 Chinese students. The research aimed to improve grade 9 students' learning achievement and their satisfaction with the application of inquiry method. The research referred to the formal textbook "Morality and Rule of Law" (2018 edition) was organized by the National Teaching Materials Committee of China. All the adapted content that was came from this book.

Table 1.1 Content of the Study

Time	Lesson Plans	Topics	Teaching Method
Pre-test			
Week 1	Lesson Plan 1	Participate in the life of a democracy	Inquiry Method
Week 2	Lesson Plan 2	Build a home for life together	Inquiry Method
Week 3	Lesson Plan 3	Open and interactive world	Inquiry Method
Week 4	Lesson Plan 4	Seek common interests and common development	Inquiry Method
Post-test			

#### 1.5.4 Time Frame

The research would be conducted over a duration of four weeks, commencing from the final week of May and concluding in the third week of June 2024. The researcher used the inquiry method to teach a political course once a week and completed it within 4 weeks.

#### 1.6 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The research incorporated two types of variables, independent variable and dependent variables. The independent variable was the application of inquiry method, while the dependent variable encompassed both learning achievement and students' satisfaction with the utilization of the inquiry method.

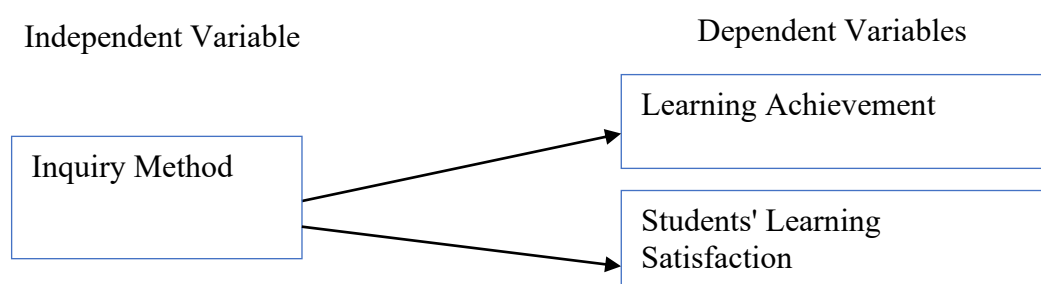


Figure 1.2 Independent and Dependent Variables

## 1.7 Limitations of the Study

1.7.1 The research was carried out in an experimental class of grade 9 students at a public school in Yunnan Province, China. Therefore, the results may not be generalized to all Chinese students.

1.7.2 The experiment of the research only lasted about one month. Therefore, if the data was collected more longer, the result may be different.

## 1.8 Research Terminologies

**Inquiry Method** refers to the teaching method that the researcher designs for teaching to the students in the sample group. It is through discovery and exploration activities based on existing knowledge under the supervision of the teacher. In this study, the researcher designs the inquiry method into 5 steps for teaching 1) Engagement 2) Exploration 3) Explanation 4) Elaboration and 5) Evaluation. In this process, the teacher purposefully brings into the situation, arouses the enthusiasm of participation, raises inquiry questions, and guides and helps the students to carry out inquiry activities. On the basis of existing knowledge, students understand the content of the topic in depth through hypothesis, verification and discussion.

**Learning Achievement** refers to the grade 9 students' scores in the pre-test and post-test of the political course through inquiry method including four topics as follow; 1) Participate in the life of a democracy 2) Build a home for life together 3) Open and interactive world 4) Seek common interests and common development. Data in this area were analyzed using student achievement tests (pretest and post-test).

**Students' Satisfaction** refers to the grade 9 students' positive attitude towards the interest and motivation, engagement and efficacy of inquiry method on student learning. In the research, students' satisfaction questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to investigate students' satisfaction.

**Political Course** refers to a comprehensive course that guides and promotes the ideological and moral development of the students based on the life of adolescents in the middle school stage. It is aimed at grade 9 Chinese students and includes many aspects such as morality, psychology, law, and national conditions. It is aimed to improve students' ideological and political quality, moral cultivation, legal literacy and personality quality, it also includes a variety of skills, such as thinking ability, practical ability, self-regulation ability, cooperation and communication ability.

**Grade 9 Students** refer to students aged 14-16 in the last year of junior high school. In the research, the researcher used grade 9 students in the school where the research was conducted as participants.

## **1.9 Significance of the Study**

1.9.1 The application of inquiry method improved the learning achievement of grade 9 students in political course.

1.9.2 The research enhanced students' satisfaction with political course learning and the use of inquiry methods.

1.9.3 The research provided a specific and feasible new teaching method for grade 9 political course teachers. It could not only improve students' satisfaction with political course learning but also reflected student-centered thinking and could also further increase the effectiveness of other learning and created a more engaging and effective learning environment.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the Chinese curriculum, the learning management in China, the political course in China, learning achievement in China, how to apply inquiry method, related theory and researches which are stated in the following order:

- 2.1 The Chinese Curriculum
- 2.2 The Learning Management in China
- 2.3 The Political Course in China
- 2.4 Inquiry Method
- 2.5 Learning Achievement in China
- 2.6 Related Theory
- 2.7 Related Researches and Studies

#### 2.1 The Chinese Curriculum

##### 2.1.1 Concept of the Chinese Curriculum

The curriculum is an indispensable tool for the mutual communication between theoretical learning and practical learning in our courses. In the Tang and Song Dynasties in China, with the improvement of the imperial examination system, the term "curriculum" appeared (Wu, 2021). The term "course" in this context solely pertains to the organization and structure of the educational content, without encompassing any pedagogical requirements. It would be more precise to refer to it as a "learning course".

The curriculum is a developing concept. The modern Chinese curriculum concept is the product of the evolution of the traditional Chinese curriculum concept. Almost all books discussing educational theory involve the word curriculum (Zhang & Du,

2005). Due to the implementation of the class teaching system and the incorporation of Herbart's "five-stage teaching method", people began to pay attention to the teaching procedures and design, so the meaning of the course changed from "study course" to "tutorial". After 1949, Owing to the influence of Kairov's pedagogy, the word "curriculum" rarely appeared until the mid-1980s.

Curriculum, as the primary conduit in the teacher-student relationship, constitutes the essence of attaining national educational objectives (Wang, 2011). Lu (1994), an expert on the history of the Chinese curriculum, defined curriculum as the content and process of school homework. From the perspective of educational goals, the curriculum is a blueprint for cultivating people. From the perspective of course content, the curriculum is a knowledge system that is suitable for students' physical and mental development, connects students' direct experience and indirect experience, and guides the all-round development of students' personalities and the way to acquire it. A well-known teaching theory expert Bingde Li, believes that "curriculum is the content outline and goal system of classroom teaching, extracurricular learning and self-study activities, and it is the overall plan and process of teaching and various student learning activities" (Jia, 2013). It can be seen that the curriculum includes the scope of teaching, subjects and their implementation sequence, and process arrangement. In order to facilitate the distinction between disciplines and majors, we believe that courses can be regarded as specific teaching subjects.

### **2.1.2 Reform of the Chinese Curriculum**

The curriculum reform is a key breakthrough in the entire education reform, a major measure taken to meet and adapt to social development, which will bring new content and impact to traditional teaching (Chen, 2010). Since 1949, China has experienced eight major reforms. There are close historical connections between previous curriculum reforms, which have continuously promoted the development of Chinese curriculum education. Zhao and Gao (2010) elaborated on the evolution of basic education reform in "The Evolution and Enlightenment of my country's

Curriculum Reform since the Founding of New China". The key points of the reform are as follows:

Table 2.1 Eight Reforms of the Chinese Curriculum

Number of	Reform period	Curriculum points for reform
The first basic education reform	1949~1952	Unify the new policy and establish the new curriculum. It has set up a full range of subject curricula, such as politics, Chinese, mathematics, nature, biology, chemistry, physics, history, geography, foreign languages, physical education, music, art, and so on.
The second basic education	1953~1957	School education was improved, and the curriculum system was initially established. For the first time, labor technology education is included in the teaching plan.
The third basic education reform	1957~1963	Implement an education revolution. The school system was shortened, the curriculum was streamlined, emphasis was placed on the compilation of local textbooks and rural textbooks, and the primary and secondary school curriculum reform was launched with an emphasis on the integration of education and labor.
The fourth basic education	1964~1976	There is no unified educational policy. Lifestyle teaching materials compiled by each locality, life, society, and revolution make up the entire curriculum.
The fifth basic education reform	1977~1980	Restore order. Guidelines for compiling teaching materials have been formulated, focusing on the selection of basic knowledge, intellectual enlightenment, and ability cultivation.

Table 2.1 Eight Reforms of the Chinese Curriculum (Cont.)

Number of	Reform period	Curriculum points for reform
The sixth basic education reform	1981~1985	Update teaching plans and promulgate a syllabus for various subjects in primary and junior high schools to adapt to the development of the form.
The seventh basic education reform	1986~1996	Implement compulsory education and launch curriculum plans. Course categories, teaching content, teaching requirements, and class time allocation are clearly defined. In addition, curriculum reform strategies adapted to local conditions have been gradually established. Contents such as "personality development" "elective courses" and "activity courses" all play an important role in curriculum plans and curriculum standards in various places.
The eighth basic education reform	1949~1952	Comprehensively implement quality education and build a new curriculum system. This is a systemic reform that takes a curriculum as the core and affects the entire education field. It is an innovation in curriculum culture and a change in educational concepts and values, involving curriculum concepts, goals, methods, management, evaluation, and other aspects.

Source: Wang, 2011

Curriculum reform, as an important part of education reform, is of great significance to both talent training and social development. After eight basic education reforms, my country's basic education curriculum system has been established, which meets the country's training quality and specifications for basic education talents (Wang, 2011). Successive educational reforms have gradually made knowledge an important force in human development, subject construction, creativity, and value survival, making individuals the masters of active choice, active exploration, and value pursuit of knowledge.

### 2.1.3 The Chinese Curriculum in the Compulsory Education Stage

#### 2.1.3.1 Principles of Curriculum Setting

Compulsory education is the foundation stage of school education and an important period for training students' learning abilities, cultivating students' learning habits, and stimulating students' learning motivation (Zhang, 2021). The current curriculum follows the principles of the "Compulsory Education Curriculum Plan" (2022).

(1) Reinforce the pursuit of holistic development by constructing a curriculum system that fosters comprehensive moral, intellectual, physical, artistic, and labor education. Prioritize moral education while enhancing the quality of intellectual education. Strengthen physical and aesthetic education as well as implement labor education.

(2) Open to all students. Provide suitable learning opportunities for every school-age child and teenager. Grasp the stage characteristics of students' physical and mental development. Pay meticulous attention to the interconnection among kindergarten, primary school, middle school, and high school while also considering the disparities between regions, schools, and students. Additionally, appropriately expand the range of course options.

(3) Focus on core competencies. Reinforce the guidance of accurate values and prioritize the cultivation of ethical integrity and essential competencies.

(4) Strengthen curriculum integration. Strengthen the alignment between curriculum content and students' experiential and social life, enhance the integration of knowledge across disciplines, and develop comprehensive courses that incorporate interdisciplinary thematic learning.

(5) Highlight practice. Reinforce the integration of curriculum with productive labor and social practice, while emphasizing the exploration of subject thinking methodology and inquiry methods.

### 2.1.3.2 Curriculum Categories and Subjects

The curriculum categories and subject settings at the compulsory education stage are based on the "Compulsory Education Curriculum Plan" (2022), which is roughly as follows.

Table 2.2 Curriculum Categories and Subject Settings

Category	Subject	Grade
National curriculum	Morality and the Rule of Law (politics)	Grades 1~9
	Chinese	Grades 1~9
	Math	Grades 1~9
	English	Grades 3~9
	History, Geography	Grades 7~9
	Science	Grades 1~6
	Physics, Chemistry, Biology (or Science)	Grades 7~9
	Information Technology	Grades 3~8
	Sports & Health	Grades 1~9
	Art	Grades 1~9
	labor	Grades 1~9
Comprehensive Practice	Grades 1~9	
Local curriculum	Planned and established by the provincial education administrative department	Grades 1~9
School-based curriculum	Set by the school according to regulations	Grades 1~9

Source: Researcher

It can be seen that politics (morals and the rule of law), Chinese, mathematics, English, history, geography, science, physics, chemistry, biology, information technology, sports and health, art, comprehensive labor practical activities, etc., are compulsory national curriculum in the compulsory education stage. The local curriculum and school-based curriculum may differ depending on regional education policies, teaching staff, student needs and other factors. The grade 9

curriculum arrangement is an important part of compulsory education, which is related to students' further education and future development. This study is a study of the political subject curriculum in grade 9 of compulsory education.

In this study, the researcher used political course for studying. The new curriculum reform presents a formidable challenge for the comprehensive implementation of quality education in pedagogy. The curriculum also emphasizes adhering to all-round development and focusing on the cultivation of comprehensive literacy and comprehensive quality. It aims to empower students to proactively acquire knowledge, apply it effectively, and tackle complex problems. Political course is one of the important aspects in China's curriculum system that promote the all-round development of students. Together with national curriculum subjects such as Chinese, mathematics and English, the aforementioned constitute the fundamental knowledge and essential skills that students are required to acquire. Hence, enhancing the performance of the political class can not only establish a robust basis for students' future development but also contribute to societal advancement and progress. On the one hand, political course can draw lessons from the definition of curriculum, clarify educational goals in this study, select appropriate educational content, and adopt appropriate educational methods to help students master relevant expertise and competencies. On the other hand, the connection between political course and various disciplines provides an analytical perspective for this study and helps explain and analyze the issues studied. In addition, categorizing political course into compulsory education disciplines can better achieve curriculum education goals, deepen the understanding of the application of inquiry method in political course, and provide theoretical support and practical reference for optimizing curriculum teaching and improving educational quality.

## **2.2 The Learning Management in China**

### **2.2.1 Concept of the Learning Management**

The term "learning management" was first born in the field of distance education, in order to improve the learning efficiency and learning quality of students

participating in distance learning (Ge, 2021). Although it was born under the conditions of Informationization, it does not require information technology as a necessary condition, but is a general learning method and management strategy developed to improve learning efficiency (Li, 2011).

The learning management concept was developed by Richard Smith of Central Queensland University in Australia, it is the capacity to design pedagogic strategies that achieve learning outcomes for students (Smith & Moore, 2006). That is, in the balance between and emphasis on curriculum development and pedagogy, the emphasis is definitely on pedagogical strategies (Smith & Lynch, 2010). As one of the key links in educational management, the object of learning management is learning itself, but the academic community has not made a unified and clear conceptual definition of learning management (Jiang, 2021). There are three typical definitions of it:

Fu (1990) said that learning management refers to the organization of learning activities including ensuring the integrity, diversity, comprehensiveness and allocation of learning time of learning activities.

Zeng (2021) said that learning management refers to using management methods to program, process, and standardize learning through planning, organization, leadership, control, etc., to Create and update the best solution to achieve efficient learning.

Tian (2021) said that learning management provides a variety of functions, such as individual tutoring, collaborative monitoring, discussion group management, troubleshooting, test paper management, homework management, performance management, and learning progress management.

To sum up, the learning management refers to as optimizing the educational environment, integrating educational resources, and using scientific management methods to purposefully and systematically guide and control students' learning behavior under the guidance, support, and supervision of relevant departments to

achieve the best comprehensive learning effect for students, and to train qualified personnel for national construction. The student population constitutes the primary entity in the process of acquiring knowledge, and the learning management activities should highlight students' subjective initiative and internal regulation. Simultaneously, school teachers are designers, guides and supervisors of the learning management for students, and play an important role in students' learning content, learning process, and learning results.

### **2.2.2 The Development of the Learning Management**

The development of the learning management in China is a process of continuous absorption and innovation. It is not only affected by the domestic and foreign environment, but also reflects people's understanding and pursuit of education in different historical periods.

Traditional learning management in China is based on the arrangement of schools, faculty, classes, etc., and teachers train, communicate, and guide students according to unified teaching objectives, unified teaching content, fixed teaching time, and standardized assessment methods (Xu, 2010). Learning management has strict disciplinary constraints and is a tool for teachers to control students' behavior and maintain teaching order. Students only passively receive knowledge, thus ignoring the multi-faceted educational functions of the learning management process itself in China (Yan, 2011).

With the continuous development of the knowledge economy, on the one hand, the improvement of information technology has enriched learning objectives, and on the other hand, the development of cognitive tools has enriched learning means (Huang, 2003). Learning management begins to focus on the relationship between "teaching and learning", allowing students to shift from passively receiving knowledge to active learning (Ni, Liu, & Yang, 2012). At the same time, considering that learning management in Western countries started earlier than that in China, China began to learn from advanced foreign learning management experience (Wang, 2014). It not

only manages students' learning behavior, but also involves how to effectively manage learning resources, improve learning efficiency, and promote the transformation and application of learning results (Tian, 2021).

Since learning management in China is still in the initial exploration stage, it is necessary to use new technologies and new methods to build an open and modern learning management model in the future (Wang, 2023). Guan (2020) said that according to the needs of educational reform and development, learning management in China can be analyzed from the three perspectives of schools, teachers, and students to promote better development of learning management. Details are as follows:

From the perspective of school. First, clarify the standards and guidelines for learning management, and establish and improve the learning management operating mechanism. Second, improve school running conditions, expand information space, and design flexible and multiple-choice course organization forms to adapt to the development of different students. Third, establish a range of diverse teacher training programs and encourage parental engagement in school governance.

From the perspective of teachers. First, in accordance with the students' learning status, adjust the arrangement, content and rhythm of learning management to meet the needs of the students. Second, change the unsuited teaching methods and use better network technology and resources to design students' activity plans and strengthen students' learning motivation. Third, establish and improve the student incentive system and evaluation system based on the current development status and growth patterns of students.

From the perspective of student. First, integrate social practice and subject knowledge for application, and improve the ability to explore. Second, through the guidance of teachers, students can independently formulate study plans, arrange study time, choose learning methods and strategies, and evaluate and provide feedback on their own learning effects. Fourth, actively communicate and cooperate with teachers

and classmates, learn problem-solving methods and thinking, and constantly update knowledge and skills.

In this study, the researcher should integrate the organization and regulation of learning management components within the educational process involving schools, teachers, and students. It is necessary to not only cater to the personalized management needs of 9th-grade students to build their own personalized management and achieve learning goals, but also to enable the management jointly built by schools and teachers to support 9th-grade students in completing their learning tasks and comprehensively improve students' learning effects and quality.

## **2.3 The Political Course in China**

China's political courses are one of the courses that have the greatest impact on students' ideological and moral education in schools (Zhang, 2019). It is a course designed for students around comprehensive factors such as personal, family, school, society, and country (Li, 2020). It mainly teaches students basic contents such as ideas, behavioral norms, moral principles, legal knowledge, and social common sense. Its curriculum teaching concepts and methods are also closely integrated with the current social development characteristics and needs (Zhou, 2023).

### **2.3.1 Objectives of Political Course**

Chinese grade 9 politics class plays an important role in the healthy development of students, it is a key course to promote the all-round development of students (Bian, 2019) and is also designed and implemented to help students initially understand and adapt to social interpersonal rules and operating methods (Li, 2019). Objectives of the grade 9 political course is to facilitate students in acquiring proficiency in theoretical knowledge, critical and innovative thinking, research-based learning abilities, the cultivation of social responsibility, ideological morality, and legal awareness. The details are as follows:

- 1) Mastery of theoretical knowledge: Students can master the fundamental national conditions of China, the representative achievements of traditional

Chinese excellent culture, the achievements in reform and opening up as well as socialism with distinctive Chinese characteristics, legal-related theories, the relationship between individuals and the social, state, and world, and economic theory, etc.

2) Cultivation of critical and innovative thinking: Students can think and solve problems from different perspectives and come up with new insights and ideas through classroom discussions, case analysis, current affairs comments, etc.

3) Cultivation of research-based learning abilities: Students can use the Internet, libraries, and other resources to collect and analyze information, interpret and analyze political phenomena and issues.

4) Cultivation of a sense of social responsibility: Students should take the initiative to care for their parents and friends, respect their teachers, pay attention to the political, economic, cultural, and other developments of the country and society, and actively participate in social activities and public affairs.

5) Cultivation of ideological and moral character: Students can correctly understand themselves, regulate their emotions, resist the influence of bad thoughts, cultivate a sound perspective on life and values, and embody ethical conduct.

6) Enhance the awareness of the rule of law: Students can understand the main content, status, and role of the law, enhance legal awareness, and be aware of the harm of illegal crimes so as to make their behavior more rational.

These abilities are an important objective of the political course for ninth-grade students and are also important qualities that they must possess for their future development. Therefore, teachers must pay attention to the importance of the subject and play an important role in political teaching.

### **2.3.2 Teaching Strategies for Political Course**

Effective teaching strategies can promote students' learning (Fang, 2020). According to the "Compulsory Education Morality and Rule of Law Curriculum Standards" (2022), the following suggestions need to be adopted when teaching political course:

1) Teaching should be approached from the perspective of fostering students' core competencies, and formulate specific and operable goals based on students' age characteristics, focusing on the guidance of students' values.

2) Teaching should focus on the curriculum content system and explain current events with great influence at home and abroad to enhance the timeliness, vividness and novelty of political education.

3) Teaching should fully leverage the instructional guidance provided by teachers, aiming not only to facilitate students' comprehension of fundamental concepts, principles, and theories through explanations but also to foster their active engagement in learning and critical thinking.

4) Teaching should be combined with social practice, focusing on case teaching, and selecting, designing and applying real, positive and typical examples in personal or social life. Guide students to carry out independent inquiry and cooperative inquiry through hot spot analysis, role play, situational experience and other methods to improve students' abilities.

In sum, in the teaching of grade 9 political course, teachers should prioritize students' development, implement diverse life-oriented teaching activities, continuously enhance pedagogical strategies, and optimize classroom instruction.

### **2.3.3 Advantages of Using Inquiry Method in Political Course**

Political course is very important to the development of students' comprehensive qualities, and the inquiry method makes up for the lack of practical inquiry and participation in previous teaching (Hu, 2018). Clarifying the advantages of using inquiry methods in political course can improve students' subject quality and the effectiveness of inquiry methods in classroom teaching practice.

First, the use of inquiry methods in political course meets the requirements of the new curriculum reform and new curriculum standards. On the one hand, the inquiry method follows the requirements of curriculum reform, provides students with rich and diverse inquiry activities that they are willing to accept, and guides students

to comprehensively improve their abilities in inquiry activities that use their brains (Gong, 2022). On the other hand, the new curriculum standards (2022) require political course to be based on the development of core competencies, focus on practicality, and allow students to promote the formation of moral concepts and legal concepts in a variety of activities. Traditional teaching methods are difficult to meet the requirements of the new curriculum reform and curriculum standards, while the inquiry method uses inquiry activities to effectively stimulate students' interest in inquiry and develop students' innovative abilities, which is in line with the requirements of the new curriculum reform and new curriculum standards.

Second, political textbooks provide ways for the use of inquiry methods. In 2016, China changed the name of the middle school political textbook "Ideology and Morality" to "Morality and Rule of Law", and made major adjustments and changes in the layout, design and content of the textbook, with the purpose of giving full play to students' dominant position in the classroom (Wang, 2021). Details are as follows:

Table 2.3 Number of Different Modules in the Ninth-Grade Political Course

Semester module	Use your experience	Explore and share (ratio)	Expansion space	Total modules
First semester of ninth grade	16	67 (68%)	16	99
Second semester of ninth grade	14	70 (71%)	14	98
Total modules	30	137 (70%)	30	197

Note Proportions are rounded to whole numbers

Source: Researcher

According to textbook statistics, the "Inquiry and Sharing" module in grade nine has a larger proportion of teaching activities. It can be seen that China's junior high school political course attach great importance to students' inquiry ability. The

inquiry method is in line with the idea of writing political textbooks and has great convenience and advantages in teaching.

Third, the use of inquiry methods in political course is in line with students' cognitive rules. There is a lot of knowledge to remember and apply in ninth grade. Using inquiry methods can help stimulate students' learning interest and motivation, allowing them to consciously and proactively construct new knowledge (Wei, 2020). The acquisition of this knowledge also provides basic conditions for the use of inquiry methods. Students can quickly master many skills, such as collecting information, comparing and filtering, questioning and criticizing, analyzing and summarizing.

Fourth, multimedia technology and the Internet facilitate the use of inquiry methods in political course. At present, more and more schools are investing a lot of money in building teaching equipment and intelligence, which has greatly improved the teaching conditions of the schools. Multimedia includes graphics, audio, video and other forms, which can give students a real atmosphere and feeling (Jiao, 2019). Before inquiry, teachers can use multimedia technology to show students the situations and questions that need to be explored and make abstract knowledge concrete. During the process of inquiry, teachers can use the teaching tablet to solve students' questions and communicate at any time promptly. Meanwhile, students can also use the teaching tablet to search and collect information on the Internet, and display their own inquiry results on the tablet after the inquiry, so that teachers and students can have a more intuitive understanding of different inquiry results. Finally, teachers can use multimedia technology to evaluate the inquiry results of students, and present the problems and excellent inquiry results to everyone.

In this study, the researcher adopted inquiry method to teach politics class, with the purpose of helping grade 9 students establish correct ideological and moral concepts, cultivate their ability to analyze and solve problems, and thereby improve their learning achievement. The inquiry method adapts to the development needs of the political course. It can understand the principles behind the course through the process of inquiry, rather than just memorizing knowledge points, so that students can continue to adapt to the development and changes of political course in the future.

## 2.4 Inquiry Method

### 2.4.1 Definition of Inquiry Method

Inquiry is a process of exploring the essential characteristics of things and grasping the developmental laws of things, driven by curiosity and desire for knowledge (Zhang, 2020). The "inquiry method" was first proposed by American educationist John Dewey in teaching in the early 20th century (Huang, Yang, & Zou, 2019). It is a scientific teaching method that is widely advocated in international education. Different scholars have different definitions of the inquiry method.

American National Science Education Standards defined the inquiry method: posing questions; examining books and other sources of information to see what is already known; planning investigations; reviewing what is already known in light of experimental evidence; using tools to gather, analyze, and interpret data; proposing answers, explanations, and predictions; and communicating the results (National Research Council, 1996).

Yao (2014) said the inquiry method refers to a form of teaching in which the teacher sets up problem situations. Students use the teaching materials as the inquiry content for independent learning and cooperative discussion under the guidance of the teacher, students learn the scientific knowledge behind problems through teaching activities and apply the knowledge they have learned to solve practical problems.

Ganesan et al. (2020) said the inquiry method is a student-centered learning approach with the concept of students who are actively involved in the teaching and learning activity under the monitoring and supervision of teachers. This method emphasizes knowledge related to "how" and not "about," which means how knowledge is acquired and not about knowledge.

Christine, Peter, John, and Ciriaka (2023) defined the inquiry method as teachers facilitating the learning process, and students participating in the process of

observation, experimentation, and deriving explanations and conclusions based on findings to understand the concepts of knowledge and acquire problem-solving abilities.

In this study, the inquiry method is a student-centered approach that facilitates the acquisition of knowledge and understanding through systematic research and exploration of existing knowledge, under the guidance and supervision of educators. In this process, the teacher purposefully brings into the situation, arouses the enthusiasm of participation, raises inquiry questions, and guides and helps the students to carry out inquiry activities. On the basis of existing knowledge, students understand the content of the topic in depth through hypothesis, verification and discussion. so as to build a new knowledge system and develop their ability of learning and problem-solving.

#### **2.4.2 Characteristics of Inquiry Method**

In order to use the inquiry method well, teachers must have a systematic and comprehensive understanding of its characteristics in order to play its role (Huang, 2023). Combining learning-by-doing theory (Dewey, 1916), characteristics of inquiry learning (Schwab, 1962), and Zhang's (2006) research, the inquiry method can be divided into three characteristics: autonomous construction, procedural, and openness. Further explanation is as follows:

##### **1) Autonomous construction**

Autonomous construction is the primary feature of the inquiry method, and students are the active constructors of knowledge (Gong, 2022). New knowledge is created in the dynamic interplay of actions and responses. Students absorb and assimilate new knowledge on the basis of the original cognitive structure, enrich and improve the original cognitive structure, or reorganize the original cognitive structure to form a new cognitive structure that unifies old and new knowledge. (Mao, 2013). On the one hand, the teacher needs to provide multi-faceted support to help students construct knowledge. On the other hand, students analyze and

solve problems based on their own experience and ability, better master relevant theoretical knowledge, and build new cognition.

### 2) Procedural

The effectiveness of inquiry must focus on the process, rather than ignoring the process and looking at the results (Zhang, 2020). On the one hand, only the knowledge gained through participation in inquiry or repeated practice can students not easily be forgotten (Wei, 2020). The inquiry method not only pays attention to the accumulation of knowledge but also attaches great importance to the training of students' skills in acquiring knowledge, as well as the experience and perception in the process of participating in activities. On the other hand, it emphasizes knowledge related to "how" and not "about", which means how knowledge is acquired and not about knowledge (Ganesan et al., 2020). The inquiry method not only focuses on thinking, hypothesis and verification during the participation process, but also focuses on explaining the solution to the inquiry problem.

### 3) Openness

The openness of the inquiry method is mainly reflected in teaching objectives, content, process, time, space, results, and evaluation (Huang, 2023; Xing, 2018). First, from the perspective of teaching objectives and content, focus on students' problem-solving abilities and the process of constructing new knowledge. Current affairs and political materials related to political curriculum standards can become teaching content. Second, from the teaching process and results, students can boldly raise questions, collect and process information, communicate and cooperate, and draw conclusions. The learning results are dynamic in the classroom. Third, from the perspective of teaching time and space, it is not limited to fixed classrooms and class schedules and can be selected according to actual conditions. Fourth, from the perspective of teaching evaluation, including teacher evaluation, student self-evaluation, student-student mutual evaluation, and other comprehensive evaluations, mastering knowledge is not the only evaluation, but more attention is paid to the improvement of students' abilities and the development of quality.

### 2.4.3 Implementation Steps of Inquiry Method

The inquiry method is an innovative pedagogical approach that aligns with the evolving demands of contemporary society and educational needs. To effectively integrate this method into political courses and unlock its inherent value, it necessitates strategic implementation guidance (Xing, 2018). According to Models-based Inquiry five links (Windschitl, Thompson, & Braaten, 2008), the 5E learning cycle model (Bybee, 2014), Edwin Fenton' six major steps in implementing the inquiry method (Ganesan et al., 2020) and the teaching content of grade 9 and the development needs of students, this study divides the inquiry method into "Engagement - Exploration - Explanation - Elaboration - Evaluation" five-step, details as follows:

#### 1) Engagement

Subject participation is the basis of teaching activities and determines the beginning, process and effectiveness of teaching activities (Xu, 2022). Use vivid and specific scenes to arouse students' certain emotional experiences and promote the development of psychological functions (Wang, 2018). Before the inquiry, educators can utilize multimedia courseware to present students with visual aids such as images, videos, etc., related to the teaching content for students to watch, triggering emotional experiences, mobilizing students' initiative and enthusiasm for participation, and providing a good foundation for further development of the inquiry method.

#### 2) Exploration

During the inquiry process, a series of targeted questions are purposefully raised according to the teaching content, inspiring students to think deeply at all levels, gradually advancing through the questions, and stimulating students' enthusiasm for learning new knowledge (Wang, 2017). Teachers should also consider factors such as class size, the complexity of problems, and specific situations of students, and adopt the method of group cooperative exploration or students' independent exploration (Ma, 2019). In this process, questions are used to trigger students to explore further, forming a hypothesis in the cognitive thinking that students have formed and then asking students to formulate a group inquiry plan to verify it. Through their own thinking and exploration, they can acquire relevant knowledge and master it more firmly.

### 3) Explanation

The inquiry method pays attention to the process of students' knowledge acquisition, and enables students to stimulate imagination and creativity in information collection, investigation, cooperation and communication, and acquire the ability to solve problems, so that the knowledge obtained by students is practical and useful (Zhao, 2020). In the explanation process, students first explain their hypothesis about the inquiry question. After consulting relevant materials and textbooks, think and discuss again, explain the rationality and practicality of the solution to the problem, and thereby gain knowledge and improve abilities. Teachers supervise the direction of students' inquiry during the process of students' explanations to prevent deviations. At the same time, teachers promote students' inquiry process through assistance and guidance so that every student can fully exert his or her dominant position.

### 4) Elaboration

This stage is very important. The group obtains the results of the inquiry through the analysis of the inquiry questions. Each group sorted out and prepared the solution to the inquiry problem and the explanation of the solutions, and the representative of the group orally shared the inquiry results with the whole class.

### 5) Evaluation

Students and teachers can supplement or refute based on the conclusions they share, and objectively evaluate students' performance in the inquiry through different methods, so that students can have a multi-faceted understanding of the issues they discuss and achieve timely classroom learning evaluation (Hu, 2018; Li, 2019). Finally, the teacher shows the exercises for the current class, enable students to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in practical scenarios, critically analyze and resolve complex problems, and enhance their proficiency through comprehensive evaluation conducted by both teachers and peers.

In this study, the researcher used the inquiry method for teaching and divided the inquiry method into five steps: "Engagement - Exploration - Explanation - Elaboration - Evaluation" to effectively stimulate students' learning motivation and interest in political course. Allow students to understand and master relevant concepts, theories and policies of political course through dynamic inquiry, cultivate critical and

innovative thinking, improve problem-solving abilities, and promote the development of political course learning performance.

## **2.5 Learning Achievement in China**

In the Chinese cultural context, learning achievement has always been highly valued, it is a relatively objective and fair indicator for evaluating students' learning quality and ability. It is also an important parameter for measuring students' further education and the quality of school running (Zhao, 2011). Learning achievement, in a broad sense, is a test of school teaching quality, and in a narrow sense, it represents students' learning effects in school (Wang, 2022). Learning achievement usually uses students' final exam scores or grade point points (GPA) for each course in school as an indicator of students' learning achievement, sometimes, the results of the learning ability assessment test are also used as a standard to measure learning achievement (Young, 2007).

Learning achievement will have a very important impact on the establishment of students' self-efficacy, subjective well-being, and self-esteem (Elliot & Sheldon, 1997). Learning achievement is also a manifestation of student development and educational effectiveness, and is an important factor in shaping a person's outlook on life (Steinmayr, Grede, McElvany, & Wirthwein, 2016). Therefore, the study of learning achievement is not only of great significance to students' Learning development but also has a guiding role in the optimization of China's education system.

### **2.5.1 Factors Affecting Learning Achievement**

Junior high school students are in a period of rapid development in both physical and mental aspects, and their learning achievements are highly uncertain. Objectively speaking, students' learning achievement is inevitably affected by internal and external factors, external factors include teachers, parents, environment, etc., while internal factors include intellectual factors and non-intellectual factors (Wang,

2022; Zhao, 2011). There are many factors that affect learning achievement, according to research by Liu (2009), Wang and Guo (2023), etc., the factors that affect learning achievement can be elaborated from four aspects: students, teachers, schools and families, as follows:

#### 4) Student

Students are the main body of learning, and the most critical factor affecting learning achievement is the learner himself (Wang, 2022). Learning achievement is the result of the joint action of intellectual factors and non-intellectual factors, among them, intelligence influencing factors include achievement motivation, learning strategies, learning interest, metacognitive level, learning investment, learning attitude, etc., and non-intelligence factors include self-regulation, cognitive flexibility, etc. (Du, 2022).

#### 5) Teacher

The research of Bardach and Klassen (2022) emphasizes that the impact of teachers on students' academic success can be significant, including teaching level, organizational management capabilities, evaluation feedback, moral quality, teaching methods, guidance methods, etc.

#### 6) School

School is an important place for junior high school students to learn. The school's development strategy, cultural construction, management system, teaching facilities, learning atmosphere, teacher-student relationship, etc., all affect students' engagement in learning (Huang, 2019).

#### 7) Family

Because junior high school students are in their teenage years, they are not yet able to effectively control their own behavior (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). Parents' effective management of students' academic performance, parents' involvement in their children's education process, and their close parent-child relationship can all affect their children's learning achievement (Li, 2018).

In sum, analysis and research on the influencing factors of learning achievement can help to identify existing problems in teaching, make timely improvements, improve students' learning achievement, and provide experience for ninth-grade political teaching.

### 2.5.2 Strategies for Improving Learning Achievement in Politics Course

Learning achievement is crucial for students to master several major developmental goals in life, especially while in school (Heckhausen, Wrosch, & Schulz, 2010). In China, politics is one of the subjects in the junior high school entrance examination, and improving achievement is very important. Applying the inquiry method in the teaching of ninth-grade political course can not only achieve the internalization of knowledge, but also gain complex experience and improve learning achievement, which is of great significance to later learning and growth (Wang, 2015). Therefore, combining the teaching methods of this study, the advantages of political course, and the influencing factors of achievement, strategies to improve learning achievement can be divided into the following three points.

#### 1) Use inquiry method to stimulate interest in learning

Adopting the inquiry-based teaching method, by mobilizing the enthusiasm of students, the process of single knowledge transmission is transformed into a process of joint exploration by teachers and students under the guidance of teachers, and the focus of teaching is shifted from simple teaching of knowledge itself to the methods of acquiring knowledge and thinking methods at the same time (Jiang & Zhu, 2013). Arousing students' imagination by presenting new and exciting phenomena that are within the students' zone of proximal development, enabling students to link these new experiences to existing background knowledge (Zuckerman, Chudinova, & Khavkin, 1998). Grasp students' curiosity, cultivate students' positive emotions, stimulate students' interest, and make students want to think about the teaching content of inquiry (Wang, 2015). Therefore, the inquiry method can stimulate students' learning interest, let students learn in practice, enhance knowledge and experience, and develop students' achievements.

#### 2) Utilizing the advantages of political course to improve achievement

On the one hand, the contemporary, policy-based, and exploratory characteristics of the political teaching content determine that only by allowing students to conduct inquiry based on their own lives and learning experiences can better teaching results be achieved (Zhang, 2021). On the other hand, political course is based on knowledge and focus on the cultivation of behavioral abilities and

emotions, attitudes, and values, reflecting the practical nature of the teaching materials (Wang, 2021). Therefore, political course teaching must seize the critical period of development of each student, combine the advantages of the course's own inquiry, and promote the development of student achievement.

3) Adjust the factors that affect the development of students' achievement

The factors affecting junior high school students' learning achievement is highly controllable, and it is very important to take effective measures and strategies to intervene and adjust (Huang, 2019). It requires joint collaboration and efforts from students, teachers, schools, and families (Jin & Zhu, 2013; Wang & Guo, 2023). Therefore, in the teaching of political course, it is imperative to comprehensively adjust the multifaceted factors influencing students' learning achievement.

In sum, the researchers aim to apply the inquiry method of teaching to improve the political course achievement of 9th-grade students, through research on learning achievements, sufficient theoretical support is provided for the impact of inquiry methods on students' achievement in political course. At the same time, it also helps to deeply understand the nature of learning achievement, and provides effective methods and ways to improve students' political learning achievement.

## 2.6 Related Theories

Based on the impact of inquiry method teaching on students' learning achievement in politics course, we find that it is supported by various teaching theories. We will focus on Dewey's pragmatism theory, Bruner's discovery learning theory, Rogers' humanism theory and Piaget's constructivism theory, and analyze how these theories work together to improve teaching efficiency.

### 2.6.1 Dewey's Pragmatism Theory

John Dewey, the famous American educational practitioner in the 20th century, was one of the founders of pragmatism philosophy (Kong, 2012). Dewey's pragmatism educational ideas such as "education is life; school is society, learning by doing, and

child-centered theory" have always played an important role in the development of modern education in the world (Zheng & Feng, 2011). According to Liu's (2013) research, Dewey's important views can be described from the following three points:

1) Education needs to be student-centered, motivate students to fully participate, and teaching activities and education must be set up according to students' growth and cognitive patterns,

2) Interest is the unique human impulse to communicate, explore, express and create, and teachers should guide, help and care for students' interests (Zhang, 2020). Moreover, according to the five steps of "difficulties, questions, hypotheses, reasoning, experiments (tests)", students' wisdom is inspired and scientific thinking is formed (Wang, 2015).

3) Learning by doing, the classroom is returned to the students, and the students must solve the problems encountered in learning through their own thinking, cooperation and communication among peers, and the necessary help of the teacher (Gong, Yang, & Gao, 2015).

In this study, combined with Dewey's pragmatism teaching theory, the researcher can be student-centered, reasonably set up questions and teaching activities according to the actual cognitive level of students and the content of political textbooks. Through class hypothesis, verification, explanation and interaction, students' interest in inquiry is developed step by step, their problem-solving ability can be gradually improved in participation, and students' all-round development is promoted.

### **2.6.2 Bruner's Discovery Learning Theory**

The theory of discovery learning proposed by the famous contemporary American psychologist and educationist Jerome Stuart Bruner in 1961 provides theoretical solid support for modern education (Hu, 2015). Bruner believes that the essence of the teaching process lies in discovery, Bruner's educational theory focuses on the learner's internal learning motivation and knowledge structure, and focuses on the value of intuitive thinking and the processing and extraction of information (Ren,

2019). According to Yang (2021)'s research, Bruner's important points can be described from the following three points:

1) Students are participants, and teachers are in a more collaborative position with students. The process of students' active participation in learning, spontaneous exploration of truth and acquisition of knowledge should be combined with teachers' guidance to encourage students to master and apply knowledge (Antonio & Miguel-ángel, 2012).

2) Effective use of learning materials, mastering a little information can infer information, unrelated materials, but it also makes them connected (Yang, 2021).

3) How to organize information is the basis of extracting information, the accumulation, storage, connection and organization of knowledge are organized (Wu, 2021). Combining existing knowledge and content with newly discovered content, participating in the generation and evolution of knowledge will by osmosis organize information, thus achieving better memory effect (Hu, 2015).

In this study, combined with Bruner's discovery learning theory, the researcher can fully mobilize students' various sensory systems, allow students to form hypotheses about inquiry questions based on existing cognitive structures, and use the knowledge students have already learned to guide students to generate new knowledge. With the help of textbooks and regional resources, students can cooperate in exploring, mastering relevant principles, and improving their corresponding abilities.

### **2.6.3 Rogers's Humanism Theory**

The concept of humanism education emerged in the 1950s and 1960s. American psychologist Carl Ranson Rogers was one of the main creators and most influential figures in humanism psychology (Fang & Yao, 2013). Rogers's humanism thought provides a new perspective of understanding and reflection in the field of contemporary education. According to Zhong and Guo (2005)'s research, Rogers's view can be described from the following four points:

1) The goal of teaching is to cultivate students' "self-realization", awaken learners' self-awareness, inspire learners to adapt to changes and discover their own potential (Chen, 2019).

2) Teaching should follow non-directive teaching principles. Let students learn spontaneously, focus on learning according to their original characteristics, create a good learning atmosphere, and strengthen students' self-evaluation and self-management awareness (Li, 2022).

3) The concept of meaningful learning emphasizes that learning not only enables learners to acquire knowledge, accumulate knowledge, and realize the growth of knowledge but also includes the mutual integration and penetration of learners' experiences in other aspects (Gou & Li, 2023).

4) Learning relies on one's own experience to improve oneself, its center is the accumulation of experience, the motivation is the initiative and spontaneity of students, advocates students as the center of teaching, and pays attention to the equal relationship between teachers and students.

In this study, combined with Rogers's humanism theory, the researcher can purposefully bring the topic into context for students to explore and conclude by themselves. In the process of questioning and explanation, students' understanding and perception of knowledge will be strengthened, their personality will be developed, and their interest in learning will be maintained. This not only meets the needs of the development of students in the times, enables students to realize themselves, but also helps curriculum reform and establish a people-oriented educational concept.

#### **2.6.4 Piaget's Constructivism Theory**

Constructivism theory was developed on the basis of behavioral psychology and cognitive psychology theories and was first proposed by the famous Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget in the 1960s (Lv, 2013). At that time, it was mainly used to study the laws of human learning and cognition of the surrounding world. In the 1990s, constructivism continued to develop and evolve, becoming an important branch of

cognitive learning theory (Zhang, 2018). According to Fan and Zhang (2003)'s research, Piaget's important points can be described from the following three points:

1) The process of cognition involved active construction, drawing upon the subject's pre-existing knowledge and experiences, thereby forming the fundamental basis of constructivism.

2) The learning environment of constructivism mainly includes four elements: situation, conversation, collaboration and meaning construction. Understanding arises from the interaction between the cognitive subject and the environment, and the teaching mode becomes a mode in which teachers organize and guide the teaching process, induce and inspire students to actively learn, actively seek and explore knowledge, and thus independently build knowledge (Lv, 2013).

3) The cognitive structure of the child, the schema, is gradually constructed through two basic processes of assimilation and accommodation (Kong, 2002). Among them, "assimilation" refers to the process in which cognitive subjects integrate the information provided by the external environment into their original knowledge structure, and "adaptation" refers to the process in which the original cognitive structure is reorganized and reformed due to changes in the external environment (Luan, Shi, & Liu, 2007). The cognitive individual is to achieve balance with the outside world through these two ways, in the infinite cycle of "balance - imbalance - new balance" is constantly enriched, improved and developed to fit the new environment.

In this study, with the incorporation of Piaget's constructivism theory, the researchers can give full play to students' subjectivity. Through the whole process of raising, analyzing and solving problems, students independently construct knowledge, thus forming their own knowledge system. By building a new knowledge system to store knowledge in their brains, and eventually become their own knowledge. It not only helps to cultivate students' spirit of active exploration in the study of 9th-grade politics, but also plays a positive role in promoting teachers' correct teaching concepts.

## 2.7 Related Research and Studies

In recent years, with the continuous development and reform of the education system, educational ideas and models have changed. Many researchers have applied inquiry methods in the teaching of political course to study their efficiency. The results will be presented as follows:

Wang (2015) studied the influence of the inquiry method on classroom efficiency in junior middle school politics course, and carried it out using two classes with equivalent levels, Class A and Class B. Among them, Class A used the inquiry teaching method, and Class B used the traditional teaching method. After a period of study, the passing rate of Class A was significantly higher than that of Class B by 14%, the teachers' attention to the students' learning interest in inquiry reached 85%, and the students' recognition of the inquiry method reached 95%. This research showed that the application of the inquiry method not only shortens the distance between teachers and students, changes students' learning methods, but also improves students' learning achievement and promotes the improvement of teachers' professional level.

Sun (2018) studied the application of the inquiry method in the politics class of Grade 7, analyzed the application status of the inquiry method, the learning characteristics and physical and mental development rules of 7th-grade students, and put forward the application strategies of the inquiry method teaching. The result showed that the inquiry method was in line with the teaching idea of political course, and could fully enhance students' learning enthusiasm and initiative, and enhance students' inquiry ability.

Xing (2018) studied the practical application of the combination of the inquiry method and junior high school politics lessons. The inquiry method is divided into five steps: "determine the inquiry goal - select the inquiry question - create the inquiry situation - solve the inquiry question - evaluate the inquiry activity". The results showed that teachers should avoid using the inquiry method rigorously in political classroom teaching. In the actual teaching process, teachers can flexibly use

the method according to the actual situation, constantly summarize and reflect on the teaching in practice, constantly optimize the teaching method, and let the inquiry method play the charm of teaching.

Wei (2020) applied the inquiry method to the first unit of the politics class of 8th- grade from three aspects: teachers, students and the specific implementation steps of inquiry method teaching. It was found that the teaching content of political course was in accord with the open teaching principle of the inquiry method, and the inquiry method had achieved great results in the application of political course.

Li (2021) studied the characteristics and implementation process of the inquiry method and found that there were still many problems with the application of the inquiry method in political textbooks in junior middle schools in China, such as low participation of students, insufficient guidance ability of teachers, conflicts between excessive course content and insufficient class hours, etc. Based on the analysis of the causes of these factors, the paper concludes effective strategies for the use of inquiry methods, such as rationally formulating teaching objectives, following the four steps to implement inquiry methods, and improving teachers' inquiry ability.

Song (2023) studied students from four middle schools and 35 middle school politics teachers in Pingquan City, Hebei Province, China, and found some problems in the application of the inquiry method in middle school politics and put forward a series of scientific solutions. It was also found that teachers need to take measures to adjust the contradictions of different opinions in the same group so as to avoid the emotional fluctuations of students.

In sum, the inquiry method plays an important role in political course teaching. However, the above studies, such as Sun (2018), Xing (2018), Wei (2020) & Li (2021) were all theoretical studies, the purpose of which is to find out the problems of the political teaching of inquiry method and propose solutions to the problems. However, these studies are not comprehensive enough, and there is a lack of experimental comparison to prove the influence of the inquiry method on political

science students' academic performance. Wang (2015) was to explain the application strategy of inquiry method in politics class through two different teaching classes and to understand the teaching method suitable for politics class. However, his research was an analysis of an old textbook with little reference value. Therefore, the application of the inquiry method in political classes needs to be further studied in terms of teaching practice.



## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter described the methods used in this study to answer the research questions: Would there be any improvement of grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course after the application of inquiry method? What would be grade 9 Chinese students' satisfaction in political course towards the inquiry method?

The description were presented in the following order:

- 3.1 Research Design
- 3.2 Population and Sample
- 3.3 Research Instruments
- 3.4 Validity and Reliability
- 3.5 Data Collection
- 3.6 Data Analysis

#### 3.1 Research Design

The present study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Quantitative methods provide numeric information to generalize findings and see the bigger picture, such as the survey model or experiments using quantitative. Meanwhile qualitative methods allow for insights into the social context of particular individuals and settings. Qualitative methods include sampling, data generation, and analysis procedures (Koyuncu & Kaptanoğlu, 2022).

The study employed quantitative data collection methods, including achievement tests and questionnaire surveys, as well as a qualitative data collection method through semi-structured interviews. Pre-test and post-test achievement

assessments were administered to a cohort of 30 students before and after the implementation of the inquiry-based teaching approach. The students' satisfaction questionnaires were collected the quantitative data after the teaching process and semi-structured interviews were supported the qualitative data of students' satisfaction. The research procedure were as follows:

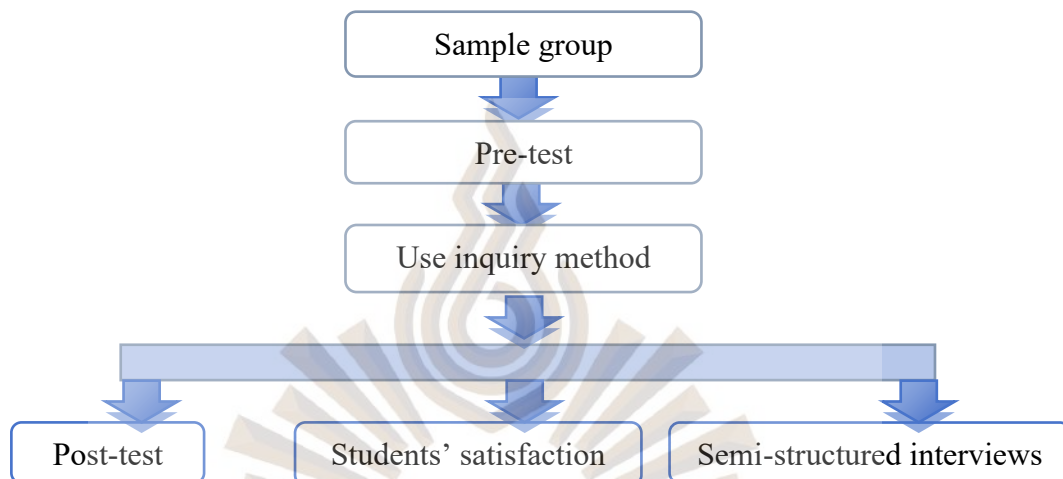


Figure 3.1 Research Design

### 3.2 Population and Sample

**Population:** The population of the research included nine classes of grade 9 with a total of 405 students. They were between 14 and 16 years old, and their gender and abilities to study political course were different.

**Sample:** The researcher used a cluster random sampling to select a class from the population that mixed-ability to form an experimental class included 30 students in the experimental class.

**Location:** The study was initiated at a public middle school in the Yunnan Province of China. The school had favorable conditions to apply the inquiry method to the political course. The school was composed of grades 7 to 9. By 2023, the school had about 1300 registered students and 106 teachers. The school was located in a semi-urban area.

### 3.3 Research Instruments

A mixed methodology was employed in this study, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Lesson plans served as the primary instructional tool, while achievement tests (pre-test and post-test), student satisfaction questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews were utilized to assess the efficacy of the intervention.

Table 3.1 Details of Research Instruments

No.	Research Objectives	Research Instruments
1	To compare grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course before and after using the application of inquiry method.	The achievement tests (pre-test and post-test) were conducted before and after using the inquiry method
2	To explore grade 9 Chinese students' satisfaction in political course towards learning with the application of inquiry method.	Students' satisfaction questionnaires and semi-structured interviews

#### 3.3.1 Lesson Plans

The researcher prepared four lesson plans based on 9th-grade textbooks that applied the inquiry method teaching over the course of one month (one lesson plan = 90 minutes). The content of each lesson plan was presented as follows: (See Appendix A for the specific content of the lesson plans).

Table 3.2 Lesson Plan Outline

Topics (Time)	Learning Objective	Learning Activities
1. Participate in the life of a democracy (90 minutes)	<p>1) Students will be able to express the definition of democratic life, the ways and requirements for exercising democratic rights.</p> <p>2) Students will be able to use relevant knowledge of the democratic life to analyze and solve practical problems.</p> <p>3) Students will be able to enhance their awareness of democracy.</p>	<p>1) Teacher shows the video of democratic life, then students share their democratic live.</p> <p>2) Teacher presents inquiry materials and questions. Students conduct group inquiry.</p> <p>3) Each group explains their guesses about the inquiry questions, after consulting relevant materials and textbooks to think, explain and discuss again. Meanwhile, teacher provides assistance and guidance to students.</p> <p>4) The groups summarize and share their research results. Teacher and students supplement and evaluate their sharing.</p> <p>5) Teacher guides students to translate these answers into concrete concepts of democratic life. Finally, students take notes, and teacher assigns after-class tasks.</p>
2. Build a home for life together (90 minutes)	<p>1) Students will be able to express the reasons and ways of building a home for life together</p> <p>2) Students will be able to use relevant knowledge of building a home for life together to analyze and solve practical problems.</p> <p>3) Students will be able to enhance their respect for nature and develop a low-carbon and environmentally friendly lifestyle.</p>	<p>1) Teacher shows the video of build a home for life together, then students share the harmonious coexistence between man and nature.</p> <p>2) Teacher presents inquiry materials and questions. Students conduct group inquiry.</p> <p>3) Each group explains their guesses about the inquiry questions, after consulting relevant materials and textbooks to think, explain and discuss again. Meanwhile, teacher provides assistance and guidance to students.</p> <p>4) The groups summarize and share their research results. Teacher and students supplement and evaluate their sharing.</p>

Table 3.2 Lesson Plan Outline (Cont.)

Topics (Time)	Learning Objective	Learning Activities
		5) Teacher guides students to translate these answers into concrete concepts of build a home for life together. Finally, students take notes, and teacher assigns after-class tasks.
3. Open and interactive world (90 minutes)	<p>1) Students will be able to express the characteristics of today's world and manifestations of economic globalization.</p> <p>2) Students will be able to use relevant knowledge of the open and interactive world to analyze and solve practical problems.</p> <p>3) Students will be able to enhance their open and inclusive mentality to face economic globalization.</p>	<p>1) Teacher shows the video of open and interactive world, then students share close cooperation and exchanges between countries.</p> <p>2) Teacher presents inquiry materials and questions. Students conduct group inquiry.</p> <p>3) Each group explains their guesses about the inquiry questions, after consulting relevant materials and textbooks to think, explain and discuss again. Meanwhile, teacher provides assistance and guidance to students.</p> <p>4) The groups summarize and share their research results. Teacher and students supplement and evaluate their sharing.</p> <p>5) Teacher guides students to translate these answers into concrete concepts of open and interactive world. Finally, students take notes, and teacher assigns after-class tasks.</p>

Table 3.2 Lesson Plan Outline (Cont.)

Topics (Time)	Learning Objective	Learning Activities
4. Seek common interests and common development (90 minutes)	To use relevant knowledge of the seek common interests and common development to analyze and solve practical problems. 3) Students to use enhance their global awareness and establish a view of common interests and values of shared responsibility.	3) Each group explains their own guesses about the inquiry questions, after consulting relevant materials and textbooks to think, explain and discuss again. Meanwhile, teacher provides assistance and guidance to students. 4) The groups summarize and share their research results. Teacher and students supplement and evaluate their sharing. 5) Teacher guides students to translate these answers into concrete concepts of seek common interests and common development. Finally, students take notes, and teacher assigns after-class tasks.

### 3.3.2 Instruments for Quantitative Data Collection

#### 3.3.2.1 Pre-test and Post-test

The achievement test in this study consisted of pre-test and post-test, which were administered to 30 students before and after the implementation of the inquiry method to 30 investigate students' achievement. The test contents were developed by the researchers based on the four topics of lesson plans. The test papers were the same. The examination contents including; (1) Participate in the life of a democracy (2) Build a home for life together (3) Open and interactive world (4) Seek common interests and common development.

According to the question type requirements of these four topics in the high school entrance examination. The achievement tests were separated into three parts. Part 1 multiple choice questions, each question has 4 choices, there are 20 questions and 1 point each, a total of 20 points. Part 2 short answer questions, there are

5 questions and 2 points each, a total of 10 points. Part 3 material analysis questions, there are 5 questions and 2 points each, a total of 10 points. Therefore, the achievement test format includes a total of 20 multiple choice questions, 5 short answer questions, and 5 material analysis questions. Each test lasts 90 minutes and the total score is 40 marks. (See Appendix B for specific content of the achievement test)

### 3.3.2.2 Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires

The students' satisfaction questionnaires to investigate students' contentment of grade 9 students towards the application of inquiry method in politics course. The students' satisfaction questionnaires would be divided into three parts: interest and motivation, engagement and efficacy of inquiry method on student learning. According to the Likert scale, the measurement is carried out in a 5-level scale form, including: 1 - strongly disagree, 2 - disagree, 3 - neutral, 4 - agree, 5 - strongly agree (Qi, 2006).

During the distribution of the students' satisfaction questionnaires, the researcher would explain and justify each question to ensure that the participants understand the students' satisfaction questionnaires accurately (See Appendix C for the specific content of the questionnaire).

Table 3.3 The Range of Mean Score Interpretation

Likert-Scale Description	Score Range	Students' opinions Level
Strongly Agree	5.00-4.01	Highest
Agree	4.00-3.01	High
Neutral	3.00-2.01	Moderate
Disagree	2.00-1.01	Low
Strongly Disagree	1.00	Lowest

### 3.3.3 Qualitative Data

#### 3.3.3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were informal interviews conducted by researchers in accordance with a broad interview outline. In the semi-structured

interview method, although the questions to be discussed are listed in advance, the researcher will ask questions in an open way around the questions closely related to the research topic (Zhao,2021). Semi-structured interviews can be conducted in person or electronically via social media platforms (Irvine, Drew, & Sainsbury, 2012).

In this study, the researcher also conducted semi-structured interviews with students, after the application of inquiry method teaching. The researcher used a simple random sampling of students, 2 students per group, from 3 groups, namely the higher score, medium score, and lower score to conduct semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interview consists of three parts: interest and motivation (Questions 1 and 2), engagement (Questions 3 and 4), and efficacy of inquiry method on student learning (Questions 5 and 6). Two questions were set in each part, with a total of six questions. Therefore, the researcher created a comfortable and open atmosphere for the 6 students and asked 6 questions according to the interview outline to collect rich data. Participants' verbal responses were recorded by pen and categorized according to different themes. The responses were recorded, analyzed and translated into English to support satisfaction. Participants' privacy and confidentiality were ensured during the interviews, and research ethics guidelines were followed. Communicate the purpose and process of the interview with the participants beforehand and obtain their consent to participate in the study (See Appendix D for the specific content of the semi-structured interview).

### **3.4 Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability are systematic tests aimed at various possible deviations and errors. Validity focuses on the "accuracy" of research results, while reliability reflects the "consistency" or "repeatability" of results obtained by different research methods (Cai, Du, & Jiang, 2011). Pan (2005) shows that the relationship between the two can be summarized in one sentence: validity is the purpose of reliability, and reliability is a necessary but not sufficient condition for validity.

### 3.4.1 Validity

Heale and Twycross (2015) state that Validity is defined as the degree to which a definition is accurately measured in a quantitative analysis. In this study, the research instruments were to be examined and validated by three experienced senior political teachers in China. We used the Item-Objective Consistency (IOC) index developed by Rovinelli and Hambleton (1997) to evaluate the validity of this study (Carlson & Turner, 2003). Validation of research tools, including lesson plans, achievement tests, students' satisfaction questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews.

The IOC is calculated by applying the formula:  $IOC = \Sigma R/N$ , in which ' $\Sigma R$ ' represents the total score of the experts rating and ' $N$ ' represents the number of experts. The IOC score, ranging from -1 to +1, will be a pivotal metric for assessing the conceptual alignment of the research instruments. The explanation is as follows:

+1: the item clearly matches stated objectives.

0: the item is unclear whether the measures meet the stated objectives or not.

-1: the item totally does not match the stated objectives.

Additionally, the operational score range of the domain is from 0.67 to +1. Items scoring between 0.67 and 1.00 will be retained as part of the instrument. Conversely, items with values below 0.67 will be considered unclear and may necessitate rephrasing or removal to ensure optimal instrument validity.

In this study, the IOC (Index of Consistency) results for the lesson Plans, the achievement tests, student satisfaction questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews were 1, 0.94, 1, and 1. All instruments were validated by three experienced experts with the scores which were higher than 0.67 (Detail as shown in Appendix E, F, G, H).

### 3.4.2 Reliability

The aim of reliability validation is to ensure that the research instrument measures the variable of interest consistently across multiple applications without being seriously affected by random errors, thus ensuring the trustworthiness of the research instrument.

In this research, the researcher will be used the Kuder-Richardson (KR-20) to evaluate the reliability of the achievement tests, and Cronbach's Alpha will be used to test the reliability of the students' satisfaction questionnaires. The range of Cronbach alpha is 0 to 1. The higher the score, the higher the consistency and reliability among the items. If the score is below 0.7, the item will be defined as unreliable and removed. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency is shown below:

Table 3.4 Cronbach's Alpha Rule of Thumb

Cronbach's Alpha Rule of Thumb	Internal Consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$	Acceptable
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Questionable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

Source: George & Mallery, 2003

The reliability of the test items was evaluated by administering the tests to 30 students outside the main sample group. After conducting the reliability of the achievement test of the political course and the students' satisfaction questionnaire were 0.77 and 0.98, indicating the tests meet statistical reliability standards. Therefore, the test items were confirmed as reliable for use in data collection. (Detail as shown in Appendix K)

## **3.5 Data Collection**

### **3.5.1 Approval and Ethical Considerations**

The researcher obtained approval from the authorities of No. 1 Middle School in order to conduct the study at the public school (See Appendix I).

### **3.5.2 Confidentiality**

Prior to data collection, the participants were provided with detailed information about each research procedure, including the handling of their personal data and questionnaire responses. All data were kept confidential and deleted by the researcher after the study was completed (See Appendix J).

## **3.6 Data Analysis**

Two different methods were used to analyze the data, which was in line with two research objectives. First, the quantitative data of the pre-test and post-test were examined to assess the improvement of political achievement after the application of inquiry method teaching in the sample group. Secondly, the quantitative data of students' satisfaction questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to investigate the satisfaction of grade 9 students toward the application of the inquiry method in the political course.

### **3.6.1 Quantitative Data**

The research employed quantitative data collection through pre-test and post-test scores on two achievement tests, with the t-test serving as the primary analytical method for the collected data. The t-test dependent sampling is a type of inferential statistic used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups of data (Kim, 2015). Calculations were made for the mean, standard deviation, and significant value.

In addition, the quantitative data of students' satisfaction questionnaires to investigate students' contentment of grade 9 students towards the application of the inquiry method in politics course. Mean and standard deviation were used to statistically analyze the students' responses to each item. The average score was highest at 5.00 ~ 4.01, high at 4.00 ~ 3.01, medium at 3.00 ~ 2.01, low at 2.00 ~ 1.01, and lowest at 1.00.

### 3.6.2 Qualitative Data

In this study, qualitative data from semi-structured interviews to support students' contentment of grade 9 students towards the application of inquiry method in politics course. The participants voluntarily answered six questions through semi-structured interviews, and the researcher used thematic analysis to interpret and analyze the data under three themes: Part A: Interest and motivation, Part B: Engagement, and Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning. During the semi-structured interviews, the researchers accurately recorded the participants' verbal responses throughout the interviews, which were then extracted and translated into English, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the student perspective.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

In this chapter, a quasi-experimental design was used to compare the development of learning achievement of grade 9 students before and after using the inquiry method and to investigate students' satisfaction towards using the inquiry method in political course. The results were obtained from achievement tests (pre-test and post-test), satisfaction questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. The results of the data were presented in the following order:

- 4.1 Analysis of Political Achievement Test Scores
- 4.2 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires
- 4.3 Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews

#### **4.1 Analysis of Political Achievement Test Scores**

This section detailed the results of the first research question regarding the development of grade 9 students learning achievement in political course through inquiry method. The results came from a pre-test that was completed prior to starting the intervention and a post-test that was completed following it. Two assessors were involved in the process of assessment to rule out any bias. The sample group's pre-test and post-test scores were compared utilizing the paired sample t-test. The comparison was carried out using mean, standard deviation, and inferential statistics with  $p < 0.05$  being the significance level.

##### **4.1.1 Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Sample Group**

The data presented in Table 4.1 shows that the sample group made significant progress between the pre-test and post-test. In the pre-test, the students' minimum

score was 16, and the maximum score was 32 (out of a total of 40), which is a significant difference in scores. In the post-test, the minimum score increased to 27, and the maximum score reached 40 (out of a total of 40). In addition, two participants made the most remarkable improvement; the percentage difference between the pretest and posttest was 40.00% and 45.00%. All 30 participants showed varying degrees of improvement in their scores, ranging from 7 to 18 points. The mean score of the sample group increased from 27.10 to 37.90, an average improvement of 10.80 points or 27.00%.

Table 4.1 shows the scores, score increases, and percentage differences between the pretest and posttest for the participants.

Table 4.1 Pre-test & Post-test scores of the sample group

Student ID	Pre-test Score (Full Score=40)	Post-test Score (Full Score=40)	Increase in Test Score	% Difference
1	32	40	8	20.00%
2	31	40	9	22.50%
3	31	40	9	22.50%
4	31	38	7	17.50%
5	31	38	7	17.50%
6	30	39	9	22.50%
7	30	37	7	17.50%
8	30	40	10	25.00%
9	29	37	8	20.00%
10	29	40	11	27.50%
11	29	39	10	25.00%
12	28	38	10	25.00%
13	28	39	11	27.50%
14	28	35	7	17.50%
15	28	39	11	27.50%

Table 4.1 Pre-test &amp; Post-test scores of the sample group (Cont.)

Student ID	Pre-test Score (Full Score=40)	Post-test Score (Full Score=40)	Increase in Test Score	% Difference
16	28	40	12	30.00%
17	28	40	12	30.00%
18	26	38	12	30.00%
19	27	38	11	27.50%
20	27	37	10	25.00%
21	26	40	14	35.00%
22	26	37	11	27.50%
23	25	37	12	30.00%
24	23	39	16	40.00%
25	25	36	11	27.50%
26	24	36	12	30.00%
27	22	35	13	32.50%
28	22	40	18	45.00%
29	23	38	15	37.50%
30	16	27	11	27.50%
Mean	27.10	37.90	10.80	27.00%

Upon comparing the raw scores obtained from the pre-test and post-test, it was observed that all 30 participants achieved higher scores on the post-test in comparison to their performance on the pre-test. The subsequent analyses are based on these pre- and post-test scores.

#### 4.1.2 Analysis of Paired Sample t-test

The analysis of the achievement tests scores obtained from the pretest and posttest using paired sample statistics (t-test for dependent sample) revealed a positive result, as shown in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Paired Samples t-test

Group	n	Pretest		Posttest		Mean difference	t	p-value
Sample Group	30	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	10.80	-22.26	.000
		27.10	3.51	37.90	2.58			

\*  $p < .05$

According to Table 4.2, paired-sample analysis of test scores revealed positive results. The pretest mean was 27.10, with a standard deviation of 3.51, while the posttest mean was 37.90, with a standard deviation of 2.58. The difference between the pretest and posttest means is 10.80, demonstrating an increase in the posttest mean. The obtained p-value was .000, which was less than .05 ( $p < .05$ ), indicating a statistically significant improvement in the sample group's posttest score compared to the pretest score. This demonstrated that the students' post-test scores differed from the mean, indicating a more credible result.

#### 4.1.3 Pretest and Posttest Comparison

Figure 4.1 The following are the pre- and post-test scores of the participants. As depicted, the blue line represents the pre-test score while the orange line represents the post-test score. It is evident that all students exhibited an improvement in their scores during the post-test, indicating that employing inquiry-based methods is conducive to enhancing political learning performance among grade 9 students.

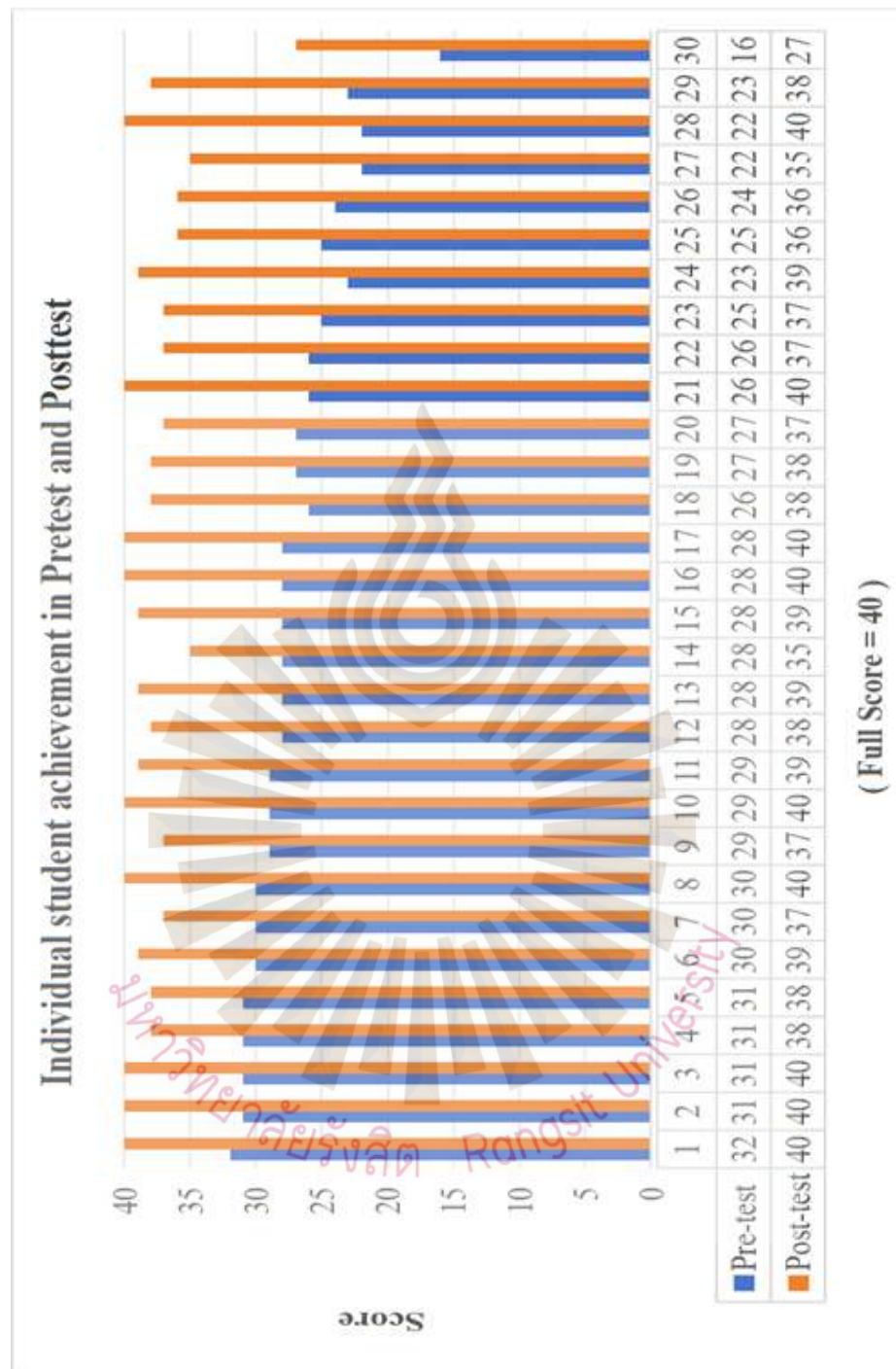


Figure 4.1 Graphical representation of students' pretest and posttest scores

In addition, Figure 4.2 shows the mean scores for the pretest and posttest, which were 27.10 and 37.90. The mean score for the post-test was higher than the mean score for the pretest. The post-test scores, represented by the orange bar,

confirmed an increase of 10.80 points compared to the pretest scores, represented by the blue bar. So, each person progressed in the posttest and got a better score.

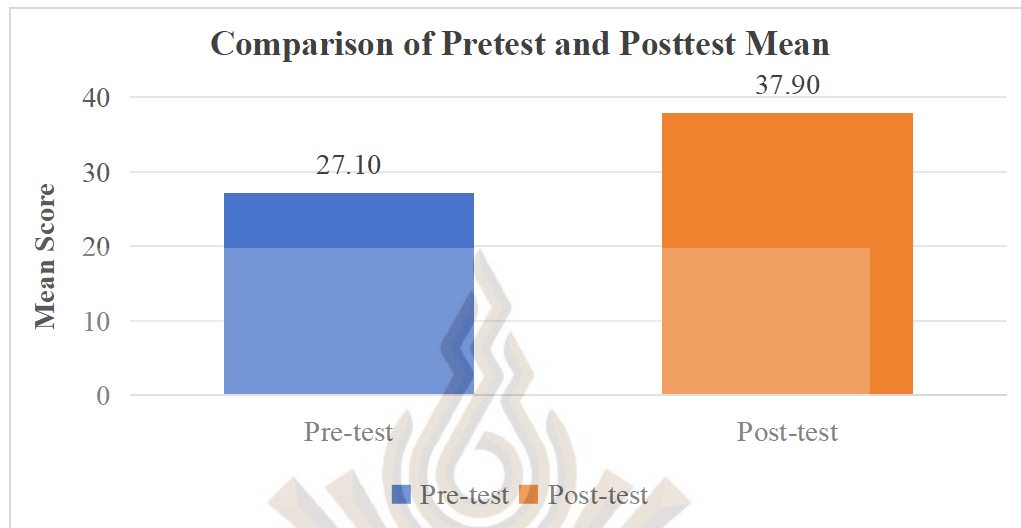


Figure 4.2 Comparison of the overall pre-test and post-test mean scores

## 4.2 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires

A five-point of Likert scale was adopted to collect quantitative data and explore grade ninth students' satisfaction with using the inquiry method in the political course: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. The questionnaires consisted of 15 items divided into three parts, Part A: Interest and motivation, Part B: Engagement, and Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning. All 30 (n =30) study participants were given questionnaires. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to analyze the survey results. The average score was highest at 5.00 ~ 4.01, high at 4.00 ~ 3.01, medium at 3.00 ~ 2.01, low at 2.00 ~ 1.01, and lowest at 1.00.

Table 4.3 Questionnaires result of the Sample Group

Item	n	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Part A	30	4.35	0.87	Highest
Part B	30	4.37	1.00	Highest
Part C	30	4.39	0.91	Highest
Total	30	4.37	0.93	Highest

Questionnaire were administered to all 30 (n=30) study participants. From table 4.3 above, it could be seen that the mean scores were 4.35, 4.37, and 4.39 for part A, part B and part C respectively, which were all at the highest level. The overall average was also at the highest level with 4.37.

#### 4.2.1 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires Part A: Interest and Motivation

Table 4.4 shows the mean scores and standard deviations of students' satisfaction with Part A: Interest and Motivation. Item 5, The methodology of inquiry method that could motivate me to learn the politics course, had the highest mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 4.47, which was at the highest level. Although item 2, I enjoy the classroom atmosphere when using the inquiry method, was the lowest mean score ( $\bar{x} = 4.23$ ), it is still at the highest level. The overall average of Part A, interest, and motivation was at the highest level ( $\bar{x} = 4.35$ ). The interpretation of the mean scores showed that the application of the inquiry method could improve the student's interest and motivation.

Table 4.4 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires Part A: Interest and Motivation

No.	Part A- Interest & Motivation	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Using inquiry method to learn politics course was interesting.	4.40	0.72	Highest
2	I enjoyed the classroom atmosphere when using the inquiry method.	4.23	0.94	Highest

Table 4.4 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires Part A: Interest and Motivation (Cont.)

No.	Part A- Interest & Motivation	Mean	SD	Interpretation
3	Using the inquiry method helped me to develop my confidence in learning.	4.30	0.88	Highest
4	The teacher well organized for teaching with the inquiry method.	4.37	0.93	Highest
5	The methodology of inquiry method could motivate me to learn the politics course.	4.47	0.90	Highest
	Average	4.35	0.87	Highest

#### 4.2.2 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires Part B: Engagement

Table 4.5 shows the mean scores and standard deviations of students' satisfaction with Part B: Engagement. Items 8 and 10, The inquiry method could have more opportunity to interact to each other in the class and the steps of the inquiry method give me to explore more knowledge, had the highest mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 4.43 were in the highest level. Although item 6, The activities engaged me in learning politics course, was the lowest mean score ( $\bar{x} = 4.27$ ), it is still at the highest level. The overall average of Part B, engagement was at the highest level ( $\bar{x} = 4.37$ ). The interpretation of the mean scores showed that the application of the inquiry method could improve the students in engagement.

Table 4.5 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires Part B: Engagement

No.	Part B- Engagement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
6	The activities engaged me in learning politics course.	4.27	1.08	Highest
7	I was more willing to engage in the resources provided by the teacher.	4.37	1.07	Highest
8	The inquiry method could have more opportunity to interact to each other in the class.	4.43	0.97	Highest
9	I was willing to apply the inquiry method to learn in other topics.	4.37	1.00	Highest

Table 4.5 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires Part B: Engagement

No.	Part B- Engagement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
10	The steps of the inquiry method let me to explore more	4.43	0.90	Highest
	Average	4.37	1.00	Highest

#### 4.2.3 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning

Table 4.6 shows the mean scores and standard deviations of students' satisfaction with Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning. Item 12, The inquiry method could greatly reduce my burden of memorizing the key knowledge of political course, had the highest mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 4.43 was in the highest level. Although items 14 and 15, The inquiry method could improve my ability of analyze and solve the problems and using inquiry method could enable me to deeper understanding the content of the topic, were the lowest mean score ( $\bar{x} = 4.37$ ), it is still at the highest level. The overall average of Part C, efficacy of inquiry method on student learning was at the highest level ( $\bar{x} = 4.39$ ). The interpretation of the mean scores showed that the application of the inquiry method could improve the students in learning efficacy.

Table 4.6 Analysis of Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning

No.	Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning	Mean	SD	Interpretation
11	The inquiry method helped me to improve in learning achievement.	4.40	0.89	Highest
12	The inquiry method could greatly reduce my burden of memorizing the key knowledge of political	4.43	0.90	Highest
13	The strategies of inquiry teaching method were effective in learning.	4.40	0.89	Highest
14	The inquiry method could improve my ability to analyze and solve the problems.	4.37	0.93	Highest
15	Using inquiry method could enable me to deeper understanding the content of the topic.	4.37	0.93	Highest
	Average	4.39	0.91	Highest

Finally, as mentioned above, part C had the highest mean score among the three parts, with a mean of 4.39 and a standard deviation of 0.91. In contrast, part B had relatively lower mean scores, with an average score of 4.37 and a standard deviation of 1.00, and part A had the lowest mean score, with a mean of 4.35 and a standard deviation of 0.87. Nevertheless, considering the overall mean of 4.37, the researcher was convinced that the students were positively satisfied with using the inquiry method in Political course learning.

### **4.3 Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews**

The researcher was able to gather valuable insights into students' satisfaction through semi-structured interviews. By analyzing the data according to the topics, the researcher was able to efficiently collect data on student satisfaction in a short period of time. Additionally, the data collected through the interviews complemented and supported the data collected from the questionnaires, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the student perspective.

After using inquiry method teaching in political course, the researcher used a simple random sampling to selected 6 students from the 30 participants for interviews. The 6 students were divided into three groups, 2 students per group, namely the higher score, medium score and lower score to conduct semi-structured interviews. The participants voluntarily answered six questions through semi-structured interviews, and the researcher analyzed the collected responses under three themes: Part A: Interest and motivation, Part B: Engagement, and Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning. A comprehensive analysis of each group was provided below.

#### **1) Part A: Interest and motivation**

Based on the feedback received from the students, it could be stated that they were satisfied with the use of the inquiry method for learning political course. Most of the participants found it interesting and motivating to learn political course through this method. They also mentioned that the learning materials and activity processes provided by the researcher were helpful, incorporated information

relevant to their lives, and enabled them to learn Politics effectively and be more motivated to learn. The following student responses supported these views:

"The videos and pictures played by multimedia are all related to our lives, making political knowledge more concrete." and "I was able to get preliminary answers to my research questions by thinking and looking up relevant information." (Students 1 and 2, the higher score group, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

"The inquiry activities and group discussions in political class rendered the learning process highly captivating." and "The steps of the inquiry method were very reasonable. I was able to complete the class inquiry tasks under the guidance of the teacher, which strengthened my confidence in inquiry." (Students 12 and 18, the medium score group, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

"I liked to inquiry, and discussing with other students made me active." and "using inquiry made my politics class less boring." (Students 27 and 30, the lower score group, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

## 2) Part B: Engagement

The majority of the students have reported that the teaching steps of the inquiry method were relevant to political course, and the activities designed according to the inquiry method were highly engaging and aided them greatly in learning political course. They also expressed their eagerness to continue participating in these classroom activities, as they believed this could improve their learning thinking and more active participation in classroom activities. The following student responses supported these views:

"The inquiry method gave me more opportunities to participate in class and express my ideas." and "I was able to understand my shortcomings through mutual evaluation and then improve myself." (Students 1 and 2, the higher score group, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

"Inquiry made me more willing to participate in learning. I hope that teachers in other courses can use inquiry teaching." and "The exploration activities were very interesting. I was able to participate with the teacher and classmates, which made me pay more attention to the class." (Students 12 and 18, the medium score group, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

"I was willing to follow the teacher's inquiry steps to learn. Under the teacher's guidance, I remained free and my thinking was active." and "I was willing to discuss with my classmates in the group and I felt relaxed." (Students 27 and 30, the lower score group, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

### 3) Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning

The majority of students found the implementation of the inquiry method teaching pedagogy to be beneficial and productive. Utilizing the inquiry method teaching led to an improvement in their ability to analyze and solve problems, understanding and memory of knowledge, and the achievement test in political course. The following student responses supported this view:

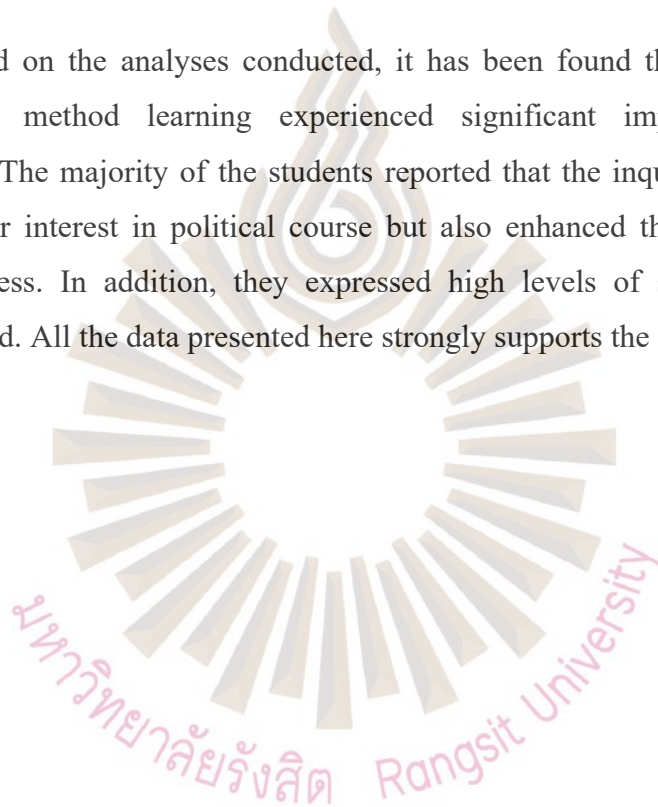
"During the inquiry and discussion, I was able to combine the knowledge I had learned before to discover problems, solve problems, and then understand new knowledge." and "The inquiry method helped me better analyze and solve inquiry problems." (Students 1 and 2, the higher score group, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

"In the process of solving inquiry problems, my memory of knowledge was deepened." and "Learning using the inquiry method has enhanced my

learning ability." (Students 12 and 18, the medium score group, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

"In the classroom using the inquiry method, I found that my ability to understand the problem has improved" and "After using the inquiry method, my political achievements have improved significantly." (Students 27 and 30, the lower score group, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

Based on the analyses conducted, it has been found that the students who used inquiry method learning experienced significant improvement in their achievement. The majority of the students reported that the inquiry method not only increased their interest in political course but also enhanced the efficiency of their learning process. In addition, they expressed high levels of satisfaction with the inquiry method. All the data presented here strongly supports the students' satisfaction.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The present chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research, presenting detailed information in a sequential manner:

- 5.1 Conclusion
- 5.2 Discussion
- 5.3 Recommendations

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The two research objectives were stated for this study:

- 1) To compare grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course before and after using the inquiry method.
- 2) To explore grade 9 Chinese students' satisfaction in political course towards the inquiry method.

The study employed a mixed approach, quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative methodology included pre-test, post-test, and questionnaires administered to grade 9 Chinese students. The qualitative methodology was semi-structured interviews with grade 9 Chinese students. The findings led to the following conclusions:

##### **5.1.1 The Result of Political Achievement Test Scores Analysis**

The first research objective followed the pre-test and post-test results, a paired sample t-test was conducted to compare the learning performance within one group of students.

The application of the inquiry method provided an efficient and interactive platform for political course learning, which greatly promotes students' motivation and improves learning efficiency. Through inquiry activities, students were able to master new knowledge and enhance their memory of knowledge.

The findings of the study could be concluded as follows:

1) The statistical analysis of the paired sample T-test revealed a significant increase in the average score after the test (37.90) compared to before the test (27.10), with an average difference of 10.80 (27.00%). The standard deviations for the pre-test and post-test were found to be 3.51 and 2.58, respectively. These findings indicate that the average score in the post-test was significantly higher than that in the pre-test.

2) The pre-test yielded a maximum score of 32 and a minimum score of 16, while the post-test resulted in the highest score of 40 and the lowest score of 27. Consequently, there was an increase of 8 between the highest scores on the post-test compared to those on the pre-test. Similarly, the lowest score on the post-test exceeded that on the pre-test by 11.

3) Most of the participants, 29 out of 30, scored above 30 on the post-test. In contrast, only eight students scored 30 or higher on the pre-test, while the rest scored below that level.

4) For all 30 students, all participant's post-test scored were higher than the pre-test. The increase in scores ranged from 7 to 18 points, respectively.

The quantitative data analysis above revealed a significant improvement in students' post-test results. Thus, this study's results indicated that using the inquiry method could effectively improve the learning achievement of grade 9 students in political course.

### **5.1.2 The Results of Students' Satisfaction questionnaires Analysis**

The second research objective was to collect the quantitative data through a questionnaires containing 15 items, which were further divided into three parts:

Part A: Interest and motivation

Part B: Engagement

Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning

1) According to the data in Part A of the students' satisfaction questionnaires, it showed that students had the highest level of interest and motivation in using the application of the inquiry method for political course learning. (mean=4.35, SD=0.87).

2) According to the data in Part B of the students' satisfaction questionnaires, it showed that students had the highest level of engagement in using the application of the inquiry method for political course learning. (mean=4.37, SD=1.00).

3) According to the data in Part C of the students' satisfaction questionnaires, it showed that students had the highest level of effectiveness of using the application of the inquiry method for political course learning. (mean=4.39, SD=0.91).

### 5.1.3 The Results of Semi-Structured Interviews Analysis

Three semi-structured interviews were conducted with 2 students in each group. Qualitative data was collected through pen recording of students' oral accounts, which were later analyzed thematically. The semi-structured interviews included six questions, which were further divided into three parts: Part A: Interest and motivation, Part B: Engagement and Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning.

1) Based on the feedback in Part A of the semi-structured interview, it showed that most of the participants found it interesting and motivating to learn political course through this method. They also mentioned that the learning materials and activity processes provided by the researcher were helpful, incorporated information relevant to their lives, and enabled them to learn politics effectively and be more motivated to learn.

2) Based on the feedback in Part B of the semi-structured interview, it showed that most of the students have reported that the teaching steps of the inquiry method were relevant to political course and the activities designed according to the

inquiry method were highly engaging and aided them greatly in learning political course. They also expressed their eagerness to continue participating in these classroom activities, as they believe this could improve their learning thinking, more active participation in classroom activities.

3) Based on the feedback in Part C of the semi-structured interview, it showed that most of students found the implementation of the inquiry method teaching pedagogy to be beneficial and productive. Utilizing the inquiry method teaching led to an improvement in their ability to analyze and solve problems, understanding and memory of knowledge, and the achievement test in political course.

As mentioned above, they expressed high levels of satisfaction with the inquiry method. All the data presented here strongly supports the students' satisfaction.

## **5.2 Discussion**

There were two key findings in this study. The first finding proved that using the inquiry method can improve grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course. The second finding was that students were satisfied with using the inquiry method to learn political course. The following discussion will summarize the findings in detail and explain how they effectively solve the questions posed by this study.

### **5.2.1 Political Achievement Test Scores**

The results of the test showed that using the inquiry method improved grade 9 students' learning achievement. All 30 participant's mean scores of the post-test (37.90) were higher than the pre-test (27.10). In addition, students No.24 and No.28 made the most remarkable improvement, the percentage difference between the pretest and posttest was 40% and 45%. Although Student No.1 improved by only 8 points, he consistently scored at the top in the pre-test and post-test, showing he already has an excellent learning foundation in political course. On the other hand, Students No.4, No.5, No.7 and No.14 improved by only 7 points, which were the smallest improvement among his classmates.

Nonetheless, their scores were still considered above average, indicating that they have the potential for further development. Therefore, using the inquiry method was in line with the idea of writing political textbook and students' cognition, inquiry materials and pictures also increased the fun of learning, it positively impacted political course. All findings from the pre-test and post-test were reliable answers to the first research question.

The inquiry method was an effective tool for learning in political course. The process inquiry was also well organized and gave students more time to participate in the inquiry. The inquiry method also encourages students to learn independently, and cultivate their ability to think independently and manage themselves. At the same time, in the process of inquiry, students train their ability to question, analyze and evaluate information, learn how to solve problems systematically, and provide immediate feedback through testing. These have also been proven in previous studies. Wei (2020) also showed that students observe, communicate, predict and verify with questions in the process of participating in inquiry activities, and truly regard the learning process as a process of active exploration. In this process, they can exercise inquiry skills and use inquiry skills to acquire knowledge and solve problems, enhancing the learning effect. Zhang and Dong (2024) study demonstrated that organizing students to explore is an important point of the inquiry method, giving students space to question and discuss, and ensuring that every student is clear about the problem. Through communication, cooperation, induction and summary, students' understanding and mastery can be promoted, and they can also be guided to solve problems creatively based on independent thinking and the power of their classmates.

### **5.2.2 Students' Satisfaction**

The students' satisfaction included questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, both of which were divided into three parts: Part A: Interest and Motivation, Part B: Engagement and Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning. The questionnaire consists of 15 items, and a five-point of Likert scale was used to collect quantitative data: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree, questionnaires were administered to all 30 study participants (n = 30), and the

survey results were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation. In addition, the semi-structured interview consisted of six questions, and topic analysis was used to collect qualitative data, six students participated and gave feedback. All participants expressed their satisfaction with the inquiry method in political course. All findings from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were reliable answers to the second research question.

#### 1) The Results of Part A: Interest and Motivation

The results of Part A of the questionnaire showed that the inquiry method positively impacted students' interest and motivation, with a mean score of 4.35 (SD=0.87) indicating the highest level of satisfaction. Item 5, "The methodology of inquiry method could motivate me to learn the politics course" had the highest mean score of 4.47 (SD=0.90). In addition, the feedback of semi-structured interviews showed that the inquiry method was interesting and motivating, the learning materials and activity processes incorporated information relevant to their lives and enabled them to learn Politics effectively and be more motivated to learn.

These results clearly show that the design of the inquiry method greatly enhances the learning enthusiasm of students and makes them feel that the learning process is very interesting. Using materials such as videos, pictures and cases related to life in the inquiry method teaching can stimulate students' interest in learning. Students can understand the relevant inquiry questions more intuitively through these visual materials, making them feel that inquiry is not so difficult. At the same time, students can complete learning tasks through inquiry, which will greatly increase their interest and motivation in learning. These findings are consistent with previous studies. Zhu (2023) found that through using materials that are closely related to students' lives or current hot issues, students' enthusiasm can be fully mobilized. Teachers can also integrate knowledge points into cases, guide students in analyzing and exploring the cases, and make it easier for students to acquire knowledge. Ding (2024) study demonstrates that abstract and single knowledge can only be taught to students, and it cannot achieve the goal of high-quality teaching. Teachers should create a certain learning space for students, reasonably create learning situations based on relevant question content, and connect knowledge with students' daily lives, so as to attract students' attention and lead them to understand the knowledge. And Wang

(2024) also found that the inquiry method uses students' life experiences as reference material. Through the guidance of a teacher, students can more easily understand the inquiry questions, thereby stimulating students' interest and enthusiasm in learning.

## 2) The Results of Part B: Engagement

The results of Part B of the questionnaire showed that the inquiry method successfully increased student engagement. The mean score of 4.37 (SD= 1.00) reflects the highest level of satisfaction, indicating that inquiry method stimulated student participation and significantly increased their overall satisfaction with the learning process. In this part, items 8 and 10 said, "The inquiry method could have more opportunity to interact to each other in the class and the steps of the inquiry method give me to explore more knowledge" received the highest mean score of 4.43 (item 8 SD = 0.97, item 10 SD = 0.90). In addition, the feedback from semi-structured interviews showed that the steps of the inquiry method were relevant to political course and the activities designed according to the inquiry method were highly engaging, which improved their learning thinking and made them more actively participate in classroom activities.

These results clearly show that reasonable inquiry steps and classroom interaction are critical to motivating student engagement. The inquiry method is designed based on political course textbooks, emphasizing the active participation of students. In each link of the inquiry, teachers leave enough time for them to explore on their own. In this process, students have more opportunities to cooperate and discuss problems with classmates and teachers, constantly improve their thinking, and enable them to participate in classroom activities more actively. These findings are consistent with previous studies. Wang (2015) found that that the design of the inquiry method should be based on student inquiry, linking the course content with students' individual experiences, and guiding students to think about problems that often occur in life. At the same time, with the encouragement of teachers, every student has the opportunity to fully participate. Through active participation, independent learning, and cooperative discussion, they can achieve self-experience and understanding of knowledge. Li (2021) also believed that the steps of inquiry method can stimulate students' curiosity, improve classroom participation, and

cultivate students' higher-order thinking ability. Han (2022) found that through the inquiry method, students can conduct group cooperative inquiry in class, discuss problems freely, learn in a relaxed classroom atmosphere, which can effectively improve students' learning efficiency.

### 3) The Results of Part C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning

The results of Part C of the questionnaire showed that the inquiry method successfully improved students' efficacy development in political course. The mean score of 4.39 (SD= 0.91), with the highest level of satisfaction, indicates that learners generally regarded the inquiry method as an efficient learning tool. Item 12 in the questionnaire, "The inquiry method could greatly reduce my burden of memorizing the key knowledge of political course" received a mean score of 4.43 (SD=0.90). In addition, the feedback from semi-structured interviews showed that the inquiry method improved their ability to analyze and solve problems, understanding and memory of knowledge, and the achievement test in political course.

These results clearly showed that inquiry method is particularly effective in helping students remember political course knowledge. The inquiry method encourages students to actively think and discover problems. In the process of finding answers and analyzing and discussing, students can have a deeper understanding of the concepts and principles of political courses and build new knowledge based on existing knowledge, rather than just mechanical memorization, which is essential for practical learning application. In addition, through repeated questioning and explanation, students' ability to analyze and solve problems is enhanced. These findings are consistent with previous studies. Wang (2024) who found that through inquiry, students had the ability to analyze problems independently and propose solutions. In addition, the inquiry method combines the knowledge learned with practical problems through activities such as solving problems and explaining doubts, thereby enhancing the understanding and mastery of knowledge and improving grades. And Sha (2024) found that using the inquiry method of teaching, students think and explore answers with questions, and then perceive, understand or construct knowledge in the process of discovering and analyzing

problems. The inquiry method enables students to become active participants in classroom teaching, verifying and deepening their understanding of problems in the process of participation, which can not only effectively cultivate students' ability to observe, analyze and solve problems, but also improve learning effects.

In conclusion, the inquiry method significantly improved Chinese students' learning achievement in political course through comparison of pre-test and post-test. In addition, students' satisfaction with inquiry method was the highest, the feedback from semi-structured interview also strongly supports the students' satisfaction, indicating that it successfully improved learning efficiency and provided a fun learning experience.

### **5.3 Recommendations of the Study**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

#### **5.3.1 Recommendation for Implementation**

1) The application of inquiry method to improve learning achievement of Grade 9 students in political course has proved beneficial. Through the five steps of engagement, exploration, explanation, elaboration and evaluation in the teaching process, students' ability to analyze and solve problems has been gradually strengthened. However, this study was limited to only four lessons. To collect more comprehensive data and achieve better learning outcomes, it is recommended that schools and educators extend the use of the inquiry method to political course in other schools.

2) Using the inquiry method in political course learning with Grade 9 students has successfully received positive feedback from learners. Therefore, we recommend that political teachers at all grade levels incorporate the inquiry method into their teaching to increase student engagement and motivation in learning political course.

3) Although the inquiry method is effective for learning achievement in political course, it is important to maintain classroom order. It is recommended that

political teachers grasp the time for inquiry, pay attention to the status and needs of students during the inquiry process, and thoughtfully incorporate the inquiry method to support instructional goals.

### 5.3.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Considering some limitations of this study, the researcher suggests the following for further research:

1) The study was conducted with a limited sample size of 30 ninth-grade Chinese students in public schools. To enhance the robustness and generalizability of our findings, future research should consider expanding the sample size, including students from various grades and schools across different regions in China, thereby ensuring the reliability and validity of our conclusions.

2) This study was limited to four topics from the political course textbook. However, in order to improve our understanding of political course, future research should include a variety of content from different courses to evaluate learning strategies in different contexts.

3) This study aimed to enhance students' learning achievement in political course. Future research could investigate the impact of inquiry method on learning habits, moral qualities, and legal awareness.

All details of this study have been presented. In conclusion, the use of inquiry method has a positive impact on students' political course learning. The inquiry method is very effective in improving students' learning interest, class participation, knowledge memory and problem solving. This teaching method has proven to be an excellent tool for political teachers and students in China. It can be effectively applied to political course teaching and other related fields.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**LESSON PLANS**

<b>Lesson Plan 1</b>		
<p><b>Subject:</b> politics</p> <p><b>Grade:</b> 9</p> <p><b>Class Strengths:</b> 30 students</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 90 minutes</p> <p><b>Learning Content:</b> Participate in the life of a democracy</p> <p><b>Teaching Strategy:</b> inquiry method</p> <p><b>Teaching preparation:</b> 9th grade textbook, 9th grade exercise book, projector, electronic whiteboard, USB flash drive, pen and whiteboard eraser</p> <p><b>Lesson Objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Students express the concept of democratic life, the ways and requirements for exercising democratic rights.</li> <li>2) Students use relevant knowledge of democratic life to analyze and solve practical problems.</li> <li>3) Students enhance their awareness of democracy.</li> </ol>		
<b>Lesson Steps</b>	<b>Teacher/Students' Activity(s)</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Engagement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher uses multimedia to show the video of democratic life. Then, bring into the situation, so that students can intuitively feel the democratic life in the multimedia. And asked students to actively share their democratic lives.</li> <li>2. Students voluntarily share the democratic life in which they participate, arousing their emotional experiences.</li> </ol>	10 minutes
<b>Exploration</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The teacher uses multimedia to display examples about Chinese citizens being elected as deputies to the National People's Congress, citizens attending hearings in urban areas, citizens calling the government hotline to report illegal acts and ask the questions.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What are the ways for citizens to exercise their democratic rights?</li> <li>2) Why should we enhance citizens' democratic awareness?</li> <li>3) What are the requirements for citizens to participate in democratic life?</li> <li>4) How should students enhance their democratic awareness?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	15 minutes

Lesson Steps	Teacher/Students' Activity(s)	Time
	<p>2. The teacher divided the students into five groups and six each group.</p> <p>3. Students will make a group inquiry plan and draw a form with the above inquiry questions by hand, leaving areas for answering them. Combine the examples and questions given by the teacher to make guesses and verify.</p>	
<b>Explanation</b>	<p>1. Each group member first explains their own guesses about the inquiry questions. After consulting relevant materials and textbooks, think, explain and discuss again. The solution to the problem can be explained from the following two points.</p> <p>1) Does your answer make sense? Give examples or give reasons or basis for your answer.</p> <p>2) Can other questions relate to democratic life be explained in this way? Give reasons.</p> <p>2. The teacher supervises the direction of student inquiry during the process of students explanation to prevent deviation. At the same time, the teacher provides assistance and guidance to students when they need it.</p>	15 minutes
<b>Elaboration</b>	1. The groups work together and write down the group's research results and explanations on hand-drawn tables.	10 minutes
	2. Each group selects a representative, who will present the results orally to the class.	15 minutes
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>1. Students supplement and evaluate the results shared by other groups.</p> <p>2. The teacher interrupts at any time to ask questions and help students improve the unmentioned content. And guide students to translate these answers into concrete concepts of democratic life.</p>	10 minutes

Lesson Steps	Teacher/Students' Activity(s)	Time
	<p>3. The teacher evaluates and reflects on the teaching process of this lesson. Use multimedia to present final answers to inquiry questions and related concepts of democratic life. Students take notes in their textbooks.</p> <p>4. Arrange after-class exercises to consolidate knowledge content.</p>	15 minutes



<b>Lesson Plan 2</b>		
<p><b>Subject:</b> politics</p> <p><b>Grade:</b> 9</p> <p><b>Class Strengths:</b> 30 students</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 90 minutes</p> <p><b>Learning Content:</b> Build a home for life together</p> <p><b>Teaching Strategy:</b> inquiry method</p> <p><b>Teaching preparation:</b> 9th grade textbook, 9th grade exercise book, projector, electronic whiteboard, USB flash drive, pen and whiteboard eraser</p> <p><b>Lesson Objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Students express the reasons and ways of building a home for life together.</li> <li>2) Students use relevant knowledge of the building a home for life together to analyze and solve practical problems.</li> <li>3) Students enhance their respect for nature and develop a low-carbon and environmentally friendly lifestyle.</li> </ol>		
<b>Lesson Steps</b>	<b>Teacher/Students' Activity(s)</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Engagement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher uses multimedia to show the video of build a home for life together. Then, bring into the situation, so that students can intuitively feel a scene of harmonious coexistence between man and nature in the multimedia. And asked students to participate in sharing stories about the harmonious coexistence between man and nature that they have seen in their lives.</li> <li>2. Students voluntarily share the harmonious coexistence between man and nature that they have seen in their lives, arousing their emotional experiences.</li> </ol>	10 minutes
<b>Exploration</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The teacher uses multimedia to display examples about overexploitation of groundwater leads to land subsidence, deforestation leads to desertification, a severe smog event occurred in 1952 London and ask the questions.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Why insist on the harmonious coexistence of man and nature?</li> <li>2) How to achieve harmonious coexistence between man and nature?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	15 minutes

Lesson Steps	Teacher/Students' Activity(s)	Time
	<p>3) How to adhere to the path of green development?</p> <p>4) How should students enhance their awareness of low-carbon and environmental protection?</p> <p>2. The teacher divided the students into five groups and six each group.</p> <p>3. Students will make a group inquiry plan and draw a form with the above inquiry questions by hand, leaving areas for answering them. Combine the examples and questions given by the teacher to make guesses and verify.</p>	
<b>Explanation</b>	<p>1. Each group member first explains their own guesses about the inquiry questions. After consulting relevant materials and textbooks, think, explain and discuss again. The solution to the problem can be explained from the following two points.</p> <p>1) Does your answer make sense? Give examples or give reasons or basis for your answer.</p> <p>2) Can other questions relate to human and nature be explained in this way? Give reasons.</p> <p>2. The teacher supervises the direction of student inquiry during the process of students explanation to prevent deviation. At the same time, the teacher provides assistance and guidance to students when they need it.</p>	15 minutes
<b>Elaboration</b>	1. The groups work together and write down the group's research results and explanations on hand-drawn tables.	10 minutes
	2. Each group selects a representative, who will present the results orally to the class.	15 minutes
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>1. Students supplement and evaluate the results shared by other groups.</p> <p>2. The teacher interrupts at any time to ask questions and help students improve the unmentioned content. And guide students to translate these answers into concrete concepts of build a home for life together.</p>	10 minutes

Lesson Steps	Teacher/Students' Activity(s)	Time
	<p>3. The teacher evaluates and reflects on the teaching process of this lesson. Use multimedia to present final answers to inquiry questions and related concepts of build a home for life together. Students take notes in their textbooks.</p> <p>4. Arrange after-class exercises to consolidate knowledge content.</p>	15 minutes



<b>Lesson Plan 3</b>		
<p><b>Subject:</b> politics</p> <p><b>Grade:</b> 9</p> <p><b>Class Strengths:</b> 30 students</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 90 minutes</p> <p><b>Learning Content:</b> Open and interactive world</p> <p><b>Teaching Strategy:</b> inquiry method</p> <p><b>Teaching preparation:</b> 9th grade textbook, 9th grade exercise book, projector, electronic whiteboard, USB flash drive, pen and whiteboard eraser</p> <p><b>Lesson Objectives:</b></p> <p>1) Students express the characteristics of today's world and manifestations of economic globalization.</p> <p>2) Students use relevant knowledge of the open and interactive world to analyze and solve practical problems.</p> <p>3) Students enhance their open and inclusive mentality to face economic globalization.</p>		
<b>Lesson Steps</b>	<b>Teacher/Students' Activity(s)</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Engagement</b>	<p>1. Teacher uses multimedia to show the video of open and interactive world. Then, bring into the situation, so that students can intuitively feel the close economic and trade cooperation between countries in the multimedia. And asked students to share their knowledge of close cooperation between countries.</p> <p>2. Students voluntarily share the cases of close cooperation and exchanges between countries, arousing their emotional experiences.</p>	10 minutes
<b>Exploration</b>	<p>1. The teacher uses multimedia to display examples about World Import Expo trade data, a pair of shoes travel (German product design - Chinese production design - Southeast Asia provides power - the shoes are shipped to Saudi Arabia on a cargo ship in the United States) and ask the questions.</p> <p>1) What are the characteristics of today's world?</p> <p>2) What are the important manifestations of economic globalization?</p> <p>3) What is the impact of economic globalization?</p> <p>4) How should we face economic globalization?</p>	15 minutes

Lesson Steps	Teacher/Students' Activity(s)	Time
	<p>2. The teacher divided the students into five groups and six each group.</p> <p>3. Students will make a group inquiry plan and draw a form with the above inquiry questions by hand, leaving areas for answering them. Combine the examples and questions given by the teacher to make guesses and verify.</p>	
<b>Explanation</b>	<p>1. Each group member first explains their own guesses about the inquiry questions. After consulting relevant materials and textbooks, think, explain and discuss again. The solution to the problem can be explained from the following two points.</p> <p>1) Does your answer make sense? Give examples or give reasons or basis for your answer.</p> <p>2) Can other global questions be explained in this way? Give reasons.</p> <p>2. The teacher supervises the direction of student inquiry during the process of students explanation to prevent deviation. At the same time, the teacher provides assistance and guidance to students when they need it.</p>	15 minutes
<b>Elaboration</b>	1. The groups work together and write down the group's research results and explanations on hand-drawn tables.	10 minutes
	2. Each group selects a representative, who will present the results orally to the class.	15 minutes
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>3. Students supplement and evaluate the results shared by other groups.</p> <p>4. The teacher interrupts at any time to ask questions and help students improve the unmentioned content. And guide students to translate these answers into concrete concepts of open and interactive world.</p>	10 minutes
	<p>3. The teacher evaluates and reflects on the teaching process of this lesson. Use multimedia to present final answers to inquiry questions and related concepts of open and interactive world. Students take notes in their textbooks.</p> <p>4. Arrange after-class exercises to consolidate knowledge content.</p>	15 minutes

<b>Lesson Plan 4</b>		
<p><b>Subject:</b> politics</p> <p><b>Grade:</b> 9</p> <p><b>Class Strengths:</b> 30 students</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 90 minutes</p> <p><b>Learning Content:</b> Seek common interests and common development</p> <p><b>Teaching Strategy:</b> inquiry method</p> <p><b>Teaching preparation:</b> 9th grade textbook, 9th grade exercise book, projector, electronic whiteboard, USB flash drive, pen and whiteboard eraser</p> <p><b>Lesson Objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Students express the reasons and requirements for building a community with a shared future for mankind.</li> <li>2) Students use relevant knowledge of the seek common interests and common development to analyze and solve practical problems.</li> <li>3) Students enhance their global awareness and establish a view of common interests and values of shared responsibility.</li> </ol>		
<b>Lesson Steps</b>	<b>Teacher/Students' Activity(s)</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Engagement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher uses multimedia to show the video of seek common interests and common development. Then, bring into the situation, so that students can intuitively feel the global issues in the multimedia. And asked students to share what they know about common global issues.</li> <li>2. Students voluntarily share the global issues, arousing their emotional experiences.</li> </ol>	10 minutes
<b>Exploration</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The teacher uses multimedia to display examples about the gap between rich and poor, regional hot spots, terrorism, cyber security, major infectious diseases, climate change, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and ask the questions.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What is the connotation of a community with a shared future for mankind?</li> <li>2) Why build a community with a shared future for mankind?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	15 minutes

Lesson Steps	Teacher/Students' Activity(s)	Time
	<p>3) How to build a community with a shared future for mankind? (described from the national and personal perspectives respectively)</p> <p>2. The teacher divided the students into five groups and six each group.</p> <p>3. Students will make a group inquiry plan and draw a form with the above inquiry questions by hand, leaving areas for answering them. Combine the examples and questions given by the teacher to make guesses and verify.</p>	
<b>Explanation</b>	<p>1. Each group member first explains their own guesses about the inquiry questions. After consulting relevant materials and textbooks, think, explain and discuss again. The solution to the problem can be explained from the following two points.</p> <p>1) Does your answer make sense? Give examples or give reasons or basis for your answer.</p> <p>2) Can other questions relate to the seek common interests and common development in this way? Give reasons.</p> <p>2. The teacher supervises the direction of student inquiry during the process of students explanation to prevent deviation. At the same time, the teacher provides assistance and guidance to students when they need it.</p>	15 minutes
<b>Elaboration</b>	<p>1. The groups work together and write down the group's research results and explanations on hand-drawn tables.</p> <p>2. Each group selects a representative, who will present the results orally to the class.</p>	10 minutes 15 minutes
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>1. Students supplement and evaluate the results shared by other groups.</p> <p>2. The teacher interrupts at any time to ask questions and help students improve the unmentioned content. And guide students to translate these answers into concrete concepts of seek common interests and common development.</p>	10 minutes

Lesson Steps	Teacher/Students' Activity(s)	Time
	3. The teacher evaluates and reflects on the teaching process of this lesson. Use multimedia to present final answers to inquiry questions and related concepts of seek common interests and common development. Students take notes in their textbooks. 4. Arrange after-class exercises to consolidate knowledge content.	15 minutes





**The Achievement Test**  
**Subject: political course**  
**Total score: 40 Marks**  
**Test time: 90 minutes**

**Student Name:** .....

**Explanation:** The test there are three parts. part 1 multiple choice questions, there are 20 questions 20 marks. part 2 short answer questions, there are 5 questions 10 marks. part 3 material analysis questions, there are 5 questions 10 marks.

**Part 1**

**Suggestion:** Please choose a correct answer. Each of the following questions has A, B, C, D four alternative answers. (20 marks)

1. The village committee of a certain village regularly displays the distribution of various subsidy funds that farmers are most concerned about on the "Village Committee Information Disclosure Column" for farmers to check, allowing farmers to supervise the work of the village committee. What is the way that the village committee discloses information and accepts villagers' participation in supervision called?

- A. Participation in and deliberation of state affairs      B. Democratic consultation  
 C. Democratic supervision      D. Democratic participation

Answer;...C...

2. Democratic elections are an important form for people to realize their democratic rights. What are the principles to be followed in democratic elections?

- A. Proactive, impartial and extensive      B. Extensive, real, and effective  
 C. Positive, proactive and rational      D. Open, fair and impartial

Answer;...D...

3. From the picture on the right, what is the action of the people?

- A. Actively participate in democratic life
- B. Correctly exercise cultural rights
- C. Participate in economic development
- D. Decide on major national issues



Answer;...A...

4. Which of the following is incorrect expressions of "civic participation"?

- A. Zhang called the hotline of the county magistrate to reflect the problem of noise disturbance at the construction site - democratic supervision
- B. Voters elected Zhao as a deputy to the National People's Congress -- democratic election
- C. Yang put forward suggestions on the draft of the city's "14th Five-Year Plan" -- democratic decision-making
- D. Wang participated in the hearing on the level price of residential electricity -- democratic supervision

Answer;...D...

5. On May 28, 2020, the third session of the 13th National People's Congress voted to adopt the Civil Code of the People's Republic of China. During the compilation process, the Civil Code was publicly solicited 10 times and received 1.02 million suggestions from 425,000 people. What message does the above material convey?

- A. The democratic consciousness of our citizens has been greatly enhanced and improved
- B. The system of people's Congress is a basic political system in our country
- C. The procedure for making and amending the civil code is the strictest among all laws
- D. Democratic supervision is the special form of socialist democratic politics in our country

Answer;...A...

6. What is the wise choice humans make in the face of ecological crisis?

- A. Wantonly overtaking nature      B. Pursuing harmonious coexistence between man and nature  
C. Just blindly asking for nature      D. Ignoring and destroying the environment

Answer;...B...

7. My country has made a commitment to "strive to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060." What is Fulfill promises requires?

- A. Solve the problem of resource shortage  
B. Adhere to energy conservation and emission reduction as the focus of all work  
C. Enterprises do not assume responsibility  
D. Adhere to the path of green development

Answer;...D...

8. A certain community distributes garbage classification brochures to residents, uses waste materials to make garbage classification models, and learns garbage classification methods... What are the benefits of these activities?

- A. Reduce the generation of harmful waste and completely change the environment  
B. Achieve garbage recycling and avoid all pollution  
C. Promote green and low-carbon development and build ecological civilization  
D. Man and nature coexist harmoniously and develop resources at will

Answer;...C...

9. What is the correct understanding of the cartoon "Penny Wise, Pound Foolish"?

- A. Environmental protection cannot be carried out at the expense of economic development.

- B. Focus on economic construction and put environmental protection in a prominent position

- C. Environmental protection is more important than economic construction

- D. Economic construction is more important than environmental protection

Answer;...B...



10. The northward migration of wild Asian elephants in Yunnan has attracted wide attention. Various departments and people in Yunnan have taken a number of measures to escort elephants along the way to minimize the disturbance of the target groups. What message do the above measures convey?

- ① Indicates that my country's ecological environment has been fundamentally improved
- ② Adhere to the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature
- ③ Improving my country's ecological protection system
- ④ Is of great significance to maintaining biological diversity

A. ①②    B. ①③    C. ③④    D. ②④

Answer;...D...

11. On March 30, 2023, the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2023 was held in Hainan. What are the characteristics of today's world reflected in the theme of "An Uncertain World: Solidarity and cooperation to meet challenges, openness and inclusiveness for Development"?

- A. Chaos, instability, uncertainty
- B. Closure, decline, isolation
- C. Openness, development, close ties
- D. Conflict, cold War, confrontation

Answer;...C...

12. At present, new technologies, new economies and new forms of business continue to emerge and flourish, and the world is going through a new round of major changes and adjustments in development. Which of the following world characteristics fits the material?

- A. It's an open world
- B. It's a developing world
- C. It's a close-knit world
- D. This is a colorful world

Answer;...B...

13. News: On the morning of May 24, 2023, a China-Europe (Central Asia) train consisting of 50 carriages loaded with auto parts, manufacturing machinery and other goods left Houma, Shanxi, China, bound for Central Asian countries. Economic and trade cooperation between China's Shanxi Province and Central Asian countries continues to deepen. Which of the following is the theme reflected in this news?

- A. Economic globalization
- B. World multipolarization
- C. Cultural diversity
- D. Information socialization

Answer;...A...

14. The brand wine produced in one country is jointly created by a certain country, Italy, Portugal and other countries; Brand washing machines made in one country are sold all over the world. What message does the material convey?

- ① The production of goods is done on a global scale
  - ② Risks and crises cross borders
  - ③ Commodity trade is carried out on a global scale
  - ④ International business competition is becoming increasingly fierce
- A. ①②    B. ①③    C. ②④    D. ③④

Answer;...B...

15. According to the World Bank, the share of world trade in goods in global GDP has been increasing in recent years. Some predict that by 2050, world trade will account for 50% of global GDP, and world trade activities will be more frequent. What message does the material convey?

- ① The trend of economic globalization is irreversible
  - ② All countries are based on export-oriented economy
  - ③ The economic structure of countries converges
  - ④ The economies of countries are becoming more and more closely linked
- A. ①②    B. ①③    C. ①④    D. ③④

Answer;...C...

16. In 2022, the global COVID-19 epidemic is repeated, geopolitical tensions are tense, and multiple crises such as food and energy are superimposed. What do countries around the world need to do to solve these problems?

- ① Act together, bear together
  - ② help each other, share fate with each other
  - ③ seek advantage and avoid harm, keep oneself alone
  - ④ Be good with neighbors, only speak dedication
- A. ①②    B. ①③    C. ②③    D. ③④

Answer;...A...

17. In March 2023, China, Saudi Arabia and Iran signed and issued a joint statement announcing that Saudi Arabia and Iran had agreed to restore diplomatic relations. The international community spoke highly of China's constructive role. What message does this event convey?

- A. Building a community with a shared future for mankind
- B. We will promote cultural diversity in the world
- C. Actively seek new economic growth point
- D. Leading the development of global rules

Answer;...A...

18. Which of the following is the correct approach to building a community with a shared future for mankind?

- A. Eliminate the difference
- B. Green Low carbon
- C. Exchange and mutual learning
- D. self-oriented

Answer;...C...

19. The market of jointly building the "Belt and Road" is enough to accommodate qualified enterprises from all countries to participate in it, so as to benefit people all over the world. What message does the material convey?

- A. Adhere to green and low-carbon, and build A clean and beautiful world
- B. We should adhere to dialogue and consultation to build a world of lasting peace
- C. We should strive for joint contribution and shared benefits to build a world of universal security
- D. Adhere to win-win cooperation and build a world of common prosperity

Answer;...D...

20. The following are two items from the "International Perspective" column of a school's Current Affairs newspaper:

News 1: In March 2023, the Chinese president solemnly proposed the Global Civilization Initiative at the High-level Dialogue between the Communist Party of China and World Political Parties.

News 2: Over the past decade, China has signed more than 200 cooperation documents on Belt and Road cooperation with 151 countries and 32 international organizations.

What information do the two news items convey?

- ① Actively promoting the building of a community of shared future for mankind in our country
- ② Countries strive to expand the convergence of interests
- ③ China actively cooperates with other countries in the world
- ④ All countries are actively involved in cooperation
- A.①②④    B.①②③    C.①③④    D.②③④

Answer;...B...

## Part 2

**Suggestion:** Please answers the questions. (10marks)

21. A new round of election meetings was held in a certain community, and the residents of the community actively participated in voting. What kind of participatory democratic lifestyle does this participation belong to?

Answer;...Democratic election (2 marks)...

22. A city held a hearing to adjust public transportation fares. What kind of participatory democratic lifestyle does this participation belong to?

Answer;...Democratic decision-making (2 marks)...

23. A classmate reported to relevant departments that an illegally operated internet cafe near the school had affected the study and physical and mental health of many students. What kind of participatory democratic lifestyle does this participation belong to?

Answer;...Democratic supervision (2 marks) ...

24. What are the manifestations of economic globalization?

Answer;...The production of goods on a global scale (or the globalization of production) (1 mark); Trade in goods on a global scale (or globalization of trade) (1 mark)...

25. What are the characteristics of today's world?

Answer;...It's an open world, it's a developing world, it's a connected world. (2 marks)...

### Part 3

**Suggestion:** Please read and analyze the materials and answer the questions. (10 marks)

**Material 1:** A city government work report: We should strengthen the construction of ecological civilization, pay attention to the protection of the ecological environment, and create a blue sky and clean water living environment. Implement the strictest management of water resources, intensify and accelerate the pollution control of rivers and lakes in the city, and comprehensively promote the construction of water ecology; Do a good job of covering the whole city's greening and build a "green city and ecological city"; We will strictly observe the red line for the protection of cultivated land and complete the demarcation of permanent basic farmland.

26. What kind of basic national policy and persistent strategy does Material 1 reflect?

Answer;...① Basic national policies for conserving resources and protecting the environment (1 mark); ② Sustainable Development strategy (1 mark)...

27. According to material 1, what development concept must China adhere to in order to achieve sustainable development?

Answer;...We will pursue innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development. (2 marks) ...

28. What are you going to do to build an ecological civilization as a teenager?

Answer;...① Young people should establish ecological consciousness and sustainable development concept; ② Actively publicize the importance of ecological construction and basic national policies; ③ Start from the little things around you and cultivate the habit of protecting the ecological environment; ④ Fight against acts that destroy ecological construction. (2 marks; Writing any of the above four answer can be given 2 marks. In addition, around the ecological environment, the conservation of resources, low-carbon development and other aspects of the answers, reasonable expression can also give 2 marks)...

**Material 2:** Building a community with a shared future for mankind is an inevitable choice for all countries to address global issues. On 10 November 2020, at the 20th meeting of the Council of Heads of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation

Organisation (SCO), the Chinese President stressed that the SCO should carry forward the Shanghai Spirit, strengthen cooperation, maintain stability, deepen cooperation and work together for joint development.

29. What kind of concept does Material 2 embody?

Answer;...Vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind. (2 marks) ...

30. Why should we build a community with a shared future for mankind?

Answer;...① In today's world, countries are more interconnected and interdependent than ever before; ② Mankind faces many common challenges, and no country can meet them alone; ③ Building a community with a shared future for mankind should become an inevitable choice for all countries to address global issues; ④ Mankind has only one earth, and all countries share one world. (2 marks; Writing any of the above four answer can give 2 marks)...





**APPENDIX C**

**STUDENTS' SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE**

### Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires

Mark your level of opinion from 1-5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree) against each statement. The description of each scale 1-5 is as shown in the table below.

Scale						
Strongly Disagree (SD)-1 Disagree (D)-2 Neutral (N)-3 Agree (A)-4 Strongly Agree (SA)-5						
NO.	Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
<b>PART A: INTEREST &amp; MOTIVATION</b>						
1	Using inquiry method to learn politics course was interesting.					
2	I enjoyed the classroom atmosphere when using the inquiry method.					
3	Using the inquiry method helped me to develop my confidence in learning.					
4	The teacher well organized for teaching with the inquiry method.					
5	The methodology of inquiry method could motivate me to learn the politics course.					
<b>PART B: ENGAGEMENT</b>						
6	The activities engaged me in learning politics course.					
7	I was more willing to engage in the resources provided by the teacher.					
8	The inquiry method could have more opportunity to interact to each other in the class.					
9	I was willing to apply the inquiry method to learn in other topics.					
10	The steps of the inquiry method let me to explore more knowledge.					

NO.	Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
<b>PART C: EFFICACY OF INQUIRY METHOD ON STUDENT LEARNING</b>						
11	The inquiry method helped me to improve in learning achievement.					
12	The inquiry method could greatly reduce my burden of memorizing the key knowledge of political course.					
13	The strategies of inquiry teaching method were effective in learning.					
14	The inquiry method could improve my ability to analyze and solve the problems.					
15	Using inquiry method could enable me to deeper understanding the content of the topic.					





**APPENDIX D**

**SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

### Semi-Structured Interviews Outline

This interview was conducted for the purpose of this study only, the privacy and confidentiality of the participants was ensured during the interview, and ethical principles were followed. Respondent responses will be recorded during the interview without possible risk.

Part	No.	Semi-structured interview outline
<b>A: Interest &amp; motivation</b>	1	Was the inquiry method interesting or motivating to learn more?
	2	What are the important things about inquiry methods that make you more interested or motivated to learn in class?
<b>B: Engagement</b>	3	What are the reasons that make you would like to engage in the class?
	4	Were the teaching steps of the inquiry method and the political course related or not?
<b>C: Efficacy of inquiry method on student learning</b>	5	Does the use of inquiry method teaching make you learn better? Why?
	6	How did you feel about the overall teaching using the inquiry method?

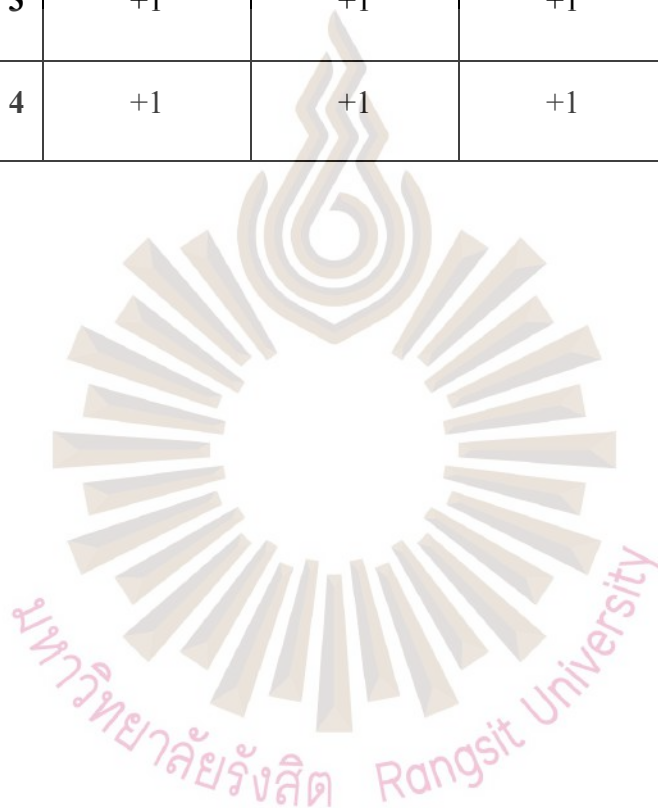


**APPENDIX E**

**IOC OF LESSON PIANS**

มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต Rangsit University

<b>Item-Objective Congruence for Lesson Plans</b>				
<b>Item No</b>	<b>Expert 1</b>	<b>Expert 2</b>	<b>Expert 3</b>	<b>congruence</b>
<b>Lesson Plan 1</b>	+1	+1	+1	congruent
<b>Lesson Plan 2</b>	+1	+1	+1	congruent
<b>Lesson Plan 3</b>	+1	+1	+1	congruent
<b>Lesson Plan 4</b>	+1	+1	+1	congruent





Item-Objective Congruence for the learning achievement test					
Item Test	No.	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Congruence
<b>Part 1 Multiple Choice Questions</b>	1	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	2	+1	0	+1	congruent
	3	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	4	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	5	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	6	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	7	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	8	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	9	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	10	0	+1	+1	congruent
	11	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	12	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	13	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	14	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	15	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	16	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	17	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	18	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	19	+1	+1	0	congruent
	20	+1	+1	+1	congruent
<b>Part 2 Short Answer Questions</b>	21	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	22	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	23	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	24	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	25	+1	0	+1	congruent
<b>Part 3 Material Analysis Questions</b>	26	0	+1	+1	congruent
	27	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	28	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	29	+1	+1	+1	congruent
	30	+1	+1	+1	congruent
<b>Overall Average</b>	<b>0.94</b>				<b>congruent</b>

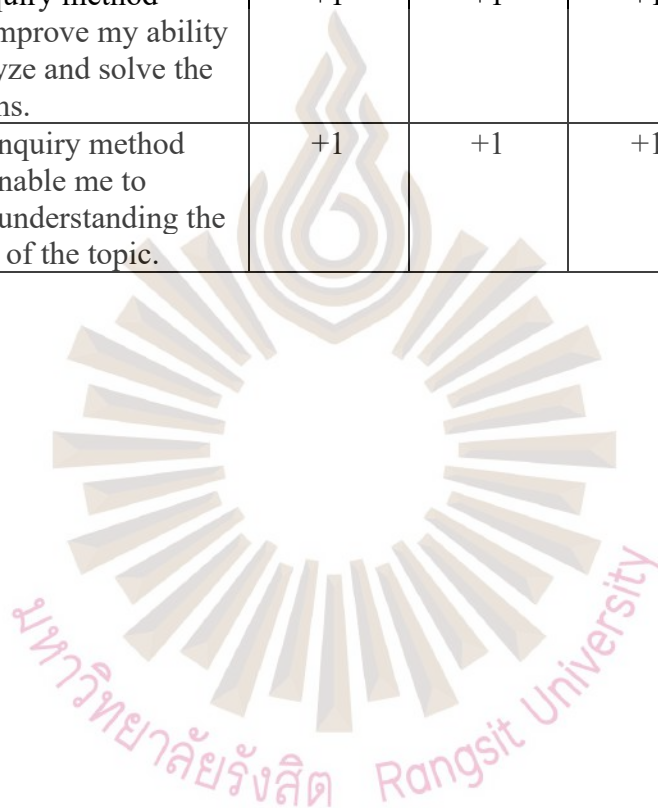


**APPENDIX G**

**IOC FOR STUDENTS' SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE**

<b>Item-Objective Congruence for Students' Satisfaction Questionnaires</b>					
<b>No</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Expert 1</b>	<b>Expert 2</b>	<b>Expert 3</b>	<b>Congruence</b>
<b>PART A: INTEREST &amp; MOTIVATION</b>					
1	Using inquiry method to learn politics course is interesting.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
2	I enjoy the classroom atmosphere when using the inquiry method.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
3	Using the inquiry method helps me to develop my confidence in learning.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
4	The teacher well organized for teaching with the inquiry method.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
5	The methodology of inquiry method could motivate me to learn the politics course.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
<b>PART B: ENGAGEMENT</b>					
6	The activities engaged me in learning politics course.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
7	I am more willing to engage in the resources provided by the teacher.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
8	The inquiry method could have more opportunity to interact to each other in the class.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
9	I am willing to apply the inquiry method to learn in other topics.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
10	The steps of the inquiry method give me to explore more knowledge.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
<b>PART C: EFFICACY OF INQUIRY METHOD ON STUDENT LEARNING</b>					
11	The inquiry method helped me to improve in learning achievement.	+1	+1	+1	congruent

No	Items	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Congruence
12	The inquiry method could greatly reduce my burden of memorizing the key knowledge of political course.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
13	The strategies of inquiry teaching method effective in learning.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
14	The inquiry method could improve my ability of analyze and solve the problems.	+1	+1	+1	congruent
15	Using inquiry method could enable me to deeper understanding the content of the topic.	+1	+1	+1	congruent





**APPENDIX H**

**IOC FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต Rangsit University

<b>Item-Objective Congruence for Semi-Structured Interview Outline</b>					
<b>No</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Expert 1</b>	<b>Expert 2</b>	<b>Expert 3</b>	<b>Congruence</b>
<b>PART A: INTEREST &amp; MOTIVATION</b>					
1	Was the inquiry method interesting or motivating to learn more?	+1	+1	+1	congruent
2	What are the important things about inquiry methods that make you more interested or motivated to learn in class?	+1	+1	+1	congruent
<b>PART B: ENGAGEMENT</b>					
3	What are the reasons that make you would like to engage in the class?	+1	+1	+1	congruent
4	Were the teaching steps of the inquiry method and the political course related or not?	+1	+1	+1	congruent
<b>PART C: EFFICACY OF INQUIRY METHOD ON STUDENT LEARNING</b>					
5	Does the use of inquiry method teaching make you learn better? Why?	+1	+1	+1	congruent
6	How did you feel about the overall teaching using the inquiry method?	+1	+1	+1	congruent



**APPENDIX I**

**LETTER OF APPROVAL**

มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต Rangsit University



### Certificate of Approval

#### Sanchahe NO.1 Middle School Administration Department

Subject: Approval of Data Collection for M.Ed. Thesis

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am currently enrolled in the master in Curriculum and Instruction at Rangsit University, Thailand. I am conducting research on the "The Development of Learning Achievement in Political Course Through Inquiry Method of Grade 9 Students in China". This research requires students' participation. The instruments involved pretest, posttest, student satisfaction questionnaire and semi-structured interview for obtaining the required data. Therefore, I would like to seek permission from the administration to allow me to collect data at this school where the names and identities of the students will be kept confidential and undisclosed.

Yours Sincerely,  
Li Hailun, Student

Thailand  
Rangsit University Thailand

Since the study requires data for analysis purposes, Li Hailun would collect data from this school and you are kindly requested to allow her to collect data with the following conditions:

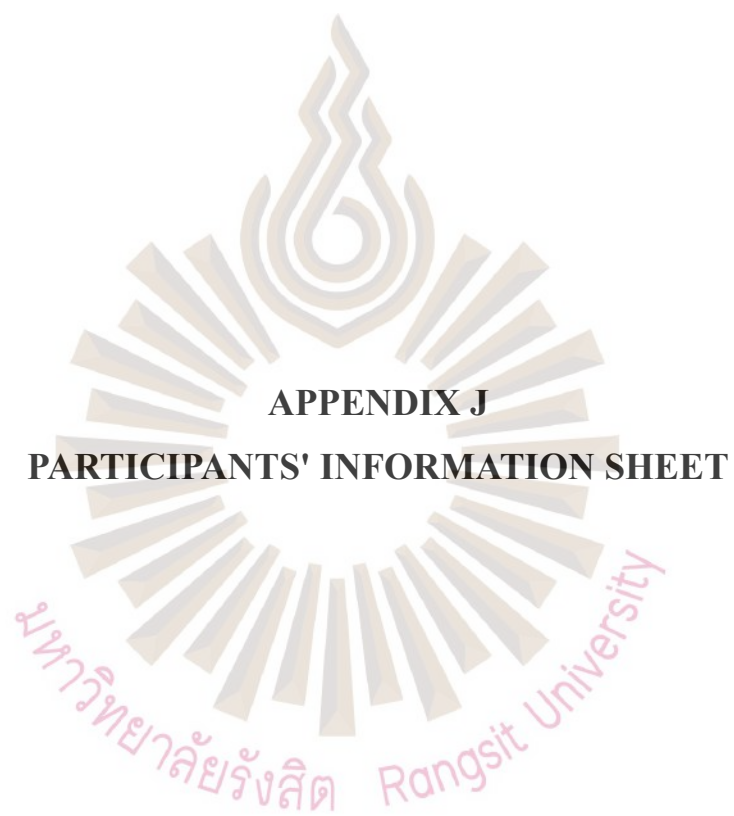
Providing research participants with information to make an informed decision as to whether to take part in research (informed consent)

Follow the prior mentioned document have been reviewed and approved by the administration of Sanchahe NO.1 Middle School.

Signature:  Date: .....

Sanchahe NO.1 Middle School Administration Department





**APPENDIX J**  
**PARTICIPANTS' INFORMATION SHEET**



### Participant's Legal Guardian Information Sheet

#### Dear Participant:

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Talk to others about the study if you wish.

**Research School:** Sanchahe NO.1 Middle School, Yunnan province, China.

**Name:** Li Hailun

**Student ID:** 6406000

**Studying University:** Suryadhep Teachers College of Rangsit University, Thailand

**Research Title:** The development of learning achievement in political course through inquiry method of grade 9 students in China

#### 1. What is the purpose of the study?

To compare grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course before and after using the inquiry method. To explore grade 9 Chinese students' satisfaction in political course towards the inquiry method.

#### 2. Expected results

There would be an improvement in grade 9 Chinese students' learning achievement in political course after the application of inquiry method.

There would grade 9 Chinese students be satisfied in political course towards learning with the application of inquiry method.

### 3. Outcome

The application of inquiry method will help enhance the learning achievement of grade 9 Chinese students in political course and students will have a positive satisfaction with the use of inquiry method in political course.

### 4. Number of participants in the study: 30 individuals

### 5. Research procedures

The researchers will collect data in four steps. First, the participants will be pretested. Second, the participants will be given political lessons using inquiry method. Third, a post-test will be administered after all the lessons have been given. Fourth, a questionnaire and semi-structured interview were given to the participants to investigate their satisfaction with using inquiry method in political course learning.

### 6. Duration

The research period will be 4 weeks, 8 sessions.

Week: class 1&2 (to be announced) Week: class 3&4 (to be announced)

Week: class 5&6 (to be announced) Week: class 7&8 (to be announced)

There is no possible risk in this research.

The school has asked students who have volunteered to participate to inform their parents and has obtained consent to volunteer for the research, and the data from the study are true and valid. The school also allow 30 students to assist her with her thesis research, either voluntarily or by voluntary experiments, by agreeing to (Li Hailun), who is enrolled at Rangsit University in Thailand to research her thesis.

Signature Li Hailun Date .....





**APPENDIX K**

**RELIABILITY OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

**Reliability Test Result of Achievement Test**

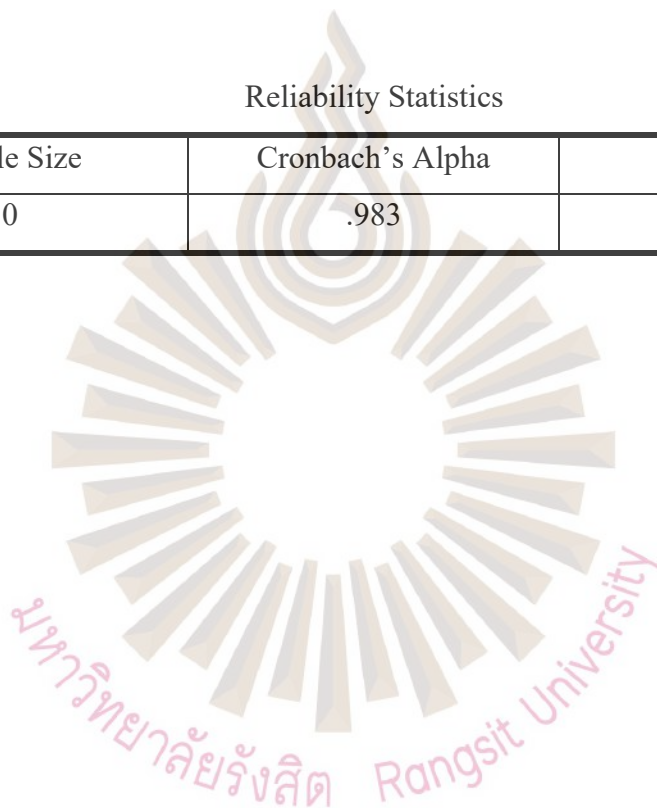
Reliability Statistics

KR-20	N of Items
.77166	20

**Reliability Test Result of Questionnaire**

Reliability Statistics

Sample Size	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
30	.983	15





### Paired Sample T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-Total	27.10	30	3.507	.640
	Post-Total	37.90	30	2.578	.471

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-Test - Post-Test	-10.80	2.657	.485	-11.792	-9.808	-22.260	29	.000



**APPENDIX M**

**EXPERTS WHO VALIDATED RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

NO.	Name	Position/Title	Institution
1	Expert 1	Lecturer	Honghe Agricultural Vocational College, China
2	Expert 2	Lecturer	Honghe University, China
3	Expert 3	Lecturer	Kunming University of Science and Technology, China



## BIOGRAPHY

Name	Li Hailun
Date of birth	January 11, 1995
Place of birth	Yunnan, China
Education background	Honghe University, China Bachelor of Law in International Politics, 2018 Rangsit University, Thailand Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, 2024
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