

# The New Position or Front of Network Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities

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**Abstract:** “Position or Front” is a term frequently used in the military field. It is an innovative breakthrough to extend this term’s meaning to study the new realms of online political and ideological education in universities. With the development of Internet technology, social networks are playing a protruding role among university students and it is of great importance to build the battlefield front of online political and ideological education in universities. It provides correct guidance for political and ideological education among university students. It is of great significance to protect university students from erosion by some detrimental western thoughts. As information technology makes progress, the Internet is to be an important front for political and ideological education in universities.

## 1. Introduction

With the development of information technology, smartphone-dominated mobile devices and information technology measures like social networks, electronic games and we-media are connecting the university students together. Mobile payment, mobile socializing, and mobile entertainment have taken up almost all of the extracurricular life of university students [23]. Traditional socializing fronts like saloons, reading parties, and student associations are abandoned by university students. They are moving to mobile games like Honor of Kings that have won wide popularity, mobile socializing software like Weibo and WeChat for socializing and entertainment. Mobile apps, WeChat and even live-streaming software have become the major instant messaging channels [6]. In the emerging trend of information networks, intrusion of harmful thoughts become prevalent, posing all-round and unpredictable threats to ideological and political education of university students. The major reason is that the fast development of information and network technology has diversified the information acquisition channels for Internet users and changed the front of online political and ideological education. If we forsake this front, the enemy will take advantage. We should not let the front undefended or unprotected, and should not give up this front which should have been taken up by ideological and political education to negative thoughts [13].

According to “China New Media Report (2018)” released by Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, as of 2017, WeChat users have exceeded 1 billion, and users of live-streaming software have exceeded 400 million and registered WeChat subscription accounts have been over 15 million. Users between 19 to 25 years old are over 65%, and university students have been the major force for information and network development, which has become an inevitable trend in this new era. It also poses new challenges to building, attack and defense of the front of online political and ideological education. Since 2017, children born after 2000 who are more active in thinking and have been derided as “spoiled brats” are starting their college life. This generation of kids are growing up with fast development of information and network technology in China, and they are posing new challenges to online political and ideological education in universities [7].

Since the 18<sup>th</sup> National Congress of CPC, the central government with President Xi as the focus have paid high attention to the front of political and ideological education and online publicity [24]. In “Opinions to strengthen and improve publicity of ideological education in universities in the new situation”, the central party committee proposes new requirements for ideological publicity in

universities. It emphasizes that universities, as the front of ideological education, should give full play to its role in online political and ideological education, promote all-round development of students, explore new channels for ideological and political education, keep up with the times and respond to the trend to control the front of Internet, and promote political and ideological education in universities through new measures [25]. It indicates that from the perspective of national strategies, Internet has become the major front of political and ideological education. To conquer and defend this front has become a major task for ideological and political education in universities, and also a serious challenge for teachers in universities. All people involved in political and ideological education in universities will face a tough situation.

Online ideological and political education refers to political and ideological education carried out through information and network technologies. Fast development of information and network technology has subverted the traditional education methods [1]. The term “front” which is frequently used in military affairs generally means the front of building defensive systems to defend enemies or attack targets [2]. When it is used in political and ideological education, it means the educational methods and channels that may give play to the educational role of teachers in ideological and political education.

## **2. Current Situation of Online Political and Ideological Education**

Political and ideological education does not fit seamlessly with information and Internet technology, and cannot claim the dominating role. As information and Internet technology moves towards the direction of big data and Internet +, new media including WeChat and Weibo crop up and become the new channels for university students to get access to new knowledge, new thoughts and emotional communication. It changes the life style of university students and becomes the main front of online ideological and political education [3]. Current methods for political and ideological education are still dominated by large class-teaching, spoon-feed lecturing and propaganda. As a result, many students play their mobile phones in classes related to political and ideological education and few listen to the teachers. Though PPT presentation has become the major method for teaching in classes, lack of instant interaction with phone-addicted students leads to lack of appeal to the students and hence receives weak results. It indicates the weak integration between Internet ideological and political education with information and Internet technology, which leads to lack of awareness of transfer of the main battlefields [4].

The content of online political and ideological education is outdated and has no timely updates. Advent of the era of Internet+ and we media suggests that university students are given more room and channels for free development, and related network technology platforms emphasize individual experience and individual correlation [21]. However, most current political and ideological education is carried out in a passive way, and on existing battlefields like instant messages and networks, the content is outdated, updates are slow and the communication efficiency is poor, the click rate is low, which in essence is still passive transmission. It does not have the speed and timeliness of content export of communication and ideological education; moreover, it reduces the university students' recognition of relevant knowledge [5]. Most universities have entered the stage of online education, but the transmitted content and knowledge lack creativity. They emphasize development of online platforms, but pays little attention to mobile media development, which results in waste of time and money.

The level of information technology for political and ideological education in universities is low. Given the current university students' attention to and dependence on online platforms, many universities have opened reclusive websites and forums, but they are mostly used for campus work management and campus life display, paying no attention to the fast development of mobile network technologies. Meanwhile, the number of modulus of political and ideological education in universities is small, let alone the mobile network platforms that have already had the largest advantages. It suggests the lack of awareness among universities to lead political and ideological education, deficiency in investment in this field and inefficient response to changes in the front [22].

### **3. New main front of online ideological and political education**

#### **3.1 to build the new main front of online ideological and political education in an all-round way**

As the main front of political and ideological education in universities moves from traditional media to information technology platforms, we must dig into the resources of campus we-media, improve campus online platforms, build influential, guiding and efficient educational network platforms that cover all types of information network devices. It is also necessary to sort all types of campus network resources, build specific political and ideological network platforms, provide featured programs on political and ideological education according to the students' characteristics, conquer the main front of political and ideological education in universities, and fully cover users of the mobile phones and PCs [17]. It is necessary to promote integration of traditional campus media like school journals and broadcast stations with new media like WeChat subscription accounts and live-streaming software. Universities should also build we-media platforms and boost upgrading of traditional campus media. Meanwhile, it is necessary to improve the online new media front of student organizations, and by making use of the organizational power of the party branch and league branch, create online party branch and league branch, create Weibo and WeChat accounts, WeChat groups and WeChat moments on five levels – university, school, grade, class, and student association. In doing so, universities can build an online new media interactive system where members in the organizations can rely on each other, share information, demonstrate personalities and learn from each other, and thus the influence of we-media can be improved.

When building the new media front for political and ideological education in universities, it is necessary to build, cultivate and rely on students, start from the actual conditions and combine the development characteristics of universities, and focus on the teacher-student demand, highlight the focuses, extract characteristics, create the online campus cultural brands, promote transformation of the system-building results to practical guidelines for political and ideological education in universities [10].

#### **3.2 To strengthen building a main force for online political and ideological education**

The subject to build online political and ideological education systems should recognize the importance of young students, promote integration of traditional educational resources with online information technology, create a main force for building the front of political and ideological education. To this end, it is necessary to improve the educational subjects' sense of online and mobile application [16]. First, we should invite experts, leading teachers and excellent alumni in the fields of humanities and social science, technology and Internet to build a think tank to provide creative strategies for this initiative, design effective frameworks, and improve the teachers' and student counsellors' quality in online political and ideological education. Besides, it is necessary to build a professional and high-level team of online commentators. First, they should take the top point of online political and ideological education, conquer the new front on platforms like Weibo and WeChat by creating hashtags, releasing authoritative information, guide public opinions and improve public sentiments. With joint efforts, they should improve the efficiency of online political and ideological education, guide public opinions and alleviate conflicts of ideas. Last, it is necessary to build a team with solid political stance, familiar with networks and strong responsibility, create a team of publicity members for the youth league, fight back negative thoughts or misinformation online, and prevent their transmission. In the meantime, they should advocate the mainstream thoughts on major online platforms, sing high the main melody of positive thoughts among university students and inject positive energy to their growth.

#### **3.3 To strengthen online political and ideological education among university students and reinforce the front**

University students are now the major audience for information technology platforms. As they still have not formed a mature system of values and lack discernment of information from these platforms, they are predisposed to be influenced by negative thoughts and fault remarks. Moreover,

due to the uniqueness of the universities they are in, some students even commit crimes about leakage of secret information, and news about online credit fraud and loan borrowing by nude pictures among university students keeps cropping up. Thus, universities should strengthen political and ideological education, use legitimate measures to guide students in using information technology, and safeguard the educational achievements [21].

First, universities should carry out campus online culture training, and by creating a new front for political and ideological education online, attack the negative thoughts actively. By using WeChat platforms and mobile apps, we can transmit information about socialism with Chinese characteristics by large quantity and on a regular basis, strengthen publicity of China Dream, guide university teachers and students to implement the core socialist values, enrich their cyber life and take the initiative in online political and ideological education.

Second, it is necessary to organize online volunteers among university students, strengthen mutual supervision of online remarks, interaction and socializing activities. Universities should promote volunteering activities to improve the online environment, and by instant interaction in educational activities, encourage the students to use proper language and have rational attitude when making comments online, create a rational, peaceful and ordered environment online, and fight back negative thoughts on networks and new media, and improve their quality online.

Last, universities should make use of the main front of political and ideological education to carry out extensive educational activities, and combine the theory of rule of law and moral education with online socializing, life, entertainment and study of university students. The major force of ideological and political education in universities should strengthen education in cyber safety and cyber rule of law, guide them to develop scientific, healthy and legitimate network-using habits, reduce their time spent on mobiles, and avoid crimes online. Universities should strengthen management of students' life and study, improve rules for access to the Internet, improve their ability to discern, avoid, criticize and fight back negative thoughts, harmful information and reactionary people online so that university students can realize self-education, self-discipline and self-protection by using Internet+ technology [23].

#### **4. Conclusion**

In this new era of fast development of information technology, the era of Internet + and Internet of Things, and the era when intelligent mobile devices have replaced fixed devices to access the Internet, it is urgent to find methods to innovate political and ideological education, take the initiative to guide public opinions on information platforms, and conquer the strategic highland of online political and ideological education. As the subject of online political and ideological education in universities, universities should integrate into the students' online life, make use of online we-media platforms to have firsthand experience of online culture, conquer the new front of political and ideological education, give full play to the new functions of online political and ideological education, grasp the main theme of education, promote development of education. They should also face the new opportunities and changes, realize that this is a new battlefield for political and ideological education online, build the information technology platform steadfastly and ensure the leading position of the main political and ideological thoughts on online information and network platforms.

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