

# Exploration of Innovation in University's Ideological Education

-A consideration based on media ecology synergy theory

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**Abstract**—The aim of the article is to explore the ideological education conducted in Chinese colleges and universities at present and search for new approaches to improve teaching effects. Using media ecology synergy theory for reference, the study also adopts the methods of theoretical interpretation, literature comparison, expert interview, etc. Our results suggest there is inconsistent phenomenon between traditional ways of ideological education and corresponding effects under new media environment, and it is beneficial to learn from media ecology synergy theory and focus on active engagement of the educated. The conclusions on innovation of university's ideological education cover three points: (1) adapt to media ecological evolution and change the educational idea; (2) improve the participation awareness of target audience and alter the educational methods; (3) implement multi-dimensional innovative strategies and optimize the effects of university's ideological education.

**Keywords**—*media ecology, co-evolution, university's ideological education, audience participation*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Broadly speaking, co-evolution is everywhere in natural environment. It refers to mutual transmission of numerous species in evolutionary process. The evolution of one species is likely to change the interaction of multi-species, leading to corresponding evolution of them through variation or selection. Co-evolution puts forth enlightenment of methodology about many significant systems in social and natural world. It is not about "mutual cooperation", but rather the main axis of "collaborative innovation evolution" which covers two layers, namely, innovation of biology in self-structure development and innovation of biology involvement in optimizing natural environment. [1] Media ecology also shows the trend of co-evolution. Continuous development of various new media regarding Internet media as platform leads to apparent changes in the interaction between transmitter and audience, as well as great enhancement of audience's initiatives. Similar to ecological environment of the media, university's ideological education is confronting the impact from media transformation too.

Channels through which contemporary college students receive information present real-time, diversified and interactive features. If we disregard these changes in ideological education, it is very difficult to achieve the desired educational results. Especially in new media era following the rise of Internet, educators attach more and more attention to principal role of the educated in university's ideological education. The co-evolution of media ecology is of great significance to understand the audience participation awareness in ideological transmission and explore innovative approaches for college education.

## II. ADAPT TO MEDIA ECOLOGICAL EVOLUTION AND CHANGE THE IDEA OF UNIVERSITY'S IDEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

As media ecology underwent several revolutionary changes in the story of human communication, the relationship between communicator and audience also changed accordingly, the mode and capacity of transmission were greatly improved. From the perspective of ecology, communicators are bound to be in constant evolution. As information receiver, the audience is not totally passive during the process, but co-evolves with communicators to fit these changes and innovate. In the light of communication studies, university's ideological education, as a kind of social activity spreading ideas and values, is also an information communication process in essence. The educated people are the audience of communication activity, as well as the destination where educators carry out ideological education. The educated people play a decisive role in the effect of university's ideological education. Development of communication technology has certain functions in changing the position and frequency of interaction of communicators and audience in ideological education system. "New media technology is considered more potential in promoting interaction between both sides". [2] Thus, new media form can make the educated of university's ideological education participate in reflection actively and even information communication, rather than passive information receiving. Educational techniques and communication capacity of the

educated are improved through media form transformation in ideological education, which injects new vitality to educational methods. Meanwhile, from accommodation of media form changes earlier to active participation in communication later, the educated can not only obtain information, but realize innovation with the characteristics of new media to construct totally new ideological education mode. This is the embodiment of collaborative innovation evolution theory of media ecology in university's ideological education.

The university's ideological education should fit the evolution of media ecology and transform education ideas. Both the educator and the educated not only require mutual adaptation and coordination, but also influence and restrict each other, promoting the reform of educational media commonly. Improvement of media technology, enhancement of educator's capacity in communicating ideas and educated people's participation awareness are the key points of co-evolution in university's ideological education and powerful force in raising ideological educational effect.

### III. RAISE PARTICIPATION AWARENESS OF THE AUDIENCE AND TRANSFORM THE MODE OF UNIVERSITIES IDEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The media ecology co-evolution theory has important enlightenment on reconstructing the ideas of university's ideological education, studying the relationship between communicator and audience in such education system and building new educational mode.

#### A. *Audience participation degree is positively correlated with the effect of university's ideological education*

Based on the viewpoint of systematic theory, media ecology co-evolution theory highlights the interdependency of systems, stressing the importance of transmission capacity that influences and correlates with each other, and effect of individual transition on the whole system environment, rather than individuals. Practice shows that the communication of ideas will be in trouble if educators think little of feeling and feedback of the audience. Destination of information is an essential link in transmission system. The audience's feedback is of great significance to communicators, which can help them understand the audience's demands and adjust relevant methods and contents specifically. During the process of university's ideological education, the role of audience can alter when receiving information and their involvement of information communication will have certain significance in maintaining communication system. The audience participation can test the quality of ideological spreading effect and set up new topics, which will be beneficial for educators to monitor the environment. The process of university's ideological education is closely linked as a whole, and it is indispensable for the audience to receive and analyze information actively and give objective feedback during the entire education process. The above contents are enough to prove that audience participation degree is positively correlated with the effect of university's ideological education.

#### B. *Audience participation is the embodiment of intersubjectivity in universities ideological education system*

In the 20th-century history of western philosophy, the inter-subjectivity thinking idea formed gradually after Husserl, Heidegger and Habermas corrected subjective thinking of Descartes. There are two main aspects of the connotation of inter-subjectivity theory: one is to acknowledge the difference and diversity among subjects; the other is to narrow the difference and realize the unity through mutual communication. In new media context, the desire and demand of both educator and receiver are more and more intense in mutual communication. Just as what McLuhan said, the overall trend of modern communication is the participation of moving process, not comprehension of ideas. [3] The so-called process participation here refers to the interaction and collision of educator and receiver, that is, inter-subjectivity, co-presence relationship between subjects. "On the one hand, media's selection and report about objective fact can affect or even control the audience's cognition; on the other hand, subjective cognitive activities of the audience will also influence the features of media information selected and accepted. Objective facts, media reality and psychological reality are intertwined and interact [4]. The formation of inter-subjectivity makes the audience and educators remain in interactional relationship during university's ideological education. In this way, not only ideological educators can influence the audience, but the audience may impact educational behaviors from various sources. The university's ideological education is a kind of interactive communication relationship between educators and audience, as well as interdependence among subjects.

### IV. IMPLEMENT MULTI-DIMENSIONAL INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES AND OPTIMIZE THE EFFECTS OF UNIVERSITY'S IDEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

#### A. *Focus on cooperative innovation of ideological education*

The media ecology co-evolution theory puts forward that there are inevitable interactive connections between different components of the system, a change of any part may, more or less, sooner or later influence others. For this purpose, university's ideological education needs to highlight the coordination of all aspects such as rules of ideological education, tertiary education, communications in new media era; both intramural and external-campus resources; theoretical and pedagogic discourse of ideology; relationship between communicator and audience, only in this way, can some phenomena of poor coordination currently existing in university's ideological education be changed. They include: poor and inadequate communication and coordination of functional departments in university's ideological education; lack of interaction of ideological education approaches and insufficient organic integration; absence of effective coordination in education contents, e.g. current ideological and political course, psychological health education course

and career planning course involving ideological education fail to support or communicate each other; unrealized organic coordination of various resources and channels in and around school.

#### *B. Focus on integrity innovation of ideological education*

Media ecology co-evolution theory regards that any of communication systems can be considered organic unity where various elements correlate and act upon each other. University's ideological education can not only help college students establish correct political view, but also concern life and psychological issues during the growth process. It is an educational process with integrity. The teaching methods and contents, even emotional attitude of both educator and the educated are factors that should be adopted into integral view for interaction. Furthermore, it is noted that integral thinking is required to handle the relationship between mainstream and non-mainstream ideological education, and the goal of mainstream ideological education can be accomplished in tertiary education process effectively. "It is the primary task of university's ideological education to guide college students to recognize the ideology of the Party and the county and let it be action orientation. The goal can't be achieved at all depending on college's own efforts, but needs joint forces of government, family and society." [5] In university's ideological education, we should focus on overall coordination and objectives to realize entire penetration of ideological education towards nationality, morality, ethics, WeChat, MicroBlog, family and social communication, as well as the integration with global culture, grass-rooted culture and elite culture.

#### *C. Focus on dynamic innovation of ideological education*

There are always variations between ecological system and the system, various elements inside the system. In the biological world, for creature with close relation, one party can become selective force of another one. When the defensive capability of preys is improved, predators should evolve accordingly, otherwise they will be eliminated. The dynamic variation also exists in social communication field. Therefore, based on media ecology co-evolution theory, university's ideological education require concern various trends of "de-ideologicalization". Under complicated ideological cultural environment, college students are in urgent need of dynamic thought to continuously improve explanatory, response and resolution capacity with mainstream ideology based on their dynamic ideological changes. Karl · Marx also admitted that ideology was dynamic superstructure and likely to evolve into thoughts with different characteristics depending on social productive

forces, different states and nations. Dynamic thoughts are inevitable requirement that any of rational Marxist needs to follow when mastering, innovating and inheriting mainstream ideology.

#### V. CONCLUSION

University's ideological education needs to fit the evolution of media ecology and transform educational ideas. Improvement of media technology, enhancement of educator's capacity in communicating ideas and educated people's participation awareness are the key points of co-evolution in university's ideological education and powerful force in raising ideological educational effect. The process of university's ideological education is closely linked as a whole, and it is indispensable for the audience to receive and analyze information actively and give objective feedback during the entire education process. According to the inspiration of media ecology co-evolution theory, university's ideological education should highlight audience participation and innovate relevant educational strategies from three dimensions: Synergy innovation, integrity innovation and dynamic innovation.

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