

Analysis of the Hotspots and Trends of New-media Ideological and Political Research: Citespace Visual Analysis Based on the Literature from 2012 to 2021

Wu Dongjie^{1,a}, Zhang Yonggang², Huang Sisi^{3*}

¹Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts

²South China Normal University

³Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts

Abstract: Nowadays, the rapid development of Internet technology and the wide application of new media technology have brought unprecedented challenges and opportunities to the ideological and political work in colleges and universities. Against this background, promoting the high integration of traditional advantages of ideological and political work with information technology is conducive to enhancing ideological and political education's keeping pace with the times and its appeal. To this end, based on the analysis of Citespace visual data of related literature from 2012 to 2021, this research investigates the frontier hotspots and theoretical focus of new media ideological and political research in China. As a whole, the discussion on the research trend of ideological and political work based on the new-media environment reveals that future related research will focus on the new-media turn of traditional ideological and political work, encompassing the transformation of concepts, the innovation of paths, as well as the cultivation of talent teams.

1. Introduction

With the rapid innovation and development of diversified Internet technologies, such as 5G technology and artificial intelligence, as well as the wide application of new media technologies, the ideological and political work in colleges and universities is inevitably facing unprecedented challenges as well as rare development opportunities. Against this background, combining the current new media technologies to conduct ideological and political education and research work is undoubtedly a top priority to improve the teaching quality, teaching effect, and work effectiveness of ideological and political courses. In this regard, based on analyzing the advantages and challenges of ideological and political education in China in the new-media environment, this research makes a CiteSpace visual analysis of relevant literature from 2012 to 2021, thereby investigating the hotspots and trends of new-media ideological and political research under the background of the new era. More precisely, with the database of China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) as the main source of literature data, this research first performs related literature retrieval with the theme of "new-media ideological and political research". Through the full screening of relevant literature, 5066 pieces of core literature are selected as the analysis objects of this paper

^a1287996990@qq.com

*362757864@qq.com

to ensure comprehensive, accurate, and objective data collection with high quality and high efficiency. Meanwhile, this research selects a host of categories such as "author", "institution", "fund support", and "keywords" for subsequent data visualization. Overall, through the CiteSpace visual analysis, this research summarizes the development situation and frontier hotspots of new-media ideological and political research in China in the past 10 years since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In particular, based on a statistical analysis of the literature concerning new-media ideological and political research, this research further discusses the development trend and focus issues of new-media ideological and political research in the future, with a view to providing a valuable reference for ideological and political research in the new-media environment.

2. Opportunities and Challenges Faced by Ideological and Political Work in the New-media Environment

2.1 Trend-oriented Innovation: Value of Ideological and Political Work in the New-media Environment

General Secretary Xi Jinping specifically pointed out at

the 2013 National Conference on Publicity and Ideological Work that "ideological work is an extremely important work for the Communist Party of China (CPC)"^[2], and it is necessary to focus on work-related innovation as well as the promotion of innovation in ideas and means. Notably, ideological and political work in colleges and universities plays a fairly important guiding and shaping role in the formation of college students' views on the world, life, and values. Hence, it is imperative to "do a good job in ideological and political work in colleges and universities flexibly, actively, and creatively according to the actual situation, the development of the times, and the change of trends." Also, it is imperative to "endow ideological and political work with vitality through new media and new technologies, promote the high integration of traditional advantages of ideological and political work with information technology, thus enhancing the ideological and political work's keeping pace with the times and its appeal."^[1] This in turn points out the direction for the innovation of ideological and political education means in colleges and universities, that is, keeping pace with the times, combining new media technologies and network platforms, and integrating creative ideological and political education methods. Nowadays, college students are mainly from the post-2000s generation who have grown up with the development of the Internet. Given this, if colleges and universities cannot keep pace with the times to innovate the teaching methods of ideological and political education, or even refuse to learn new media technologies and still echo what the books say, it will inevitably lead to various problems such as low attendance rate and low knowledge acceptance, ultimately making it difficult for ideological and political education and teaching to achieve ideal results. At present, a large number of colleges and universities not only adopt new classroom teaching models but also integrate diversified teaching methods such as experiential teaching, interactive teaching, case-based teaching, inquiry teaching, and project-based teaching to enhance classroom richness. On the same note, they make full use of the means represented by new media to build smart classrooms, with excellent outcomes achieved. Simply put, the foregoing practices are worthy of recognition and vigorous promotion.

2.2 Changes in Forms: Opportunities for Ideological and Political Work in the New-media Environment

Conceptually, the new media at the present stage is defined as a kind of communication media based on digital technology, which presents a series of characteristics such as interaction, immediacy, integration of communicators and audiences, etc., in addition to traditional media functions^[4]. Compared with traditional media, new media embodies numerous prominent features, encompassing interactivity, convenience, and immediacy. Seen from time, information can be spread quite quickly through the new media network, with the interval between the release and

receipt of information being quite short. Moreover, the information content spread through new media is available for instant refreshing, thus making the information possess significant timeliness. Benefiting from the high universality of the Internet in life, high efficiency and convenience in information acquisition bring new opportunities for the innovation of ideological and political education methods in colleges and universities. Currently, it is very common for students of all ages to learn all kinds of subjects independently through online platforms. The commonly-used learning platforms include MOOC, Tencent Meeting, Superstar Learning, WeChat group, DingTalk, and ZOOM. By means of such new media platforms, the boundary between lecturers and acceptors is thus broken, with the strong sociality contained in new media fully displayed. Additionally, many users can use these platforms to exchange and disseminate information, and even realize the continuous transformation of the identity between lecturers and acceptors. Hence, new-media users are not only the people who enjoy information resources in a general sense but also the origin of information resources. Briefly, apart from establishing broader communication platforms for teachers and students in colleges and universities, the timeliness and sociality presented in the new media era have obviously opened up a wide channel for the sharing of educational resources, providing a fire-new window for the ideological and political reform in colleges and universities.

Also, the personalization and openness of new media have shaped a new form of ideological and political work in new media. To be specific, personalization, as an important feature of new media different from traditional media, means that the information dissemination content under the background of new media can take into account various personalized needs of different users, while users can choose the information they expect to accept according to their concrete needs. Moreover, in an age of unanimous we-media, the public has the right to express their views and attitudes, thus making the new media network environment present more abundant information. Conversely, the audience's independent reception of all kinds of interesting information makes the personalization of new media particularly remarkable. On the other hand, the openness of new media is mainly manifested in the equality of communication objects and the breadth of communication scope on the network platform. Through the new media platform, people from different countries, nationalities, races, and beliefs can interact and communicate. The foregoing form makes it possible for all kinds of theories, values, ideologies, cultural thoughts, and lifestyles to communicate and collide on the network platform. Admittedly, the personalization and openness of new media have opened a brand-new world for ideological and political education in colleges and universities.

2.3 Multiple Impacts: Challenges Faced by Ideological and Political Work in the New-media Environment

The new media, which has completely changed the study and life of modern college students, not only brings numerous positive effects but also some negative effects. More precisely, first and foremost, regarding the personalization and openness mentioned above, the open network environment provides convenient and fast network conditions for the infiltration of some bad ideas and cultures that have not been strictly examined while bringing together various different ideas and cultures, thereby posing severe challenges to the current ideological and political work in colleges and universities. Though college students can be regarded as adults at the age level, their life experience is limited. Consequently, if they are not actively and effectively guided, young college students will easily go astray under the spread and infiltration of unhealthy ideology and culture, which will lead to new moral problems and delinquent conduct. To make matters worse, unhealthy ideology and culture will offset some positive effects of ideological and political education, and even lead young college students to lose their life direction and form an unhealthy outlook on life and values. Secondly, the new media network environment also provides a convenient communication soil for the infiltration of Western ideology. Due to the difficulty in distinguishing the true and false contents of online platforms, it is inevitable that communicators will publicize Western mainstream values. In this connection, if active and effective guidance to the public is absent and the network world is flooded with fallacies and false reasoning, it may lead to a crisis of trust and disapproval of the CPC's ruling philosophy and socialist road among young college students. In the meantime, not only the old ideological and political discourse expression mode is relatively rigid but also the phenomenon that the lagging discourse expression cannot keep up with the development process of new media discourse is prevalent. On these grounds, under the premise of fully realizing the importance of keeping pace with the times, colleges and universities should be good at conducting ideological and political education with the help of new media in order to enhance students' deep sense of identity and pride in CPC's ruling philosophy and socialist modernization road.

3. CiteSpace Analysis of the Hotspots and Trends of New-media Ideological and Political Research

3.1 Quantitative Analysis and Institutional Distribution Concerning Related Research Results

CiteSpace software was used to analyze the data of 5066 pieces of related literature from January 1, 2012 to September 13, 2021. The results indicate that the number of published papers concerning new-media ideological

and political research has been increasing year by year from 2012 to 2021, which is reflected in the following accurate data: 33 papers in 2012, 47 papers in 2013, 134 papers in 2014, 272 papers in 2015, 383 papers in 2016, 522 papers in 2017, 829 papers in 2018, 1102 papers in 2019, and 1105 papers in 2020. It is estimated that the number of published papers concerning new-media ideological and political research in 2021 will reach as high as 1396. It can be seen from this that the relevant research grew rapidly from 2017 to 2019, grew slowly in 2020, and increased significantly again in 2021.

The research on ideological and political work in the new media environment is closely related to the ideological and political work as well as the educational policies of colleges and universities in China. Since 2015, China has been holding the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities annually, aiming at enhancing top-level design, steadily improving systems for ideological and political education in colleges and universities, and further strengthening and improving the construction of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities, thus laying a solid ideological foundation for college students' development and accomplishment. The Seminar on Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities in 2017, for instance, particularly emphasized the need to grasp the dimension of ideological and political education, pay attention to the integrations of theory with practice, moral education with mental education, online education with offline education, and in-class education with extracurricular education, so as to continuously improve the appeal and effectiveness of ideological and political education in colleges and universities. As another example, at the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities in 2016, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "we should do a good job in ideological and political work in colleges and universities flexibly, actively, and creatively according to the actual situation, the development of the times, and the change of trends ... We should also endow ideological and political work with vitality through new media and new technologies, promote the high integration of traditional advantages of ideological and political work with information technology, thus enhancing the ideological and political work's keeping pace with the times and its appeal."^[1] It can be seen that China attaches great importance to ideological and political work in colleges and universities. More importantly, with the rapid development of the times, the effective combination of new media and ideological and political education is increasingly showing its importance and necessity.

Based on the analysis of the publishing institutions of relevant papers, it is shown that the top 30 institutions that publish the new-media ideological and political research results are all universities, among which 10 normal universities are involved. The total number of research results published by the above-mentioned normal universities is 139, accounting for 34.8% of the total published by the top 30 institutions. Among them, the top three universities in terms of the number of

papers published are Fujian Normal University, Nantong University, and Northeast Normal University. Similarly, in the ranking of citation rate and download volume of papers, the leading institutions are mainly normal universities. From this, it can be seen that colleges and universities play a very important role in promoting new-media ideological and political research in China. In addition, from the perspective of research content, the key content of the current ideological and political research can be summarized as how to put the ideological and political work into practice, how to make full use of the advantages of new media technology and educational technology and other disciplines to effectively combine the education and teaching mode in colleges and universities, grasp the quality of education and teaching, as well as how to determine the development direction of the new-media ideological and political education mode reform with China characteristics based on the analysis, comparison, and summary of the excellent experience of the new-media teaching mode reform at home and abroad in combination with the national conditions of China.

3.2 Fund Support for Related Research Achievements

Based on relevant statistics, 30 funds supported 351 papers on new-media ideological and political research, showing the following characteristics as a whole. More precisely, first of all, regarding the fund support level, there are 60 papers supported by state-level project funds, including humanities and social sciences research projects of the Ministry of Education, special funds for basic scientific research expenses sponsored by institutions of higher learning affiliated with central departments, and the National Social Science Fund of China (NSSFC). In addition, there are 283 papers supported by provincial and ministerial project funds. Among them, Jiangsu Province has the largest number of funds supporting related papers, up to 119, such as the philosophy and social sciences fund project of Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education, as well as the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Fund of Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education. Anhui Province ranks second in the number of funds supporting related papers, such as the provincial teaching quality and teaching reform project of Anhui colleges and universities, as well as the humanities and social sciences research projects of the Anhui Provincial Department of Education. Secondly, regarding the category, 23 of them are educational research projects, which support 78.35% of the papers. Lastly, from the perspective of time span, the number of fund projects supporting new-media ideological and political research showed a rapid upward trend from 2018 to 2019 and rose steadily after 2019. It can be seen that China has paid more attention to and supported the new-media ideological and political education. This is closely associated with the fact that the CPC and Chinese government have placed scientific and technological innovation at the core of the overall national development since the 18th National Congress

of the Communist Party of China. In the long run, the development of new-media ideological and political education can not only highlight the progress of science and technology in China but also help to promote the ideological and political course to keep pace with the times. Therefore, it is of paramount significance to play its role in the new era.

3.3 Atlas Presentation and Cluster Analysis for Paper Keywords

Keywords serve as a high generalization of the research category of academic papers. Therefore, the analysis of the keywords of papers is beneficial to the overall investigation of the research focus and hotspots in a certain field. In definition, the co-keyword analysis method refers to determining the relationship between the topics in the discipline represented by the literature collection by using the co-occurrence of concentrated words or noun phrases in the literature. Based on CiteSpace software, this research selected the keyword option after importing relevant data, while the system automatically generated a keyword atlas, displaying the detailed information of the top 25 keywords with higher frequency, including frequency and percentage data. From the cluster analysis related to the atlas presentation, it can be seen that cluster 1 focuses on the traditional ideological and political education mode held by colleges and universities in China. As it acts as the basis for the analysis of the current ideological and political education research in China, many papers first discuss this topic. In contrast, cluster 2 focuses on the characteristics of the new-media era. New media is an important keyword in this research. In the current new era, colleges and universities mainly focus on the differences between new media and traditional media to carry out related research. In closing, cluster 3 focuses on the effective practical path to realize the integration of new media and ideological and political education, as well as the new situation faced by ideological and political education for college students in the era of media convergence. As the new media can broaden the channels and enrich the ways and means of ideological and political work in colleges and universities, it is obviously the inevitable course to reform ideological and political education in colleges and universities. Consequently, how to effectively integrate the teaching methods of new media education with ideological and political education is the focus of theoretical research and practical innovation at present.

4. Hotspots and Development Trends of New-media Ideological and Political Research in the Future

Based on the above-mentioned statistical analysis of the relevant literature on new-media ideological and political research, it is shown that the hotspots of new-media ideological and political research in the future present a multi-element and multi-dimensional development trend, focusing on the new-media turning problem of traditional

ideological and political education. Specifically, the hotspots of new-media ideological and political research in the future include the transformation of educational and teaching guiding concepts, the innovation of paths, as well as the cultivation of talent teams.

4.1 Research on the Transformation of Teaching Guidance Concepts of New-media Ideological and Political Education

The rapid development of new media technologies requires ideological and political educators in colleges and universities to change their educational concepts in time and actively study and grasp the educational laws in the new-media environment. To be specific, on the one hand, ideological and political educators in colleges and universities should respect students' personalized choice and development on the premise of fully grasping the main direction of the course. Meanwhile, it is imperative for them to give full play to the advantages of new media and innovate the teaching methods of ideological and political education to fulfill the needs of multi-element curriculum forms, diversified teaching levels, and personalized target groups. On the other hand, the classroom and work of ideological and political education should be transformed from the traditional "superior" indoctrination education mode, which is characterized by repeating what the books say, to the classroom mode oriented by interaction, communication, discussion, and self-study. While insisting on the leading role of teachers, teachers are strongly advised to help college students understand and analyze various complicated social phenomena and correctly evaluate the complicated and diversified communication information in the new-media environment by studying and grasping the internal laws of ideological and political education for college students in the new-media environment, so as to establish the students' dominant position and enable them to form the self-help concept of self-learning and self-growth.

4.2 Research on the Innovation of Teaching Approaches of New-media Ideological and Political Education

"Ideological and political theory courses should be strengthened through improvement, improved through innovation, updated in time regarding teaching content, enriched in teaching methods, constantly improved in classroom teaching, and prevented from formalization and superficiality."^[3] Therefore, keeping in mind the innovation points of ideological and political education approaches, colleges and universities should take full advantage of new-media education and teaching in an attempt to achieve better education and teaching results.

On the one hand, colleges and universities should highly value the effective combination of new media network teaching and traditional classroom. To this end, colleges and universities can enrich the course content and teaching methods through various online teaching platforms, such as online famous teacher courses, online

diversified ideological and political question-response, scenario simulation, and ideological and political knowledge contests. It should be noted that the specific application means should be effectively integrated with the curriculum planning of colleges and universities in order to grasp the teaching means that are most in line with the characteristics of colleges and universities and improve the interaction between ideological and political courses and work, thereby effectively enhancing students' interest in learning. On the other hand, colleges and universities should also attach great importance to the effective combination of curriculum knowledge and current events. In this regard, colleges and universities should firmly grasp the advantages of new media teaching and integrate the latest current events at home and abroad with classroom teaching. Moreover, teachers should positively guide students to take the initiative to think and explore rather than to avoid contemporary social problems in combination with the content of curriculum knowledge, thus avoiding and reducing superficial or formalized teaching.

4.3 Research on the Construction of Teaching Team of New-media Ideological and Political Education

In the context of the wide application of new media technologies, for one thing, ideological and political educators in colleges and universities need to strengthen their professional and technical capabilities, especially the ability to utilize new media technologies. In other terms, they should possess the ability to skillfully integrate the concept of new media technologies with the concept of ideological and political education to form a scientific and effective teaching system. For another, ideological and political educators in colleges and universities need to strengthen the concept of fostering virtue through education, that is, to firmly establish the concept of "upholding the centennial original aspiration with undertaking the mission of educating people". Given that ideological and political education is related to the school-running orientation, the research on the effective integration of new media technology concepts and ideological and political education concepts is regarded as the direction of educational reform. As the case stands, the key to effectively promoting ideological and political education is to build a team of high-quality ideological and political talents. Adhering to the school-running orientation of Socialism with Chinese characteristics as well as the educational philosophy of education first and moral education ahead, they are not only able to consciously develop themselves, promote education, implement teaching, and advocate more noble virtues under the premise of being oriented by virtue but also aspire to cultivate talents who support the CPC's leadership and Chinese socialist system from generation to generation and strive for the cause of Socialism with Chinese characteristics. Meanwhile, they are also required to be particularly good at using the characteristics and advantages of the latest technologies such as new media to carry out education and teaching.

In addition to the extensive use of new media to conduct ideological and political education research, for example, it is suggested to invite domestic and foreign experts and scholars related to new media technologies to participate in symposiums, exchange meetings, and thematic activities concerning ideological and political education, to create a scientific and professional ideological and political education atmosphere. Only such new-media ideological and political education is effective and in line with the original intention of education and teaching reform.

Fund Projects:

This paper is the joint research production of the following scientific research projects, including the *Research on Guangdong Craftsman Culture's Integration into Education and Teaching from the Perspective of Internet Plus* (Project number is 2017WQNCX090 with the project leader as Wu Dongjie), which is a "Young Talents" project among the provincial key platforms and major scientific research projects of Guangdong colleges and universities in 2017, and the *Research on the Cultivation of Craftsmanship Spirit of Fine Arts College Students from the Perspective of Innovation and Entrepreneurship: A Case Study of Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts* (Project number is 17XJA029 with the project leader as Wu Dongjie), which is a research project sponsored by Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts in 2017, as well as the *Research on Guangdong Craftsman Culture's Integration into Education and Teaching from the Perspective of Internet Plus* (Project number is 2017GZMZGJ27 with the project leader as Wu Dongjie), which is the philosophy planning project of Guangzhou in 2017.

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