

Research on the Current Situation and Development Strategies of WeChat Official Accounts for Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities

Zhou Yue

Longyan University, Longyan Fujian 364000;

Abstract: With the rise of social media, WeChat official accounts have become an important platform for university publicity, education and management. Especially in ideological and political education, university ideological and political WeChat official accounts have become an important tool for spreading ideas, guiding public opinion and creating a good campus cultural atmosphere. However, in the actual operation process, university ideological and political WeChat official accounts have some problems, such as single content, poor interactivity and unsatisfactory communication effects. Therefore, this paper aims to deeply understand the current situation of the construction of university ideological and political WeChat official accounts, analyze the existing problems, and propose corresponding development strategies to provide references for universities to improve the publicity effect and influence of ideological and political WeChat official accounts.

Keywords: colleges and universities; ideological and political education; WeChat official accounts; development strategies

DOI:10.69979/3041-0843.25.01.038

1. Introduction

At the beginning of 2021, multiple departments including the Publicity Department of the Central Committee, the Cyberspace Administration, the Ministry of Education, and the Communist Youth League Central Committee jointly introduced a series of measures to promote the efficient implementation of ideological and political education in contemporary colleges and universities. The most significant measure among them was the release of a list of key schools for the construction of ideological and political WeChat public accounts. The list included over 200 public accounts from 12 categories such as Tsinghua University, Capital Education, and Peking University Youth ^[1].

This research aims to comprehensively understand the current situation of the construction of ideological and political WeChat official accounts in colleges and universities, explore the roles they play, analyze the existing problems, and propose corresponding development strategies. The specific research contents include: conducting investigations and analyses on the quantity, distribution, and characteristics of ideological and political WeChat official accounts in colleges and universities; deeply exploring college students' acceptance psychology, usage habits, and information dissemination methods towards ideological and political WeChat official accounts; investigating and analyzing the content, form, and dissemination effects of ideological and political WeChat official accounts in colleges and universities; analyzing the roles brought by ideological and political WeChat official accounts in colleges and universities, summarizing the common problems existing in the construction and development of ideological and political WeChat official accounts in colleges and universities, and proposing development strategies and suggestions for different types of ideological and political WeChat official accounts in colleges and universities.

2. The Current Situation of the Construction of WeChat Official Accounts for Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities

WeChat public accounts of ideological and political education in colleges and universities are effective carriers and important media for conducting ideological and political education in colleges and universities. They play a

n important role in ideological guidance, educational publicity and communication. They are of great significance for expanding the influence of ideological and political education and improving the quality of online education. Especially in colleges and universities where the "00" generation is the main force, WeChat, Weibo and other new media platforms are the main channels for them to obtain information. Therefore, it is particularly important to actively leverage the advantages of new media platforms and fully play the role of ideological and political education carriers in ideological and political education work in colleges and universities. However, at present, many WeChat public accounts of ideological and political education in colleges and universities have few views on their posts due to the lack of appeal to college students. Therefore, what to post and in what form to post have become issues that operators need to consider.

2.1. Analysis of the Differences between WeChat Official Accounts and Other Mainstream Social Media Platforms

Currently, in addition to WeChat Official Accounts, popular social networking platforms among college students include Douyin, Weibo, Kuaishou, and Bilibili. The following will compare the relevant data of these several commonly used social platforms by college students based on their financial reports, industry research reports, and specific research data. A comprehensive analysis of the current development status, advantages and disadvantages of WeChat Official Accounts will be conducted, and then strategies for promoting and optimizing the development of ideological and political WeChat Official Accounts in colleges and universities will be considered.

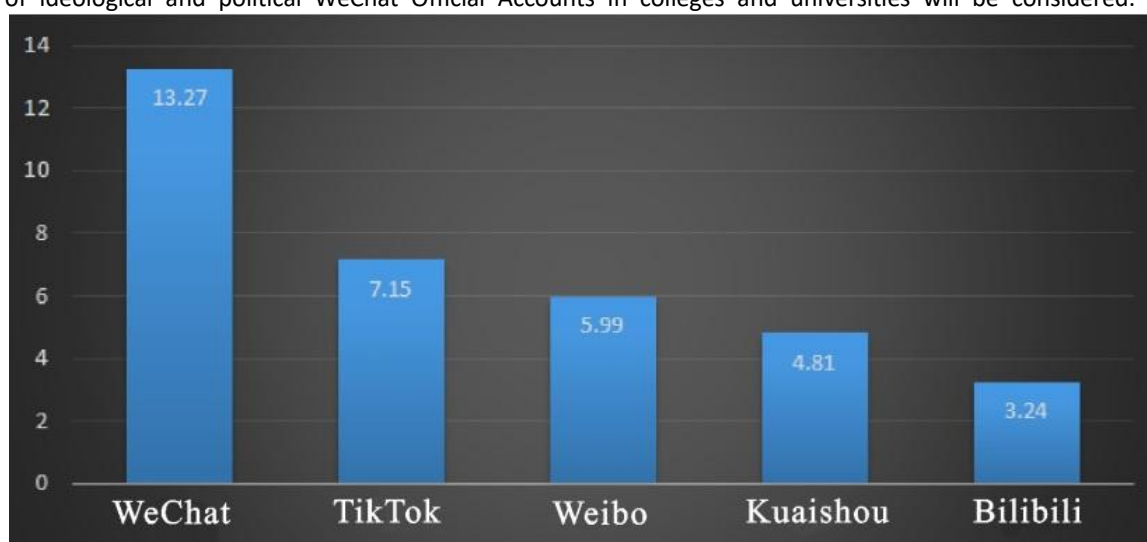


Figure 1 Monthly Active Users (in billions) of Various Platforms in Q2 2023

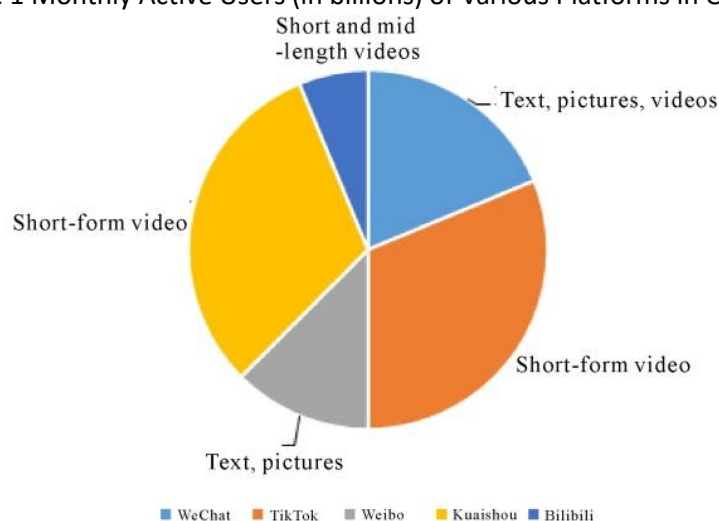


Figure 2: The Dissemination Effects and Content Forms of Various Platforms

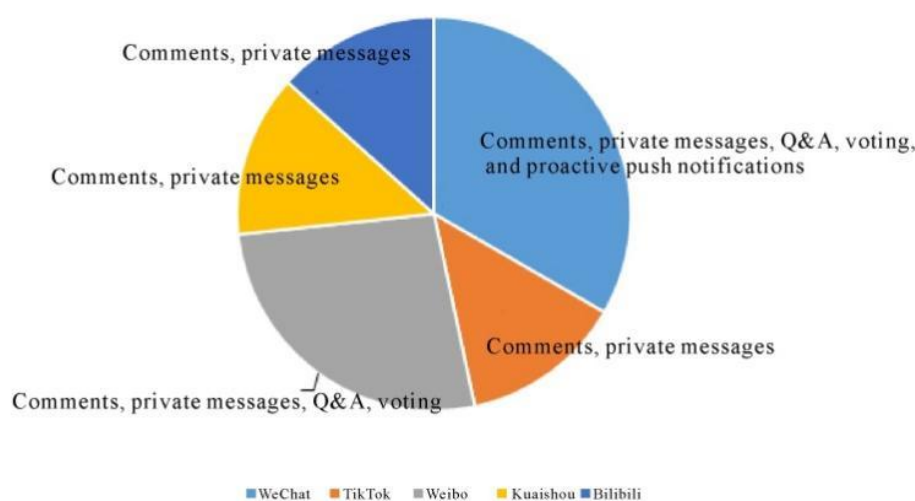


Figure 3 Interaction and User Engagement on Various Platforms

As can be seen from the above chart, WeChat Official Accounts have certain differences from social platforms such as Douyin and Weibo in terms of user scale, dissemination effect and interactivity.

3. User scale

The latest data shows that the monthly active users of WeChat have exceeded 1.3 billion, which means that the potential user base of WeChat Official Accounts is huge. Although WeChat Official Accounts have certain advantages in terms of user scale compared with Douyin and Weibo, their usage rate is relatively poor compared with other platforms. On the one hand, the usage rate of WeChat Official Accounts is greatly affected by users' time. Many users' fragmented time has been occupied by social platforms such as short videos and Weibo, resulting in a lower usage rate and less effective dissemination compared with other platforms. On the other hand, social platforms like Douyin and Weibo have a wider user base, especially among young people, while the influence of WeChat Official Accounts among young users is relatively weak. In conclusion, there are certain differences in user scale among the three social platforms of WeChat Official Accounts, Douyin and Weibo, which are mainly related to factors such as their target audience and content forms.

3.1. Communication Effect and Content Form

WeChat Official Accounts disseminate information in various forms such as text, images, and videos, catering to the diverse needs of different users. Through the social ecosystem of Moments and users' subscriptions and shares, it can precisely reach the target user groups and meet users' varied reading demands, achieving a more profound communication effect. In contrast, Douyin is more visual and entertaining in terms of content and form. With short videos no longer than one minute, the content is mainly about entertainment and humor, making it more acceptable to young people. Therefore, its user base is generally younger. Additionally, Weibo is more open and free in terms of content and form. Users can easily obtain various real-time information and freely express their views and opinions on current hot topics. This open and free format has attracted many celebrities and public figures to join, who share their lives and work on Weibo.

To sum up, there are some individual differences between current university ideological and political WeChat official accounts and social platforms such as Douyin and Weibo in terms of user scale, communication effect and interactivity. WeChat official accounts have an advantage in user scale, while short video platforms have an advantage in communication effect and interactive participation. Therefore, university ideological and political WeChat official accounts need to combine their own characteristics and advantages, adopt effective promotion strategies

ies, enhance interaction and communication with users, expand communication efforts, and better play their role in ideological and political education.

3.2. Problems in the Construction of Current Ideological and Political WeChat Official Accounts in Colleges and Universities

Taking the construction situation of ideological and political WeChat public accounts of several representative universities in Fujian Province as an example, this paper conducts a horizontal comparison of relevant information to explore the current construction status of ideological and political WeChat public accounts in universities and the problems existing in the construction process [2]. Taking Xiamen University, Fuzhou University, Fujian Normal University, Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University and Huaqiao University as examples, the relevant research data are shown in Tables 1 to 4.

Table 1 Basic Information of WeChat Official Accounts of Ideological and Political Education in Five Universities

university or college	The number of ideological and political-related public accounts	The proportion of ideological and political-related public accounts	Total average daily push volume
Xiamen University	15	20.83%	108
Fuzhou University	7	18.42%	57
Fujian Normal University	2	6.06%	39.6
Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University	2	7.69%	26
Huaqiao University	2	9.52%	21

Table 2 Column Design of Ideological and Political WeChat Official Accounts of Five Universities

Colleges and universities	Typical public account	First level menu bar	Secondary menu bar
Xiamen University	Youth Xiamen University	message	Past recommendation, Tuantuan news, into the green media, submission cooperation
		guide	Xiamen University information portal, logistics service directory, volunteer pool, Tuantuan tree hole, wisdom group construction
		study	Youth learning, youth micro preaching, youth thinking and politics micro class, answer contest
Fuzhou University	Youth and happiness	Party history study	Fuda youth said, song hundred years of party history, red classic chant spread, Tuantuan take you to learn party history
		League style	Fuda people's day, Fuda Group news, Fuzhou University group History Museum, learning every day, the past wonderful
		Wisdom group construction	Youth learning, wisdom group construction, member registration
Fujian Normal University	Fu Shi University little Kwai	Big study	Learning calendar, Wisdom group construction, youth learning, clean education, student union reform
		Points window	Kwai points window
		Fresh service	Youth League Committee home page, colorful campus, original products, Youth square, call Kwai
Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University	Fresh agricultural Youth League committee	Wisdom group construction	Wisdom group construction, youth learning, my returning home practice story, my returning home story 2
		Campus life	Intelligent logistics, score query, CET-4 and CET-6 score query
		Whole-hearted interest	Problem feedback, service feedback, pickup registration, search registration
Huaqiao University	China Youth University	Qiaoi learning	Youth learning, wisdom group building, member learning, Party building hundred years
		Qiaoji Campus	Youth League Committee style, overseas Chinese language

Overseas Chinese guide

About us

Table 3 Statistics of classified communication strategies of wechat public accounts of ideological and political affairs in five universities

Colleges and universities	Regular push content	Number of deliveries	characteristic column
Xiamen University	Daily information, practical comments, policy interpretation, league building, youth learning, theme education, social welfare	714 Articles	Answer challenge contest
University Of Fuzhou	Daily information, social practice, live broadcast preview, theme education	283 Articles	A blessed day
Fujian Normal University	Social practice, campus information	1,218 pages	Small sunflower integral window
University Of Agriculture and Forestry In Fujian	Social practice, school information, theme education	941 pages	My story of returning home
Huaqiao University	Social practice, school information, theme education	458 Articles	Overseas Chinese speak overseas Chinese

Table 4 Representative tweets and dissemination of ideological and political wechat official accounts of the five universities

colleges and universities	title of article	content type	The number of reading
Xiamen University	Vote Xiamen university "top ten communist youth league", this time you to be the judges!	Intranet flash & vote	63000+
University Of Fuzhou	Like us! Youth role model of Fuzhou University!	Campus news	5628
Fujian Normal University	Today is the new canteen dining experience, "new" satisfied!	Campus news	17000+
University Of Agriculture and Forestry In Fujian	Vote! What kind of agriculture and forestry university have you seen?	vote	16000+
Huaqiao University	Willing to qian line the 16th overseas Chinese university ZhijiaoTuan love fundraising activities	Intramural news	5187

From the data shown in the above four tables, it can be seen that the proportion of ideological and political WeChat public accounts among the total number of public accounts of the five universities varies. For instance, the ideological and political WeChat public account of Xiamen University accounts for a quarter of its total public accounts, indicating that it attaches great importance to ideological and political education. In terms of overall column design, the five universities are relatively similar, mainly including mainstream contents such as Youth University Learning, Smart Youth League Building, and Party History and Party Building. In terms of the content of dissemination, it is mostly daily news, social practice, and thematic education. In addition, from the number of reads of representative posts shown in Table 4, it can be seen that the "success secret" mainly lies in adding interactive links, such as calling for voting or fundraising, and the overall content is more participatory, which is easy to resonate with readers and encourage their participation.

In conclusion, the current construction of ideological and political WeChat public accounts in universities still has the following problems:

3.2.1. The content is monotonous and lacks diversity.

The content of public accounts related to ideological and political education in colleges and universities mainly focuses on ideological and political education and propaganda, emphasizing the transmission of theoretical knowledge. However, the content is overly rigid, with problems such as information repetition and dullness, lacking innovation. Such monotonous content often makes readers feel bored and unattractive, affecting the reading experience of users and easily causing reading fatigue, making it difficult to form continuous attention and dissemination. In addition, the content of these public accounts is mostly presented in text form, merely limited to the release of campus news and theoretical knowledge of ideological and political education, failing to meet the requirements of high interactivity, wide influence, and original content in ideological and political education. Therefore, the function of ideological and political education through these public accounts is hard to be realized.

3.2.2. Poor interactivity and insufficient communication

Ideological and political education is a two-way interactive process. However, many ideological and political WeChat public accounts in universities only focus on content delivery while neglecting interactive communication.

This is essentially no different from the traditional "indoctrination" education, and the effect may even be worse than face-to-face teaching. Firstly, the interaction channels between the public accounts and college students are not smooth. They lack the ability to respond promptly and solve problems and demands. Most of the content is delivered unilaterally, resulting in a poor experience for students and the failure to achieve the mutual promotion of online and offline education, which affects the dissemination effect of the public accounts. Secondly, some administrators of ideological and political WeChat public accounts lack effective communication skills with students. The privacy of the private message function in the background is not conducive to communication and sharing among students, making it impossible for schools and students, as well as students and students, to exchange views, thus failing to motivate students to participate in the interaction and truly engage in the ideological and political education process. Finally, the lack of interactivity and participation also makes it impossible for students to provide timely feedback on their reading experience and learning effect after reading. As a result, this type of public account cannot better meet the needs of most students, and the guiding role of ideological and political WeChat public accounts in universities has gradually weakened.

4. The Functions of WeChat Official Accounts for Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities

Contemporary college students are mainly born in the 2000s. They have an innate sense of familiarity and closeness to the Internet and online platforms. New media platforms such as WeChat, Weibo and Douyin have become their main channels for obtaining information and entertainment. Therefore, in the ideological and political education work in colleges and universities, if the advantages of new media platforms can be leveraged, it will be particularly important and necessary for the school's educational work.

4.1. Creating a New Model for Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities

Compared with the traditional classroom's one-way teaching method, WeChat official accounts better meet college students' habits of obtaining information and are more likely to satisfy their reading needs. Although students now have more channels to access information than they did a decade ago, this change has also led to their "picky" attitude towards information. Traditional classrooms can meet the daily teaching needs, but they cannot extend the effect beyond the classroom. However, WeChat official accounts for ideological and political education have well complemented the classroom teaching effect. Moreover, they come in various forms, including videos, audios, and graphics, which not only enrich the connotation of ideological and political education, break through the limitations of traditional education, and expand the space for ideological and political education, but also are more conducive to enhancing college students' recognition of ideological and political education.

4.2. Expand the space for equal communication between teachers and students

The current network is highly developed and has even become the "first space" for college students' study,

life and work. The reasons for this are twofold: on the one hand, the convenience and development of the network have brought many benefits to college students; on the other hand, the Internet provides a space for college students to freely express their views, and their sense of autonomy has gradually strengthened through continuous use of the Internet. The establishment of ideological and political WeChat public accounts in colleges and universities is conducive to breaking the inherent identity restrictions and constraints between teachers and students in traditional classrooms. Both teachers and students can communicate and interact on an equal footing in WeChat public accounts, changing the previous situation where students could only passively accept education and rarely participate in communication.

In conclusion, with the continuous development and popularization of WeChat official accounts in recent years, ideological and political education in colleges and universities can be carried out better in line with the development of the Internet era. The connection between teachers and students is no longer limited to the classroom, which enriches the connotation and extension of ideological and political education. Meanwhile, ideological and political WeChat official accounts pay full attention to the learning and life of teachers and students as well as the hot topics they are interested in, and release lively and vivid activity reports and high-quality original content that are popular among teachers and students. This promotes excellent campus culture and builds a high-quality and efficient new media publicity platform with certain influence.

5. Development Strategies for WeChat Official Accounts of Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities

5.1. Innovate content and form to create new platforms for ideological and political education.

University WeChat official accounts shoulder the important responsibility of guiding and serving the growth and talent development of young people and strengthening student education and management. Therefore, they must accurately grasp the preferences of the college student group and innovatively improve their content in all aspects such as platform content, push forms, and educational feedback. They should increase the diversity and interest of the official account content. Through continuous innovation and improvement, they can enhance the quality and dissemination effect of the official account and make greater contributions to the ideological and political education work of universities.

5.1.1. Diversification of content

As one of the important ways of new media communication in today's society, the future development of WeChat official accounts hinges on the quality of their content. High-quality ideological and political educational content not only helps college students form positive worldviews, outlooks on life and values, but also attracts a stable readership. High-quality content requires diversity. First of all, top-level design should be done well, fully exploring exemplary figures among college students both on and off campus, telling the stories of outstanding young people in a youthful tone. It is necessary to increase the ideological and political education content of the official account, and also integrate current social hotspots and campus news dynamics, such as campus life, employment guidance, academic research, cultural entertainment, etc., and incorporate moral education, labor education and mental health education. At the same time, it is necessary to maintain the freshness and interest of the content, and have distinct advantages compared with other public platforms. For example, after condensing important meetings and theoretical spirits, they can be combined with current hotspots and campus life. Additionally, sharing personal thoughts of ideological and political teachers can be added. This is more vivid and attractive than simply piling up words or directly copying the original meeting documents, and also avoids repetitive and dull information.

By using the promotional methods and carriers favored by students and innovative dissemination approaches, it not only ensures the professionalism of the content but also expands the reach of the dissemination, thereby increasing the click-through rate and reading volume of the posts, making ideological and political WeChat public accounts a new platform for ideological and political education in colleges and universities.

6. Conclusion

At present, the construction status of ideological and political WeChat official accounts in colleges and universities has some problems. It is necessary to improve the quality and communication effect through multiple development strategies such as content innovation, interactive communication and promotion strategies. Meanwhile, colleges and universities should strengthen the management and investment of WeChat official accounts, provide necessary support and resources, and promote the greater role of ideological and political WeChat official accounts in ideological and political education in colleges and universities.

References

- [1] Anonymous. The Publicity Department of the Central Committee and Others Deploy the Construction of Key Universities' Ideological and Political WeChat Accounts [J]. Journal of Guizhou Radio and Television University, 2021(29): 36-36.
- [2] Yang Jie, Luo Jun. Research on the Influence of "Four Histories" Propaganda and Education of Ideological and Political WeChat Accounts in Colleges and Universities [J]. Journal of College Counselors, 2022(1): 75-82.
- [3] Feng Wenbo, Li Huachang, Zuo Wei. Research on the Current Situation and Path to Improve the Operation Level of Ideological and Political WeChat Accounts in Colleges and Universities [J]. Economist, 2018(4): 186-187.
- [4] Xu Jia. Research on the Current Situation and Development Strategies of WeChat Accounts of Agricultural University Journals: Taking the Agricultural University Journals Selected as "2020 China Core Journals of Agriculture and Forestry" Class A as an Example [J]. Journal of Yangzhou University (Higher Education Edition), 2022(6): 117.