

Exploration and Innovation on Ideological and Political Education From the Perspective of Big Data

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Abstract

With the advent of Big Data age, ideological and political education, from the perspective of Big Data, gradually reveals. It combines the advantages of Big Data closely with the demands of ideological and political education, contributing to enrich the resources of ideological and political education, enhancing the effectiveness of ideological and political education and developing the discipline of ideological and political education. In the practical application, we should introduce Big Data thinking into updating the concepts of ideological and political education, apply Big Data technology into innovating the methods of ideological and political education, build the team of ideological and political education according to the requirements of Big Data age, coordinate Big Data resources to optimize the environment of ideological and political education, and continue to promote the innovation and development of ideological and political education.

Key words: Big Data; Ideological and political education; Innovation

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INTRODUCTION

The year 2013 is known as China’s “First Year of Big Data”. The Big Data age has brought great changes to the way in which people work, live and think. The future will become the age of wisdom and technology under the guidance of Big Data. When the Big Data comes into being, it provides an important basis for predicting and handling human psychology and human behavior; and it offers a rare opportunity to ideological and political education. Marx once said, “Every age has its own problems. And the so-called ‘problem’ is the ‘sound of the time’ and the ‘voice of the time’.” (*Collected Works of Marx and Engels*, pp.289-290) Only by taking the initiative to adapt to demands of the times, can ideological and political education always maintain the vigor and vitality.

1. THE PROPOSAL OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BIG DATA

Since people are gradually deepening the understanding and continuously promoting the practical application, Big Data shows a profound impact on human society. With Big Data in the ascendant of development, ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data gradually reveals.

1.1 The Application of Big Data in Ideological and Political Education

With its rapid development, Big Data has been applied into ideological and political education. In June 2013, a schoolgirl from East China Normal University received a message from the College Work-Study Center, saying that “Hello, Student! It is found that you had relatively less amount of food consumption last month. Are there any financial difficulties for you? If you have any

difficulties, please contact with me through phone, SMS or email.” In fact, this girl was on diet to lost weight and thus reduced meal card spending, which triggered the school monitoring system on meal card consumption data. This monitoring system, through data analysis of the meal card consumptions, would understand students’ financial situations and suggest whether school should take necessary interventions when students’ consumption is significantly less than its normal circumstances. This schoolgirl shared the screenshot of this message on Weibo, and there came a shower of praises immediately, “Responsible school, endowing the cold data with beauty of human nature.” (Shen, 2013) In the special report on “NPC & CPPCC 2014 Annual Sessions”, CCTV had cooperated with Baidu and opened up the column “Big Data of Two Sessions” to collect public opinions through Big Data. Meanwhile, the visual presentation had closely associated with the major policies for the country with the interests and appeals of the common people, which obtained good results. In addition, Weibo, Wechat, Mobile Newspaper, E-Class (Yiban), MOOC (Curtain Course) and all the other newly sprouted under Big Data age are becoming a new path for ideological and political education.

1.2 The Connotation and Characteristics of Ideological and Political Education From the Perspective of Big Data

The Big Data age is a new phase in the development of network information age. The ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data is a form of carrying out ideological and political education on targeted groups or individuals in a targeted and predictable manner under the context of Big Data age with data facts as a basis, since valuable educational information is obtained through Big Data. And the application of Big Data presents as the key symbol. Big Data would not have come into being without the driven force of pan-internet. Therefore, the ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data is the enrichment and development of the ideological and political education through internet. The ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data takes the application of Big Data as its general characteristics and includes the following three specific features. The first is the data as information sources. Under the context of Big Data age, abundant data generate from people’s daily work and lives. By the mining and analysis of these data, people’s state of mind and behaviors would be understood; and the rule that “anything can be quantified” could be realized, thus providing valuable information to the ideological and political education. The second is the scientific basis for decision-making. The mass data in the Big Data age originate in the “track” of people’s daily activities, which objectively reveal the information that ideological and political education needs to capture. The Big Data from

the overall records of process and randomness, posing in stark contrast with the traditional data from the partial records of staging and selectivity, reveals more closely the facts, and enables to “speak with the data”, so as to make decision-making in ideological and political education “well-grounded”. The third is the intelligent approach of implementing. Under the context of Big Data age, with data dialysis, “the real” situations of educational objects is all under control and individual demands of the objects would get displayed, enabling ideological and political education implemented in targeted and different approaches and methods towards specific objects. Meanwhile, based on the analysis of large amounts of data, scientific predictions would be made on regular tendencies, getting ideological and political education to “take precautions” and improving the effectiveness of ideological and political education.

2. THE VALUE OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BIG DATA

Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data, combining closely the advantages of Big Data with the demands of ideological and political education, can effectively make up for the deficiency of current ideological and political education with significant value.

2.1 To Enrich the Resources of Ideological and Political Education

With the prevalence of cloud computing, Internet of Things, social networking, etc. and the springing up of smart phones, tablet computers, wearable mobile devices and other smart mobile devices, network information technology is changing with each passing day, creating the conditions for a “blowout” growth in data and thus giving birth to the Big Data age. In the age of Big Data, data has become the first resources of ideological and political education and having the data means taking the initiative. Since 2010, China has started promoting tri-network convergence, namely the Internet, telecommunication networks and radio and television networks. Since social lives are gradually getting networked, people have showed increasing dependency on the Internet and other new media. According to statistics from China Internet Network Information Center, as of June 30, 2014, the number of Internet users in China was 632 million, and approximately 527 million of mobile phone users. In addition, the new media quickly penetrate into people’s daily lives including Weibo, Wechat, Fetion and so on. The “2013 Mobile Consumer Report” released by the market research company Nielsen showed that the penetration rate has reached 66% in China. With smart phones and tablet computers covering almost every family, they have become a comprehensive platform for

social networking, entertainment and business for China's Internet users, dramatically changing the way they live. Online mass data has recorded their behavior and reflects their inner world such as value orientation, psychological changes, emotional preferences, etc.. Through Big Data, Taobao, Jingdong and Amazon can grasp people's consumption habits; Baidu, Google, etc. can get well known about people's focus; QQ, Weibo, Wechat, Facebook and other social applications would perceive people's social networks. Data analysis and purification would make the understanding of educational objects more comprehensive and accurate, and enable ideological and political education to be well-grounded. With these new media, the space-time of ideological and political education will be further expanded. Meanwhile, the sharp increases in all kinds of data and the establishments of abundant databases have greatly enriched the resources of ideological and political education.

2.2 To Enhance the Effectiveness of Ideological and Political Education

Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data, with its designated, predictable, initiative and scientific features, would contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of the ideological and political education. The traditional ideological and political education has been much criticized for its "on-way compulsory indoctrination"; however, ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data precisely makes up for this deficiency. Through Big Data analysis, at the macro level people's focus would be discovered and the "natural selection" of contents and forms would be conducted in ideological and political education. By supporting the superior and eliminating the inferior as well as eradicating the old and fostering the new, the attractiveness of the ideological and political education would be enhanced; at the micro level, the educational objects would be researched in a more comprehensive and actual way. Thus "individualized instruction", based on individual needs of the objects would prepare ideological and political education targeted. Through Big Data analysis, people's thoughts and behaviors would be monitored and measures would be taken to resolve any possible crisis. By analyzing large data, we could know the behavior approaches and ideological trends of the educational objects, and "indoctrinate" what is required quietly according to their personal preferences and the law of physical and mental development; therefore, we would take the initiative of carrying out ideological and political education. Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data would make data sound and make facts speak through a large amount of data analyses, which not only avoids the purely subjective judgment, but also overcomes the sampling error at the same time, thus enhance the scientificity of ideological and political education. In addition, through Big Data analysis, we

would be able to promote the improvement of related work and facilitate the upgrading of the service quality. We should associate the solving of ideological problems closely with the solving of practical problems and further enhance the actual effects of ideological and political education.

2.3 To Develop the Discipline of Ideological and Political Education

Ideological and political education, as a young discipline, has been only 30 years of history since the establishment. Although it has accomplished remarkable constructive achievements, it possesses its own shortcomings. Especially under the new historical conditions, the ideological and political education is facing tough challenges. But ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data has brought new opportunities to promote the development of this discipline. Ideological and political education is a discipline with strong features of application and practice. However, in practical applications, it has difficulty in distinguishing individual differences of the educational objects in-depth, leading to mixed effects after implementation. Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data, through data mining, would keep close attention to social reality and understand in-depth the educational objects of their personality traits, behavioral habits, social interactions and other information. Therefore, we would take specific strategies of education and improve the practical application of ideological and political education. Meanwhile, empirical researches of ideological and political education are influenced by subjective factors and sample limitations in sample investigation, causing the results to be greatly affected. For ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data, the empirical researches are based on daily data collected comprehensively of educational objects, which result in better reveal of the reality and help improve the scientific level of ideological and political education. In addition, ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data, tracking the application and development of Big Data, would therefore promote the talents cultivation and team building of ideological and political education, accelerate the integration with other disciplines, and highlight the openness of this discipline of Marxist Theory.

3. THE STRATEGIES OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BIG DATA

Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data should combine Big Data closely with the actual facts of ideological and political education, promoting the innovation and development of ideological and political

education in multiple dimensions of concepts, methods, team, environments, etc..

3.1 Introducing Big Data Thinking Into Updating the Concepts of Ideological and Political Education

Big Data is not just a kind of technology, but also a kind of value and methodology, which means that our knowledge about data is a great revolution of thinking, having developed from being content with sample data to adopting all data; from pursuing accuracy to tolerating hybridity; from focusing on the causal relationships to paying attention to correlation relationship. Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data should introduce Big Data thinking, enhance the awareness of data and update the concepts of ideological and political education. a) We should establish the concept of being people-oriented. With people's social lives being more networked and intelligent, people have entered a new stage of Being Digital under Big Data age. Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data should be highly concerned about the reality of human life, exploring their inner needs through the mining and analysis of daily data and specifically promoting the comprehensive development of man. b) We should establish the concept of keeping up with the times. The advent of Big Data age has brought great changes in people's lives, work, and thinking and deeply affects all the areas including the politics, economy, culture, etc.. The topics at the forefront of the times are how to raise our awareness of Big Data, how to strengthen the researches on Big Data and how to expand the applications of Big Data. Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data should follow closely the development of Big Data age, continuously keep up with the times and make innovations in a pioneering spirit. c) We should establish the concept of individualized instruction. Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data should distinguish differences in educational objects, take elaborate educational measures and improve the effectiveness of education by categorized guide on the group object and customized design for the individual object. The idea is the precursor of action. Only by introducing Big Data thinking and updating the concepts of ideological and political education, can ideological and political education be promoted to advance with the times.

3.2 Applying Big Data Technology Into Innovating the Methods of Ideological and Political Education

Big Data technology is the key to the applications of Big Data. Through the development of software technology and the establishment of relevant analytical models, we could filter the vast amounts of data according to different requirements, find links between the data, reveal the law

of things, and predict the developing trends, etc., thus raise the level of awareness. Under the Big Data age, Big Data technology should be applied in ideological and political education to actively innovate methods. Examples are as following. a) Optimum seeking method of Big Data. Namely, through the use of Big Data technology, it explores the educational objects "level of acceptance" of the elements of education content, methods, etc. and carries out targeted and "marketable" education in a welcoming approach to education objects. b) Prediction method of Big Data. Through the use of Big Data technology, we would analyze public opinions comprehensively, gain the real-time insight into the dynamics of public opinions, predict potential crises, release early warning and take appropriate precautions. The prediction method of Big Data can also be applied to psychological crisis intervention, academic early warning and so on. For the poisoning case in Fudan University happened in April 2013, the suspect revealed intemperate speeches on his own Weibo and Fudan BBS. If prediction method of Big Data was adopted and timely education and assistance were offered, this tragedy could have been prevented. c) Intelligent learning method of Big Data. For example, build an online self-learning classroom of ideological and political education and offer customized recommendations like shopping sites. Through Big Data technology, we would understand the learning situations and the education law of the educational objects, and patiently and systematically provide education in their favorite way, thus changing the satiation of "being taught" to "self-taught".

3.3 Building the Team of Ideological and Political Education According to Requirements of Big Data Age

Big Data age puts forward higher requirements on the ideological and political education team. Under the Big Data age, ideological and political education team should possess new professional qualities, except for basic ideological and political qualities and professional abilities. Firstly, one should have Big Data thinking. He should have a keen awareness of the data to improve his understanding and to focus on the collection, use and management of data. Secondly, one should be capable of analyzing the impacts of Big Data on ideological and political education. He should be able to analyze the impacts of Big Data on ideological and political education and explore the relevant law in front of complex mass data. Then, one should be capable of making use of Big Data to develop ideological and political education. He should be capable of applying Big Data technology and mining Big Data resources, to raise the awareness level and the scientific level of decision-making as well as to carry out targeted ideological and political education. Therefore, the entry selection of ideological and political education team

applicants should be strictly executed in accord with Big Data requirements. We should select Big Data talents to enrich the ideological and political education team and the introduction of Big Data talents would drive the improvement of the team's professional qualities. The Big Data knowledge should be strengthened to solidify work base. Since the development of Big Data is a dynamic process, we should get various kinds of learning and training and deepen our understanding of Big Data. Practice and training should be reinforced to improve the application of Big Data. In practical work, we should improve the capability of data application through targeted training and enhance the effectiveness of ideological and political education.

3.4 Coordinating Big Data Resources to Optimize the Environment of Ideological and Political Education

Under the age of Big Data, cyberspace continues to expand and the environment for ideological and political education is becoming increasingly complex. Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data should coordinate Big Data resources and constantly optimize the environment. We should integrate Big Data resources and smooth the information channels of ideological and political education. Currently, although Big Data resources are increasingly abundant, meanwhile, it is facing data segmentation, lack of communication and other practical issues, resulting in obstruction in acquiring information on ideological and political education. We should expand open data, break the data barriers, and promote data sharing among government, enterprises, schools, and other industries, in order to provide a smooth information platform for ideological and political education. We should standardize data management and purify the environment

of ideological and political education. Under the age of Big Data, the real-name registration in online shopping, social networking, network office, and online learning, etc., would have our personal privacy exposed, including our identity, contact information, family membership and social relationships, resulting in challenges against network security. Once the data is grasped by people with ulterior motives, the consequences could be disastrous. The appalling "Prism" incident sounded the alarm. We should accelerate data-driven process and expand the application areas of the ideological and political education. The state should coordinate the planning, effectively promote the development of Big Data, speed up the data-driven process in a wider field and at a higher level, and continue to broaden the fields of ideological and political education.

CONCLUSION

Ideological and political education from the perspective of Big Data combines Big Data closely with ideological and political education, showing broad application prospects. Currently, we should carry out in-depth researches and strengthen the practical application, thus constantly promote the innovation and development of ideological and political education.

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