



# RESEARCH ON PATHWAYS TO ENHANCE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' SENSE OF GAIN IN ONLINE PLATFORM-BASED IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

*With the rapid development of network technology, online platforms have profoundly transformed people's learning modes, lifestyles, and work habits, becoming an important channel for university students to acquire diverse information and exchange ideological views, playing a crucial role in enhancing students' sense of gain in ideological and political education. However, there are practical challenges in using online platforms to enhance students' sense of gain in ideological and political education, including information complexity, insufficient interactivity, contradictions between content supply and student needs, and effectiveness that needs further improvement. To overcome these challenges, comprehensive measures must be taken with sustained effort: strengthening online information screening, optimizing platform content; stimulating students' enthusiasm for participating in online platforms, enhancing platform interactivity; establishing effective online public opinion guidance mechanisms, strengthening network information supervision; and enhancing network literacy education to improve university students' network literacy.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Online Platforms, University Students' Ideological and Political Education, Sense of Gain, Enhancement*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the new era, university students' ideological and political education is facing unprecedented opportunities and challenges. The rapid development of information technology and widespread Internet adoption have made online platforms new carriers and pathways for ideological and political education, with unique advantages. However, how to fully utilize online platforms to enhance students' sense of participation and satisfaction in ideological and political education remains an urgent issue in higher education. Currently, academia has conducted extensive research on the application of online platforms in ideological and political education. Representative viewpoints include "online platforms can significantly attract university students' attention and enhance the effectiveness of ideological and political education through advantages such as rich information, rapid dissemination, and strong interactivity"; "information on online platforms is complex and difficult to verify, potentially misleading university students, thus requiring strengthened supervision and guidance of online information". However, there is still a significant research gap in academia regarding how to effectively utilize online platforms to enhance university students' sense of gain in ideological and political education. Objectively speaking, in-depth research on enhancing university students' sense of gain in ideological and political education through online platforms has important value and significance for strengthening university students' ideological and political education and improving its level and effectiveness in the new era and new journey (Xu, 2017).

## 2. THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF ONLINE PLATFORMS IN ENHANCING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' SENSE OF GAIN IN IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

Online platforms have demonstrated significant value and importance in enhancing university students' sense of gain in ideological and political education, showing notable effectiveness in promoting students' acceptance and identification with ideological and political education content.



## **2.1 Online Platforms Have Profoundly Changed People's Learning, Life, and Work Styles in the New Era**

In the information age, rapid advances in network technology have profoundly transformed people's learning, living, and working patterns. Online platforms have become indispensable for people's learning. Seeking help online when encountering problems and using search engines as the first choice for finding answers has become an important habit in many people's daily learning, with its influence surpassing traditional books in some aspects. Indeed, online platforms serve as crucial learning aids. Online platforms play an increasingly important role in people's lives. Online shopping, digital payments, cloud storage, and online consultation have become normal aspects of people's lives. The reach of online platforms has extended to every aspect of people's lives. For work, online platforms are playing an increasingly important role. Paperless offices, convenient transmission, digital communication, network-based attention, and information-driven advancement demonstrate people's growing dependence on online platforms. Cloud computing, big data, artificial intelligence, and other technologies are gradually integrating into people's daily life, learning, and work, bringing unprecedented convenience (Jin, 2016).

## **2.2 The Role of Online Platforms in University Students' Ideological and Political Education is Increasingly Important**

With the continuous development of information technology and internet penetration, the role of online platforms in university students' ideological and political education has gained increasing attention. Many universities actively adapt to contemporary needs, continuously innovating online platform education models and methods to enhance students' sense of gain in ideological and political education. Through big data analysis and artificial intelligence technology, educational content can achieve personalized recommendations and intelligent tutoring, such as intelligent education systems recommending suitable learning materials and exercises based on students' learning progress and knowledge mastery. Meanwhile, faculty development has been strengthened, with teachers significantly improving their lesson preparation efficiency through AI-assisted tools, and applications like intelligent homework correction systems have elevated their information literacy and educational technology capabilities to new heights. The educational evaluation system is gradually moving towards diversification, with big data technology serving as a discerning eye, helping schools and educational institutions accurately assess subject performance and comprehensively examine students' learning effectiveness and ideological changes. These powerful measures on online platforms have undoubtedly injected strong momentum into enhancing the effectiveness of university students' ideological and political education, helping students steadily progress on the path of comprehensive development and joyful growth (Zhang, 2011).

## **2.3 Online Platforms Are Important Methods for Enhancing University Students' Sense of Gain in Ideological and Political Education**

Contemporary university students born and raised in the network environment are known as "digital natives," having a natural affinity for online platforms. This natural affinity clearly demonstrates the important role of online platforms in university students' ideological and political education. Ideological and political education is about working with people and their hearts. Where the subjects of ideological and political education are, that's where the reach of ideological and political education should extend. Since university students love, are familiar with, and use networks, ideological and political educators should effectively utilize online platforms to enhance students' sense of gain in ideological and political education. Current online platforms provide environments familiar to university students, vast amounts of network information, convenient access methods, private spaces, and interactive fields for collective participation, making them essential resources and tools for ideological and political education in the new era. A sense of gain doesn't emerge spontaneously, and ideological and political education conducted through infusion or coercion clearly cannot inspire genuine gains. From an educational purpose perspective, with students' genuine interest, a familiar environment, and language styles they enjoy, the sense of gain in ideological and political education naturally improves.

## **3. PRACTICAL CHALLENGES IN ENHANCING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' SENSE OF GAIN IN IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION**

Through Online Platforms Currently, online platforms and their technologies have been widely applied in university students' ideological and political education. Universities nationwide have embraced social media, online education platforms, short video platforms, and other important tools for conducting university students' ideological and political education. However, some urgent problems still need to be solved in practical application.



### 3.1 Information Complexity Is a Major Challenge for Online Platforms in Ideological and Political Education

The massive and complex nature of information is a major characteristic of the internet. University students, still in their growth period, struggle to distinguish truth from falsehood in massive information and are easily disturbed or even misled by harmful information. According to the *China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) 2023 Survey Report on Chinese Youth Internet Behavior*, although young internet users have high trust in internet information, a considerable proportion of students frequently encounter false or misleading content when browsing online information. This false information on online platforms not only weakens the effectiveness of university students' ideological and political education but may also negatively influence the formation and establishment of their worldview, outlook on life, and values. In particular, some problematic self-media distort facts, exaggerate claims, and deviate from truth to attract attention and traffic, causing university students to develop many misunderstandings and prejudices about social phenomena, forming extreme viewpoints. Furthermore, the rapid spread of online rumors and false information poses significant challenges to university students' ideological and political education. Some university students, lacking information discrimination ability, often easily believe rumors and false information, leading them to be misguided in forming correct ideological concepts and value orientations (Zhao, 2018).

### 3.2 Insufficient Interactivity Is a Significant Issue in Online Platforms for Ideological and Political Education

Although online platforms possess significant interactive capabilities and can easily establish convenient interactive platforms, most universities' current ideological and political education platforms remain limited to one-way infusion teaching models, failing to establish effective interactive mechanisms with university students. One-way infusion educational methods not only struggle to stimulate students' learning interest and enthusiasm but also tend to provoke psychological resistance. A survey on university ideological and political education platforms shows that although interactive teaching has been widely applied in ideological and political theory courses, related research indicates that over 50% of students still consider platforms lack interactivity and engagement. Furthermore, another study points out that current ideological and political education curriculum settings and teaching methods fail to fully stimulate student participation enthusiasm, lacking sufficient interactivity. This relates to problems in interactive teaching such as monotonous forms, low participation rates, and topics lacking appeal. In practical application, some universities' ideological and political education platforms often simply publish notices, policies, or theoretical articles, lacking interaction and communication with university students. One-way information transmission methods neither attract university students' attention nor achieve expected educational effects. For instance, when a university's ideological and political WeChat public account published an article on "Youth Responsibility and Commitment in the New Era," despite the article's profound content and unique viewpoints, it regrettably lacked interactive elements and comment functions, which to some extent limited the article's dissemination power and made it difficult for students' voices to be fully presented and heard, thereby affecting the comprehensive realization of the post's actual value and significance.

### 3.3 Contradictions Exist Between Online Platform Content Supply and Students' Real Needs

Through questionnaires and in-depth interviews, it was found that university students hold positive attitudes toward the application of online platforms in ideological and political education. Students generally believe that online platforms are treasure troves of knowledge, rich in resources and easily accessible, significantly broadening horizons and stimulating learning interest. However, they also hope platforms can provide more quality content, enhance interactivity, and improve educators' professional competence. A questionnaire survey of university students shows that over 80% prefer receiving ideological and political education through online platforms, considering this method more attractive and flexible than traditional classroom teaching. For example, research from Changzhi University demonstrates that online ideological and political education plays a crucial role among university students, especially when facing global challenges like the 2020 pneumonia epidemic, where online platforms became important channels for ideological and political education. Research shows that university students' acceptance of online ideological and political education involves the process of internalizing and externalizing educational content, with acceptance effectiveness influenced by factors such as cognitive level, content quality, media form, and environmental conditions. They expect platforms to include more educational content close to reality, life, and students, and add interactive segments to expand communication opportunities. In deep interviews, some students expressed their views and suggestions on current ideological and political education platforms. Students suggested platforms should promote more life-related educational content, reduce empty theory, add interactive and discussion segments, and enrich communication opportunities. Other students suggested strengthening educator training and management to enhance professional quality and network capabilities to better adapt to online teaching requirements.



### **3.4 The Effectiveness of Online Platforms in Enhancing University Students' Ideological and Political Education Needs Further Improvement**

Empirical analysis results show that online platforms have achieved significant results in enhancing university students' sense of gain in ideological and political education. With the rise of short video platforms, university students' ideological and political education methods have been innovated. Short videos, with their easy operation, strong interactivity, and diverse content characteristics, have effectively enhanced student participation and learning interest. A certain university utilized WeChat public accounts and Douyin platforms to conduct a series of ideological and political education activities, including publishing themed articles, producing short videos, and conducting online discussions. These activities received wide attention and active participation from students, not only significantly enhancing their sense of gain in ideological and political education but also further deepening their sense of social responsibility and mission. Through online education platforms providing personalized learning resources and recommendations, students can better master knowledge points and skills. For instance, a university used online education platforms to provide students with rich ideological and political education courses and learning resources, including video courses, online tests, and study notes. The platform precisely recommends personalized learning resources and course arrangements based on students' learning situations and interest preferences. This personalized learning approach not only improved students' learning efficiency but also enhanced their learning enthusiasm and autonomy. However, objectively speaking, the effectiveness of online platforms in enhancing university students' sense of gain in ideological and political education still needs further improvement. While pursuing novel forms, universities should not neglect content depth; while pursuing attractive appearances, they should not forget the essence of education; while pursuing convenient educational approaches, they should not overlook the authenticity of educational subjects.

## **4. PRACTICAL PATHWAYS TO ENHANCE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' SENSE OF GAIN IN IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION THROUGH ONLINE PLATFORMS**

Resolving the practical challenges in ideological and political education through online platforms requires comprehensive measures, optimizing online platform content, enhancing interaction with university students, establishing online public opinion guidance mechanisms, and cultivating students' network literacy.

### **4.1 Strengthen Online Information Screening and Optimize Platform Content**

Providing ideological and political education content that is both rich in quality and relevant to university students' actual lives is key to enhancing students' sense of gain. First, universities should strengthen online information screening to ensure platform information is truthful, accurate, and positive. *The New Era University Ideological and Political Education Innovation Research Report* indicates that current university network platform information is complex and often contains unvetted content, with false and misleading information distorting students' ideological concepts and misguiding their value orientations. Therefore, universities should establish and improve information screening and review mechanisms to strictly control platform information, ensuring its authenticity and accuracy. Second, universities should carefully design educational content based on students' interests and needs, incorporating more life-related cases and stories to make educational content more vivid, interesting, and easily acceptable to university students. According to a survey on university students' ideological and political education content, over 70% of students expressed hope for more education content closely related to real life. Therefore, universities should actively respond to students' needs by continuously optimizing and updating educational content. For example, a university used social media platforms to launch a series of short videos themed "My Youth Story," inspiring widespread resonance and participation enthusiasm among students by sharing outstanding graduates' growth experiences and struggle stories. This initiative not only enriched the form and connotation of educational content but also improved students' sense of gain and identification. Finally, universities should closely follow current events, focus on topics of concern to university students, and carefully plan and create educational content with depth, aiming to stimulate students' critical thinking, encourage their active participation in discussions, and effectively enhance their sense of gain in ideological and political education (Chen, 2018).

### **4.2 Stimulate Student Participation and Enhance Online Platform Interactivity**

Enhancing online platform interactivity is a crucial pathway to improve university students' sense of gain in ideological and political education. First, universities should carefully design and plan diverse interactive segments and discussion topics to stimulate student participation enthusiasm and promote active discussion and exchange. They can establish online Q&A, polls, topic discussions, and other segments on platforms to give students opportunities to express their



views and opinions. According to the *University Network Ideological and Political Education Effectiveness Research Report*, introducing modern technological means, such as adding interactive and game elements, and utilizing big data technology to develop network ideological and political education platforms that can customize personalized content and tasks for students, significantly enhances student participation and learning interest, strengthening their sense of gain in ideological and political education. Second, universities should fully utilize big data and artificial intelligence technology to precisely analyze students' learning needs and interest preferences, thereby providing tailored learning resources and recommendations. They can recommend relevant learning materials and course videos based on students' learning history and performance. This personalized, targeted learning model not only effectively improves students' learning efficiency but also greatly stimulates their learning enthusiasm and autonomy. For example, a university conducted a series of online courses and activities themed "Innovative Thinking Cultivation" through its online education platform, effectively stimulating students' learning interest and cultivating their innovative thinking through diverse interactive methods such as group discussions, case analysis, and role-playing. This initiative not only significantly improved students' satisfaction and sense of belonging but also laid a solid foundation for their future academic progress and career development (Nie, 2021).

#### **4.3 Establish Online Public Opinion Guidance Mechanisms and Strengthen Network Information Supervision**

Strengthening the supervision and guidance of network information is an important guarantee for ensuring the healthy development of online platforms and a crucial measure for enhancing university students' sense of gain in ideological and political education. Universities urgently need to construct a comprehensive online public opinion guidance system to quickly respond to and resolve university students' concerns and questions, ensuring a clear and harmonious online space atmosphere. First, universities should strengthen the review of online information to ensure platform information is truthful, accurate, and positive. According to the *University Network Public Opinion Research Report*, current university online platform information review mechanisms are insufficient. Although some universities have established information release review systems, such as one university's network information review system requiring information to be truthful, accurate, and legal, implementing the principle of "those who post online are responsible," large amounts of information still pass without strict review, including false and misleading content. This information has adversely affected university students' ideological concepts and value orientations. Therefore, universities must construct and improve information review mechanisms, strictly examining platform information to ensure its truthfulness and accuracy. Furthermore, universities should establish online public opinion early warning and response mechanisms to promptly identify and handle adverse information and public opinion events. They can set up keyword filtering and sensitive word monitoring functions to intercept and process adverse information in real-time. Finally, universities should form online public opinion response teams specifically responsible for monitoring adverse information and public opinion events online and handling them promptly. Through rapid and effective responses to student concerns, these teams have effectively maintained the clarity and stability of online space, significantly enhancing students' sense of identification and satisfaction. For example, a university established an online public opinion response team responsible for monitoring and handling adverse information and public opinion events online. Through quick responses to student concerns, this team effectively ensured the health and stability of online space, significantly improving students' satisfaction and sense of belonging.

#### **4.4 Strengthen Network Literacy Education and Improve University Students' Network Literacy**

Enhancing university students' ability to identify online information and critical thinking skills is an important pathway to strengthen their sense of gain in ideological and political education. Universities should increase network literacy education efforts to guide students in rationally utilizing online platform resources. First, universities should offer network literacy education courses or lectures to teach students methods for identifying online information and critical thinking skills. They can invite experts and scholars to explain and demonstrate content such as distinguishing truth from falsehood in network information and identifying and preventing online rumors. Systematic network literacy education enables university students to master correct network information identification methods, enhancing their critical thinking abilities and effectively avoiding interference from adverse information. According to the *2023 University Student Network Literacy Survey Report*, university students' overall average network literacy score was 3.67 (out of 5), slightly above the passing line. Furthermore, the survey found that over 60% of students expressed hope that schools would strengthen network literacy education. Therefore, universities should quickly respond to students' urgent needs, focusing on strengthening the network literacy education system to simultaneously improve students' network literacy and sense of gain in ideological and political education. For example, a university utilized its online education platform to offer a "Network Literacy and Information Security" online course, improving students' network literacy and information security awareness through explaining the identification of true and false



network information and the recognition and prevention of online rumors. This initiative not only actively promoted students' sense of gain in ideological and political education but also played an important role in maintaining the health and stability of online space. Second, universities should encourage students to actively participate in network practice activities, such as online volunteer services and network public welfare activities, to improve their network literacy and practical abilities. Through participating in network practice activities, university students can put network literacy knowledge into practice, continuously consolidating and improving their personal network literacy through practice. For example, a university organized students to participate in online volunteer service activities, helping others through online question answering and providing learning resources. This activity not only significantly improved university students' network literacy and practical operation abilities but also greatly enhanced their sense of social responsibility and mission (Chen, 2021).

In conclusion, online platforms have demonstrated certain effectiveness in enhancing university students' sense of gain in ideological and political education, effectively promoting students' acceptance and identification with ideological and political education content. Future research can further explore the differences in effectiveness among various online platforms in ideological and political education, as social media platforms, online education platforms, and professional ideological and political websites each have their own characteristics and advantages, and how to design educational content more suited to university students' learning habits and interests based on these characteristics to enhance educational effectiveness. Additionally, research can focus on constructing a more complete online platform education system, covering curriculum system setting, teaching resource integration, faculty team building, and other aspects, as well as how to organically combine online and offline education to achieve complementary advantages, aiming to construct a systematic and scientific online platform education model.

#### Author Biography

Qian Chen (1980 - ), from Luoding, Guangdong, is the Executive Deputy Director of the Xijiang Public Opinion Data and Information Communication Research Center at Zhaoqing University. His research areas include ideological and political education and online media communication.

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