

Article

# The Reshaping Path of the Discourse Power of Online Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities in the context of Pan-entertainment-An Empirical study based on 926 Samples of Generation Z

Chaochao Chen <sup>1</sup>, Yinuo Shen <sup>1</sup> and Dongjian Zhang <sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua, Zhejiang, 321004, China

\* Correspondence: Dongjian Zhang, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua, Zhejiang, 321004, China

**Abstract:** In the era of pan-entertainment and networked media dominance, college network ideological and political education faces the practical dilemma of weakened discourse leadership, cohesion, and guidance. Generation Z, as the main target of ideological and political education, is characterized by fragmented, visual, and interactive information reception habits. These habits, combined with the information explosion, context fragmentation, and entertainment-driven nature of online communication, collectively impact the discourse leadership, cohesion, and guidance of ideological and political education. Empirical analysis based on 926 samples shows that the loss of discourse power originates from the disconnection between the traditional one-way indoctrination model and the egalitarian interaction ecosystem of the internet, the disembedding of theoretical content from life experience, and the conflict between educational logic and platform algorithmic logic. Therefore, it is necessary to shift the discourse power relationship from a hierarchical authority to an equal dialogue, promote the "re-embedding" of discourse content into the youth's world of life, and leverage advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence to construct a diversified and collaborative discourse ecological governance system. This will facilitate the paradigm transformation of ideological and political education in the digital age and enhance its value-guiding effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Generation Z; network ideological and political education; pan-entertainment; information media

---

Received: 04 January 2026

Revised: 20 February 2026

Accepted: 03 March 2026

Published: 10 March 2026



**Copyright:** © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of digital technologies and the widespread use of networked media, ideological and political education in universities is undergoing a profound transformation. Generation Z's cognitive patterns, values, and aesthetic orientations have been reshaped by the online ecosystem [1]. They are accustomed to fragmented information, visual interpretation, and interactive social participation. Meanwhile, the pan-entertainment trend continues to dilute the depth of serious topics, further influenced by technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and platform algorithms. In this context, the methods, content, and communication channels of university network ideological and political education face serious challenges. Its discourse influence, cohesion, and guidance are weakening, even at risk of marginalization. Understanding the characteristics and media logic of Generation Z, and effectively constructing and maintaining the influence of mainstream ideology amidst pan-entertainment, has become a crucial practical and theoretical issue for contemporary university education.

## 2. The Practical Context and Discourse Dilemma of College Network Ideological and Political Education in the Era of Pan-Entertainment

The diffusion of the pan-entertainment trend and the rise of Generation Z have jointly reshaped the ecological field of college network ideological and political education, also presenting unprecedented challenges to its discourse power. As the strategic value of college network ideological and political education becomes increasingly prominent, the deep integration of Generation Z with internet media and the multiple impacts of the pan-entertainment trend on its discourse power together outline the complex reality in which college network ideological and political education currently finds itself.

### 2.1. *The Rise of Generation Z and the Mainstream Status of Internet Media*

The generation born between 1995 and 2009, commonly referred to as "Generation Z," was born during the digital wave and is increasingly becoming a primary social force. Having experienced the internet's progression from its inception to full penetration, they are the first users of a deeply developed digital age. For them, the internet is no longer merely a tool but an inseparable dimension of life. Generation Z can be regarded as true "digital natives," reflecting a societal transition from "real people" to "virtual people" within a networked environment [2]. From smartphones to artificial intelligence, the internet is a crucial space for constructing cognition, expressing emotions, and participating in society. Their thinking habits, social behaviors, and value judgments are significantly shaped by this digital environment. In today's higher education context, Generation Z constitutes the primary audience for ideological and political courses, requiring educational approaches to align with their group characteristics.

The behavioral traits of Generation Z reflect the dominance of internet media in reshaping societal cognitive structures. Research indicates that by mid-2025, the number of internet users is expected to reach 1.123 billion, with a penetration rate of 79.7% [3]. Clearly, the internet has become the primary information medium and a major platform for college network education. This shift has revolutionized information dissemination, breaking the time and space limitations of traditional media. Fiber optic and satellite technologies enable global coverage, allowing major events to reach billions of users worldwide via social media. In education, the internet has transformed models, achieving innovations and enhancing resource accessibility through online platforms. Since 2020, the era of the intelligent Internet of Things (Web 3.0) has emerged, where data-driven industries have deepened and the influence of artificial intelligence in content production has grown significantly, outlining a new landscape for digital evolution [4].

In this context, traditional ideological and political education faces systemic challenges. In an era where "everyone has a microphone," Generation Z is exposed to diverse and often conflicting viewpoints. The mainstream narrative conveyed in classrooms is now merely one voice in their information flow, and its authority is no longer self-evident. Traditional education often struggles to compete with the embodied, immediate, and interactive content experiences students find online, leading to a decline in discourse effectiveness. Furthermore, Generation Z's preference for fragmented and visual information consumption limits the time allocated for deep reading and logical reasoning. The systemic theoretical indoctrination and one-way lecture models diverge from the cognitive habits of Generation Z, making it difficult to foster profound value identification. Faced with the reality of traditional models becoming less effective under the dominance of internet media, universities are actively advancing networked ideological and political education to leverage digital platforms and enhance educational impact.

### 2.2. *The Increasing Strategic Value of College Network Ideological and Political Education*

With the pervasive internet access of Generation Z and rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, the digital transformation of university education has become a

strategic priority. This shift represents a profound practice in cultivating talent for the digital age, rather than a mere change in methodology. As traditional models risk losing influence in a networked society, the internet provides a new arena for innovation, systematically reshaping educational forms and outcomes.

This transition is driven by two primary demands. First, global ideological landscapes have become more complex. As international interactions grow, diverse viewpoints spread rapidly via social media, impacting youth during critical stages of value formation. Strengthening targeted guidance is essential to help them navigate these influences and solidify their beliefs. Second, education must evolve alongside social dynamics and technological progress. Moving beyond one-way indoctrination is necessary, as traditional models that lack practical connection or use monotonous forms often fail to engage students. Updating concepts and innovating methods to align with the digital era is therefore vital for maintaining educational relevance.

Consequently, networked education is gaining momentum. Relevant guidelines promote digital content—such as animations and short videos—alongside online platforms for resource sharing and interaction [5]. This marks a transition from viewing the internet as an auxiliary tool to a strategic support for reform. The development of new media offers unique opportunities for theoretical advancement, requiring educators to provide fresh interpretations and summaries [6]. Rather than a simple online migration of existing content, this represents a comprehensive restructuring based on the modern media ecosystem. This strategic transformation addresses real-world challenges while fulfilling the fundamental task of character development and talent cultivation.

### *2.3. The Impact of the Pan-Entertainment Trend on the Discourse Power of College Network Ideological and Political Education*

In the new media era, while users enjoy internet convenience, they are also increasingly ensnared in the whirlpool of pan-entertainment [7]. Entertainment serves as the foundational concept of this trend, referring to "entertainment discourse extending beyond its own domain, infiltrating all aspects of social life, and creating new symbolic expressions and discursive methods" [8]. With the widespread penetration of new media, it displays distinct characteristics, including mass participation, fragmented content production, emotional expression, and a shift away from traditional value orientations. These factors exert multiple impacts on the discourse power of college network ideological and political education, primarily reflected in three aspects: leadership, cohesion, and guiding power [9].

#### *2.3.1. The Weakening of Discourse Leadership*

In traditional educational models, educators typically held an authoritative position in information dissemination and meaning interpretation. However, the rise of pan-entertainment, empowered by network platforms, has fostered a new level of discourse equality. Under the influence of advanced digital technology, individuals have become both producers and disseminators of content, breaking the original discourse monopoly. Within the Generation Z cohort, light and engaging entertainment content is more readily accepted, while systematic and theoretical education is often perceived as preachy, provoking resistance. Some students display indifference toward positive guidance, leading to a continuous erosion of the informational advantage and authoritative status of ideological and political education in cyberspace.

#### *2.3.2. The Dilution of Discourse Cohesion*

Pan-entertainment content often operates on the principle of "traffic supremacy," using exaggerated headlines, fragmented narratives, and sensory stimuli to attract attention. Its superficial expressions dissolve the systematic nature and logical depth that ideological and political education discourse should possess. In the information-

overloaded environment of the internet, serious topics are often deconstructed and trivialized by entertainment, making it difficult to build a strong value consensus. Generation Z can be easily led astray by isolated topics and emotional viewpoints, weakening their overall recognition of mainstream values and diminishing ideological cohesion.

### 2.3.3. The Erosion of Discourse Guiding Power

Pan-entertainment frequently intersects with ideologies such as historical nihilism, utilitarianism, and consumerism, using satire and deconstruction to blur moral boundaries and dilute noble values [10]. Under the guise of entertainment, certain negative values subtly influence students' judgment, causing some youths' ideals to become vague, with a tendency toward materialism and instant gratification in their spiritual pursuits. Prolonged immersion in a pan-entertainment environment may lead young people into a spiritual void, causing them to become alienated from or even question the core values advocated by ideological and political education, thereby undermining the foundation of ideological guidance.

## 3. The Paradigm Shift and Distinct Characteristics of Network Communication from the Perspective of Media Determinism

As the technological foundation of information dissemination, media evolution profoundly shapes knowledge production, cultural expression, and power structures. From the perspective of media determinism, transitions in dominant media are not merely technical iterations but paradigm shifts that restructure cognitive methods and social relations. Contemporary network media-characterized by mobility, socialization, and intelligence-leverages artificial intelligence to establish a communication paradigm distinct from the print and television eras. Four prominent characteristics-information explosion, context fragmentation, entertainment-driven orientation, and profit-seeking tendencies-significantly challenge and reshape the discourse power of campus network education.

### 3.1. Media Determinism

Media determinism emphasizes that the technical characteristics of communication media decisively influence social organization, cultural expression, and cognitive habits. Research into historical media suggests that advantages in transmitting information over time or space profoundly affect societal power structures and the trajectory of civilizations [11]. A central assertion of this theory is that "the medium is the message", meaning the form of the medium itself is more influential than the specific content it carries [12]. Each new medium alters how humans perceive the world, thereby reshaping society. For instance, while oral transmission relied on memory and face-to-face contact to foster tight-knit social structures, printing technology encouraged linear thinking and logical analysis. Today, electronic media and the internet, defined by immediacy and interactivity, foster a cultural logic characterized by fragmentation and decentralization. In this view, media technology acts as an agent of social progress [13]. In the digital age, this perspective clarifies how the internet fundamentally alters information transmission and value formation, providing a theoretical framework for analyzing the challenges faced by campus network education.

### 3.2. The Deconstructive Mechanism of Network Communication Characteristics on the Discourse Power of College Education

The paradigm shift in network communication is manifested through distinct media characteristics that directly impact the discourse power of college network education across multiple dimensions.

### 3.2.1. Information Explosion

The primary characteristic of network media is the exponential growth and real-time updating of information. In the digital era, the supply of information far exceeds individual processing capacity, leading to severe overload. For Generation Z, this manifests as an extreme scarcity of attention. They are daily surrounded by instant, fragmented information flows. Furthermore, the development of generative artificial intelligence has exacerbated this growth, producing content that blends truth with falsehood and making discernment more difficult. Warnings about "digital vertigo" are particularly relevant for this cohort [14]. In this context, systematic and theoretical discourse may become a "drop in the ocean," with its authority declining under the torrent of data. The struggle for discourse power has evolved into a "battle for attention." If educational content does not align with student preferences within the first few seconds, it loses the opportunity to be processed. Consequently, discourse authority no longer derives solely from the depth of content but from its ability to compete for attention, leading to a qualitative shift in how discourse power is evaluated.

### 3.2.2. Context Fragmentation

Unlike the linear narratives of the print era, network communication-driven by algorithmic recommendations-is characterized by strong context fragmentation. Independent information units often lack logical connections with adjacent content. Predictions regarding "retribalization" manifest here as network platforms filter information based on user preferences, creating personalized spaces [15]. This environment intensifies the "information cocoon" effect. In a "post-truth" era, individuals within online communities may detach from real-world contexts, becoming trapped in homogeneous viewpoints within "echo chambers." Such isolation can lead to public opinion polarization and amplified intergroup emotions [16]. For Generation Z, this fragments the meaningful frameworks of history and national identity into isolated points. When serious and trivial content are indiscriminately juxtaposed, value standards blur, weakening the drive for deep thinking and meaning integration. This risks disintegrating the value consensus that college education aims to achieve.

### 3.2.3. Entertainment-Driven Orientation

In the internet era, entertainment has been internalized as a dominant communication logic and audience expectation. Critiques of media saturation suggest that not only does all content tend toward an entertaining presentation, but "entertainment" itself has become a meta-standard for judging information value [17]. Visual culture now exhibits a "pleasure-oriented" tendency, seeking immediate sensory satisfaction [18]. Simultaneously, technologies such as deepfakes and virtual hosts enhance the entertainment nature of digital spaces, potentially dissolving the seriousness of educational discourse. Generation Z, immersed in this environment, often develops a preference for instant gratification over complex thought. Subconscious criteria for filtering information often shift to "whether it is interesting" or "stimulating." This creates an alienation toward content requiring rational reflection, causing educational discourse to lose its guiding position and emotional resonance.

### 3.2.4. Potential Profit-Seeking

The underlying driver of the network ecosystem is the latent profit-seeking nature of capital, which relies on algorithmic technology for traffic monetization. Algorithms have transitioned traditional digital models into "automated neoliberalism," where algorithmic hegemony serves the proliferation of digital capital [19]. This platform economy model relies on user attention, making traffic data the core indicator of performance and creating a "traffic-dominated" paradigm. Value judgment has shifted from truth and depth to the ability to provoke controversy or attract attention. This shift fosters the spread of lowbrow

content, creating a challenging information ecology for education. To reach Generation Z, some platforms or educators may succumb to "traffic anxiety," over-pursuing entertainment-style packaging at the expense of intellectual depth. This weakens discourse power by diluting the core attributes of the content. Moreover, capital-controlled algorithms can segregate users into "information cocoons", making it difficult for mainstream discourse to penetrate echo chambers, hindering effective dialogue and exacerbating the fragmentation of discourse power [20].

#### 4. Empirical Examination and Group Profile of Generation Z's Information Media Orientation

Network education is an activity centered on individuals as both subjects and objects [21]. Students within the Generation Z cohort have long been the primary focus of campus network educational initiatives. Clarifying the information orientation and influencing factors of this group is essential for highlighting the targeted characteristics of education and is a necessary path for development in an era where discourse power is paramount.

##### 4.1. Overview of the Survey

The research is divided into four major modules: "Cognitive Orientation," "Value Orientation," and "Aesthetic Orientation" to gain insights into media preferences, and "Developmental Obstacles" to identify challenges in network education. Additionally, qualitative questions were included to explore the specific inclinations of Generation Z. The quantitative portion utilizes a five-point Likert scale, with scores from 1 to 5 indicating the degree of alignment with the actual situation.

The survey was conducted online through convenience sampling between July and November 2025, covering various administrative regions nationwide to ensure broad inclusivity. After collection and screening, 926 valid questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 93.8%. The overall standardized Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient for the questionnaire was 0.914, demonstrating excellent reliability. The KMO value was 0.920, and the p-value was close to 0, indicating that factor analysis was appropriate. Valid questionnaires were analyzed using statistical software and text segmentation libraries.

##### 4.2. Descriptive Analysis of the Quantitative Survey Section

The following Table 1 presents the descriptive analysis results for the four modules.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Analysis Results for Each Question.

Item Name	Sample Size	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Mean Value	Standard Deviation	Median
A1. I am accustomed to opening multiple social media windows to process information cross-sectionally.	926	1.000	5.000	3.987	0.896	4.000
A2. The "auto-play" feature on short video platforms significantly shortens my sustained attention span.	926	1.000	5.000	3.894	0.958	4.000
A3. When encountering complex theories, I tend to look for diagrams/videos instead of reading the original text.	926	1.000	5.000	3.969	0.916	4.000
A4. Algorithm-based "information cocoons" reduce	926	1.000	5.000	4.031	0.850	4.000

my opportunities to encounter different viewpoints.						
A5. When browsing videos, real-time interactions in bullet comments or comment sections affect my understanding of the original content.	926	1.000	5.000	3.864	0.930	4.000
A6. I actively use fragmented time for systematic knowledge learning (reverse scoring).	926	1.000	5.000	3.460	1.021	3.000
A7. I do not like reading text-based content online, especially longer articles.	926	1.000	5.000	3.667	1.057	4.000
A8. Overall, I feel my thinking patterns are becoming more fragmented under the influence of the internet.	926	1.000	5.000	4.021	0.742	4.000
B1. I browse more entertainment content than serious content on the internet.	926	1.000	5.000	4.032	0.761	4.000
B2. I quickly scroll past ideological and political education content due to a lack of entertainment value.	926	1.000	5.000	3.752	0.943	4.000
B3. The viewpoints of internet influencers have a significant impact on my value formation.	926	1.000	5.000	3.059	1.246	3.000
B4. The moral role of virtual idols is as influential as real-life role models.	926	1.000	5.000	3.458	0.993	3.000
B5. The innovation in information dissemination formats attracts me more than the authenticity of the content.	926	1.000	5.000	3.636	0.951	4.000
B6. When encountering controversial events, I trust social media platforms more than official reports.	926	1.000	5.000	2.721	1.300	3.000
B7. Overall, I feel my value orientation is becoming more pan-entertainment under the influence of the internet.	926	1.000	5.000	3.730	0.818	4.000
C1. Dynamic visual designs (such as AR/VR) significantly enhance my content receptiveness.	926	1.000	5.000	3.903	0.771	4.000
C2. The "2D" expression style resonates with me more emotionally than traditional formats.	926	1.000	5.000	3.567	1.035	4.000

C3. The aesthetic quality of a product's UI directly impacts my willingness to use it.	926	1.000	5.000	3.876	0.809	4.000
C4. Multi-modal symbols (text, emojis, stickers, etc.) are necessary forms of expression.	926	1.000	5.000	3.975	0.841	4.000
C5. Text-based content should be adapted into dynamic video content.	926	1.000	5.000	3.748	0.858	4.000
C6. Serious content should, to some extent, reduce its authoritative tone to adapt to the current information expression.	926	1.000	5.000	3.722	1.029	4.000
C7. Overall, my aesthetic traits have been significantly shaped by the internet.	926	1.000	5.000	3.773	0.846	4.000
D1. Network ideological and political content is overly theoretical and disconnected from my real-life needs.	926	1.000	5.000	3.714	0.925	4.000
D2. The dissemination of serious topics lacks the interactivity expected in the new media era and is unappealing.	926	1.000	5.000	3.820	0.899	4.000
D3. The algorithmic recommendation system rarely pushes quality ideological and political education content to me.	926	1.000	5.000	3.742	0.957	4.000
D4. Existing network ideological and political content is difficult to share socially.	926	1.000	5.000	3.732	0.916	4.000
D5. I instinctively develop a psychological defense mechanism against "preachy" content.	926	1.000	5.000	3.882	0.922	4.000
D6. The entertainment packaging of ideological and political education content undermines its credibility.	926	1.000	5.000	3.753	0.849	4.000

In the research module "Cognitive Orientation Dimension (Information Decoding and Thinking Patterns)," Generation Z respondents generally believe that their cognitive patterns are trending towards fragmentation under the impact of pan-entertainment. The mean score for this dimension is above 4, indicating a strong alignment. Specifically, influenced by the characteristics of internet media, most participants tend to handle problems simultaneously and prefer watching videos over reading original texts when encountering difficulties. This has a significant impact on traditional ideological education, which heavily relies on textual analysis, indicating that campus network

education cannot be a simple "content transfer" but must deeply integrate with media-specific characteristics. The findings on reading preferences in this module support this viewpoint. Moreover, in the development of the internet, "the boundaries for receiving information are narrowing, eventually confining individuals in an information cocoon surrounded by homogenous content" [22]. Research results indicate that the phenomenon of "information cocoons" has significantly homogenized user experiences, exerting a major influence on the thinking and behavioral patterns of Generation Z. This provides practical verification for the perspective of media determinism. Consequently, university network education should align with the cognitive orientation of Generation Z and guide them to break free from homogeneous thinking traps to develop dialectical thinking skills as part of the modern educational mission.

The second module, "Value Orientation Dimension (Meaning Construction and Judgment Criteria)," explores the impact of the "deconstruction of seriousness" in internet media on campus network education. According to Table 1, Generation Z tends to browse entertainment content and values the form in which content is presented. In response to the statement "I quickly scroll past educational content due to insufficient entertainment value," the median score was 4, highlighting the importance of innovation in the presentation of online education. However, a focus on form does not mean Generation Z ignores the content itself. Data show that scores regarding content quality remain around the "average" mark, indicating an interest in formats that are both enriching and engaging. Additionally, Generation Z possesses a degree of media literacy that enables them to maintain discernment and independent thinking, forming an important foundation for the development of network education. Therefore, university network education should optimize dissemination formats while maintaining the depth, breadth, and richness of content to cater to student preferences, maximizing effectiveness through a harmonious combination of form and substance.

Module three focuses on the "Aesthetic Orientation Dimension (Form Preference and Emotional Resonance)," aiming to explore the specific preferences of Generation Z in communication formats. Overall, approximately 72.6% of respondents felt that their aesthetic preferences were significantly or somewhat shaped by internet media, forming a set of preferences regulated by technology. Among these, multimodal symbols (such as text, emojis, and stickers) and dynamic visual designs (such as AR/VR) were identified as the most important factors, significantly enhancing receptivity to network education. Additionally, factors such as interface design are influential. "The current public opinion on the internet is facing a crisis of 'internal collapse'", and the core challenge for university network education is to balance the seriousness of educational content without losing the interest of the target audience through excessive solemnity [23].

To identify the ideal approach for network education, we must also explore its current shortcomings. Research findings in module four indicate that a primary obstacle to achieving the effectiveness of character development is the outdated, "preachy" communication approach and the disconnection between serious content and media characteristics. There is also a dilemma where "over-packaging with entertainment" undermines educational impact. Essentially, modern university network education has sometimes failed to deeply understand the information orientation of youth, resulting in an improper handling of the contradiction between "content" and "form." In this context, instruction and guidance are the functional categories of education. Therefore, campus network education should empower the "truth" of content with the "harmony" of form, ensuring a proper relationship between the two so that constructive ideas can be deeply ingrained in the minds of students.

#### *4.3. Visualization of the Qualitative Research Findings*

The results of the qualitative analysis are presented in the form of high-frequency terms, which corroborate and enrich the findings of the quantitative research. In Table 2

response to the question "What elements contribute to a sense of disconnection," terms such as "boring," "abstract," and "distant from life" frequently appeared, indicating that the current content of college network ideological and political education has failed to effectively engage Generation Z in terms of narrative style and real-world relevance. This supports the quantitative conclusion of "content disconnection" from Module 4.

**Table 2.** Top Ten High-Frequency Terms in Responses Regarding Elements Contributing to a Sense of Alienation.

Word	Word Frequency	Percentage
Content	210	3.3%
Interaction	152	2.4%
Ideology	107	1.7%
Learning	103	1.6%
Form	88	1.4%
Scenario	87	1.4%
Operation	81	1.3%
Network	79	1.3%
Video	77	1.2%
Tedious	77	1.2%
Education	75	1.2%

In Table 3 the question regarding "preferred information dissemination formats," terms like "video," "visualization," and "interaction" emerged as focal points, further revealing Generation Z's clear preference for dynamic, concrete, and highly interactive content forms, echoing the strong identification with "dynamic visuals" in Module 3.

**Table 3.** Top Ten High-Frequency Terms in Responses Regarding Preferred Forms of Information Dissemination for Generation Z.

Word	Word Frequency	Percentage
Video	258	3.4%
Interaction	223	3.0%
Game	221	2.9%
Ideology	201	2.7%
Short	175	2.3%
Student	172	2.3%
Learning	169	2.2%
Livestream	154	2.0%
Experience	117	1.6%
Virtual	108	1.4%
Teaching	93	1.2%

Additionally, according to Table 4, in the Z generation's self-designed "ideal new media product for ideological and political education," terms such as "gamification" and "immersive" highlighted their expectation for ideological and political education to break away from one-way communication and evolve into an experiential, socialized, and intelligent-adapted new form. Therefore, this section inspires the transformation of college network ideological and political education towards a system-wide shift in the direction of visual storytelling, interactive experience design, and intelligent scenario integration to achieve the reconfiguration of discourse power in the new era.

**Table 4.** Top Ten High-Frequency Terms in Responses Regarding Ideal New Media Products for Ideological and Political Education.

Word	Word Frequency	Percentage
Content	210	3.3%
Interaction	152	2.4%
Ideology	107	1.7%
Learning	103	1.6%
Form	88	1.4%
Scenario	87	1.4%
Operation	81	1.3%
Network	79	1.3%
Video	77	1.2%
Tedious	77	1.2%
Education	75	1.2%

### 5. The Logic of Reshaping Discourse Power in College Network Ideological and Political Education and Its Practical Approach

From the empirical analysis of Generation Z's media orientation, it is evident that the challenges currently faced by campus network education are concentrated manifestations of systemic changes in communication paradigms and cognitive habits triggered by the shift in dominant media. Ultimately, discourse power is tied to the communication matrix centered on educators who disseminate mainstream ideologies, which must be reshaped through active self-reformation. Since this is a form of power involving profound educational guidance and value interpretation, mere content innovation is insufficient. It is essential to deeply grasp the media-subject relationship, understanding that the human position exists within a technological whole where various objects operate in coordination [24]. By clarifying the logic of network media and the characteristics of Generation Z, the goal is to drive a transformation across the entire production and dissemination chain.

#### 5.1. Promoting the Paradigm Shift in Discourse Power Relations

The power inherent in modern technology shapes how humans interact with the world and regulates the operational paradigm of discourse power [25]. Empirical data demonstrate that Generation Z exhibits a significant psychological defense mechanism against didactic content. The frequent occurrence of terms like "tedious" and "abstract" highlights the contradiction between traditional one-way indoctrination and the egalitarian nature of the digital age. Discourse consists of symbolic sequences presented and defined as specific modes of existence [26]. Discussions on power-discourse highlight that power is enacted through the circulation of information. While educators once held a monopoly on knowledge dissemination channels, the decentralization of the internet has allowed Generation Z to engage in flattened, multi-node information networks. Therefore, the priority in reshaping discourse power is to transition from a "power over" model to a model of equal interactive dialogue.

The primary task is achieving a fundamental transformation in power relations, shifting from a teacher-dominated model to one based on intersubjective interaction. This does not mean the dissolution of authority, but rather a transformation in its source—from relying on institutional identity to relying on professional expertise, personal charisma, and empathy. Specifically, focus should be placed on cultivating influential digital educators who are adept at using internet language and proficient in new media forms such as short videos and live streaming. Through genuine interaction and professional interpretation, they can rebuild trust. Additionally, teaching design should shift from grand narratives to micro-narratives, embedding theoretical explanations into topics

students care about-such as career development and social hotspots-thereby achieving guidance through equal dialogue and rational analysis.

### *5.2. Promoting the Deep "Re-embedding" of Discourse Content*

Empirical data show that Generation Z often finds current network educational content overly theoretical and disconnected from real-life needs. Under the impact of pan-entertainment, the spiritual world of youth can enter a state where individual cognition and value choices are detached from traditional collective meaning frameworks, becoming fragmented [27]. When educational discourse cannot establish a deep connection with the life experiences and emotional structures of Generation Z, it remains external knowledge that cannot be transformed into internal identity.

Therefore, the core of reshaping discourse power lies in promoting the "re-embedding" of mainstream value discourse into the lived world of Generation Z. This requires content production to transcend simple theoretical translation and focus on creative transformation. On one hand, it is essential to engage with subcultural circles to achieve a translational expression of mainstream values. By exploring fields like traditional culture, animation, and digital sports, educators can uncover elements such as craftsmanship and teamwork, creatively connecting these with mainstream social values. On the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen problem-oriented approaches, addressing real dilemmas such as "involution" and "lying flat" faced by the youth. By using systematic theoretical positions to provide in-depth analysis, mainstream values can be presented as spiritual support for solving practical problems, completing the loop from cognition to identity and practice.

### *5.3. Promoting Collaborative Governance of the Discourse Ecology*

Survey results indicate that algorithmic recommendation systems rarely promote high-quality educational content to Generation Z, leading to a significant "information cocoon" effect. This highlights the structural dependence of current campus network education on commercial algorithms. Driven by traffic-oriented logic, algorithms prioritize high-stimulation entertainment, creating tension with the depth and value required for education. Reshaping discourse power does not mean rejecting technology; rather, it is essential to define the value logic of technology within the human-machine organization [28].

Consequently, reshaping discourse power must involve constructing a healthy ecology through collaborative governance and technological empowerment. At the national and social levels, it is necessary to refine regulations for network content, addressing distorted historical narratives and extreme utilitarianism to create clear spaces for educational guidance. Simultaneously, mechanisms should encourage the creation of high-quality cultural works that balance intellectual depth with market recognition, displacing lowbrow content with quality offerings. At the university level, focus should be on building distinctive and controllable campus platforms. This includes integrating resources to create comprehensive new media applications and using artificial intelligence to develop interactive narrative products and virtual reality courses. More importantly, incorporating media literacy into the curriculum will enhance students' ability to think critically, transforming them from passive consumers into rational communicators and fortifying the defense against the erosion of pan-entertainment.

## **6. Conclusion**

### **Towards a Systemic Transformation in the Reshaping of Discourse Power**

The study of network educational discourse power focuses on strengthening mainstream values and fulfilling the mission of character development under new technological circumstances. Previous challenges in this field stemmed from the disconnection between traditional authoritative models and the egalitarian interaction of the internet, the

detachment of theoretical content from the experiences of Generation Z, and the conflict between educational logic and commercial algorithms. Therefore, reshaping discourse power is a profound practical transformation. It requires educators to understand the new forms of power in the digital era and promote changes in discourse relationships, content, and ecology. Through this systemic innovation, mainstream values can be integrated into the cognitive habits and emotional structures of the new generation. This will allow campus network education to regain attention and enhance its leadership in the digital realm, effectively shaping the generation responsible for future national development.

**Funding:** Zhejiang Province College Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program "On the Reconstructing of Discourse Power in College Network Ideological and Political Education from the Perspective of Media Determinism—An Empirical Study Based on the Media Characteristics of Generation Z under the Influence of Pan-Entertainment Trends" (Project Number: S202510345079).

## References

1. M. Sterna, "Digital natives vs digital immigrants," *Zeszyty Glottodydaktyczne*, no. 8, pp. 91-101, 2018.
2. K. V. Lewis, "The power of interaction rituals: The Student Volunteer Army and the Christchurch earthquakes," *International Small Business Journal*, vol. 31, no. 7, pp. 811-831, 2013. doi: 10.1177/0266242613478438
3. Y. Wang, and M. N. L. Y. Abdullah, "A meta-analytic review of smartphone addiction prevalence in Chinese college students," *Current Psychology*, vol. 45, no. 5, p. 548, 2026. doi: 10.1007/s12144-026-09160-z
4. H. Jiang, "ICCG: cultural communication via the internet and GLBT community building in China," 2005.
5. Z. Liu, "Exploring the potential of digital media in ideological education: a study on educational technology and political engagement," *Education and Information Technologies*, vol. 30, no. 18, pp. 25789-25827, 2025. doi: 10.1007/s10639-025-13760-w
6. Y. Zhang, "On the New Ideas of Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities under the New Media Era [J]," *Adult and Higher Education*, vol. 4, no. 14, pp. 20-27, 2022.
7. B. Millington, "Amusing ourselves to life: New media and the politics of interactivity (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia)," 2011.
8. Y. Liu, M. Wang, and P. Xiao, "The Influence of Short Video Viewing Time on the Undergraduate and Graduate Students' Inattention: The Mediating Role of Self-Control,". doi: 10.5220/0014279900004942
9. Q. Zhang, "Dilemma and Opportunity of Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities Under the Influence of Pan-entertainment," *Advances in Education, Humanities and Social Science Research*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 772-772, 2025.
10. B. Guan, "'Risk-Return' Analysis of M&A Logic in Media Market: A Case Study of Game Industry in China," 2026.
11. B. Mills, and D. M. Barlow, "The Toronto school Reading: Innis, HA (1951)'The bias of communication', in Innis, HA, *The Bias of Communication*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp," 33-60. In *Reading Media Theory* (pp. 220-246). Routledge, 2014.
12. S. W. Campbell, and R. Glover, "Mobile Media and Communication as More Than Human: Taking a Deep Dive with Whales," *Mobile Media & Communication*, 2026.
13. S. Almakaty, "A Critical Analysis of Technological Determinism Theory in the Evolving New Media Concept and Environment," 2025. doi: 10.20944/preprints202510.0972.v1
14. P. Aigrain, "Sharing: Culture and the economy in the internet age (p. 244)," *Amsterdam University Press*, 2012.
15. J. M. Koblinska, "New Era, New Media: The Postsocialist Chinese Media Ecology (Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley)," 2021.
16. J. Kamin, "Social Media and Information Polarization: Amplifying Echoes or Extremes? (Doctoral dissertation)," 2019.
17. S. W. S. Chen, "'Instructive and Amusing': Xiaohai yuebao (The Child's Paper, 1875-1915) and Childhood," In *Children's Literature and Transnational Knowledge in Modern China: Education, Religion, and Childhood*, 2019, pp. 73-108.
18. R. Howells, and J. Negreiros, "Visual culture," *Polity*, 2012.
19. F. R. D. Navalpotro, and J. M. L. Juarez, "Surveillance Capitalism and Yarvinism: Technocratic Control in Digital Governance," In *AI Influence on Governance and Law in the Digital Age*, 2026, pp. 133-150.
20. R. Jeffcote, "Technology@ utopia," *Paideusis*, vol. 3, 2003.
21. A. O. Oladejo, and E. O. Oni, "Political education and community development in Nigeria: Issues and challenges," *Canadian Social Science*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 45-54, 2017.
22. S. Chen, H. Qiu, and W. He, "The information cocoon paradox: fostering unity or fueling divergence?," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 1-13, 2025. doi: 10.1057/s41599-025-05169-0
23. A. Latief, and M. Tiara, "Strengthening digital literacy and political culture for Gen-Z through Pancasila education learning in higher education," *Jurnal Civics: Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 524-534, 2025.

24. G. Stocker, and M. Jandl, "Ars Electronica 2023 Festival for Art, Technology, and Society: Exhibition Catalogue: Who owns the truth? = Wem gehört die Wahrheit? (p. 434)," *Hatje Cantz Verlag*, 2023.
25. I. D. Thomson, "Heidegger on Technology's Danger and Promise in the Age of AI (Elements in the Philosophy of Martin Heidegger)," 2025.
26. S. F. Schneck, "Michel Foucault on power/discourse, theory and practice," *Human Studies*, pp. 15-33, 1987. doi: 10.1007/bf00142984
27. J. Thwaites-Brevik, "The Development of Political Ideology in Generation Z and Why Higher Education Is Not to Blame for Their Liberal Proclivity (Bachelor's thesis, Ohio University)," 2024.
28. K. H. Hörning, D. Ahrens, and A. Gerhard, "Do technologies have time? New practices of time and the transformation of communication technologies," *Time & Society*, vol. 8, no. 2-3, pp. 293-308, 1999. doi: 10.1177/0961463x99008002005

**Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:** The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of the publisher and/or the editor(s). The publisher and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.