

## Research on Innovation of Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities from the Perspective of Effectuation Theory

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**Abstract:** Taking the uncertain environment faced by ideological and political education in colleges and universities as the logical starting point and according to the *Effectuation Theory* proposed by Saras Sarasvathy who is the professor of University of Virginia, this paper points out that by effectively designing the existing objective environment into a new development prospect, innovate the new thinking of ideological and political work in colleges and universities; by creating a relaxed and trusted learning environment and relevant classroom activities, establish a new ideological and political course; by acting as the conductor of ideological and political guidance of students and designing characteristic guiding projects, innovate the new methods of ideological and political work.

With the continuous deepening of ideological and political education research in colleges and universities, scholars have gradually come to realize that the current ideological and political education in colleges and universities always underlines the goal orientation, presetting ideological and political education goals first, and then through the carriers and methods to achieve the goal of talent training. However, the current international political and economic environment and the Fourth Industrial Revolution brought about by the development of the Internet, artificial intelligence, and blockchain and other emerging industries, which have brought complete uncertainty to the ideological and political work in colleges and universities. Therefore, how to establish a scientific development concept and effective education means in the face of uncertain environment is particularly important for the ideological and political work in colleges and universities.

Saras Sarasvathy who is a professor in the Darden School of Business of University of Virginia, has proposed the *Effectuation Theory* which is a research on various thinking ways and behaviors in situations of uncertainty. The theoretical basis of ideological and political education in colleges and universities comes from the Marxist philosophy system. How to practice Marxist theory into China and find the Chinese solution in the face of the characteristics of Chinese universities in the new era, which is precisely guided by the idea of testing truth and developing truth in practice. This paper attempts to explore and innovate research from three angles: the curriculum, the activity and the method of ideological and political education in colleges and universities with effectuation as the logical starting point.

### 1. New Thinking of Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities from the Perspective of Effectuation Theory

The ideological and political work in colleges and universities under the perspective of effectuation theory emphasizes that in the face of uncertain environment, the existing objective environment can be transformed into a new development prospect through effective education design principles and methods. Starting from the individual experience and practice of students, we should focus on actions, actions effects and the interaction between them, and through teamwork reach a consensus, integrate information resources, and guide students to achieve their goals of self-development.

## **1.1 Recognizing the Time Features of Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities**

There are many uncertainties in ideological and political education in colleges and universities, such as education environment, characteristics of education objects and educational information technology. With the deepening of the economic influence brought by the Sino-American trade friction and changing of the world political and economic development pattern, education environment will develop a series of uncertain changes. “Belt and Road” and China-Africa development also have deep influence on the international and domestic political environment. The characteristics of the students show that when the generation after 00s enter the campus, they have new demands for their own growth and career development, and pay more attention to their self-experience, self-perception, self-evaluation. Multi-channel of information sources, the extensiveness of artificial intelligence, and deep application of Blockchain, which put young college students in an extremely unstable environment. The educational information technology has a total reformation. With the change of Flipped Classroom, MOOC, Internet Class, Micro-classroom and knowledge payment platforms, college classroom is no longer the only way for young students to acquire knowledge.

## **1.2 Opening up the Multi-dimension of Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities**

The *Effectuation Theory* has four core principles, namely: starting action with existing resources, setting affordable losses, utilizing contingency and building partnerships. The important principle of ideological and political education in colleges and universities is to solve the ideological problems and practical problems together. When college students confront professional development planning, college life design, employment & entrepreneurial choice and other practical problems, the basic elements and principles of effectuation should be applied to the actual life according to conditions, which will achieve twice the result with half the effort.

The “Bird in Hand Principle” emphasizes not to wait for the opportunity, but making full use of all the resources available from the actual action, which can be applied for college students to choose second classroom activities and voluntary service projects. The “Affordable Loss Principle” focuses on the need to consider whether the negative consequences are tolerable in any decision, and not just to see the benefits in the forecast. This principle can be applied to students in the face of career planning, academic development planning, and so on. The “Lemonade Principle” put forward a good health mentality in the face of difficulties and setbacks, which can be applied to the motivational education for the students in family financial difficulties. The “Crazy Quilt Principle” requires to establish cooperative partnership, improve personal influence in a team and work together. This principle can play an active role in the construction of Party branch, League branch, class and community. [1]

## **2. New Course of Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities from the Perspective of Effectuation Theory**

To help young college students face and adapt to the uncertain and unpredictable future is a new subject for the ideological and political education in colleges and universities. However, the “expert infusion” teaching method is almost the only way of our ideological and political education. Under the guidance of this thought, the characteristic of teaching behavior is “speaking-listening-doing”. While in an environment where it is impossible to plan for the long term or predict the path of future development, a more effective way of thinking and acting is to act first and then reflect on it, like an entrepreneur, which is “doing-learning-thinking”.

### **2.1 Creating a Relaxed and Trusted Learning Environment**

Recording ideas timely and quickly with stickers which are frequently used in entrepreneurship education, which benefits team members to share and reflect. Let the students enter the history and

reality with the attitude of acceptance and integration. In the classroom, educators should impress the students deeply through storytelling, case analysis, quick questioning, debate and other methods. Let the theory of ideological and political education into the mind more. [2] We can use the Sudoku way to quickly link the vision of the Pioneer Party branch; choose the pop song *Ten Miles Farewell to Red Army* to link to the struggle history in Jinggangshan; For students with different majors, you can use different teaching method. For the students majoring in economics, they can understand the resources competition in Sino-US trade friction through a game about money. For the students majoring in computer science, the iPhone case can be used to analyze the characteristics of demographic dividend changes in China.

## **2.2 Designing Relevant Classroom Activities**

In the ideological and political classroom, let the students experience relevant activities in the real or near real situation. The activity design must consider the content relevance, the interest and the maneuverability. Design the schedule of Three-meeting and One-lesson of the Party branch with the mind mapping; experience the changes of hometown in the past 40 years after Reform and Opening up through interviews; design a class debate contest to help students understand the international impact of China-Africa foreign policy; and reproduce the hardships of the establishment of the Jinggangshan revolutionary base area in the way of drama performance. The design of activities should always be combined with the teaching contents, and be carried out in a way that is favoured by students and convenient for classroom operation. [2] The content should conform to the students' knowledge structure and cognitive level, which should be taught visually as much as possible. Let the students set up a structured knowledge model from the existing politic knowledge.

## **3. New Methods of Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities from the Perspective of Effectuation Theory**

The core of effectuation theory is to guide students to experience and practice in action. Leadership is the basic ability of ideological and political educators in colleges and universities. Nowadays, in the face of post-2000s young college students, ideological and political workers must fully tap and inspire the potential of each student, reach consensus and integrate information resources through teamwork, and help students achieve their development goals through self-exploration. Ideological and political workers in colleges and universities should master some basic guiding techniques and make full use of students' knowledge and experience to arouse their spontaneous enthusiasm. They should rely on the organization and guidance work of Party branches, classes and associations, and effectively promote the influence of ideological and political work.

### **3.1 Be the Conductor of the Ideological and Political Guidance of the Students**

Ideological and political workers in colleges and universities are often used to regard themselves as experts and experienced persons, and preach to students placing themselves in the environment of educating and educated. The effectuation theory requires educators to take themselves out of the preaching environment and try to regard themselves as guider without direction, so as to help students find new ways and solutions to solve problems through self-exploration. When facing the team building, educators should remove the barriers between team members effectively, appreciate and respect every student, instead of always providing ideas and conclusions. They need to focus on the process of guidance and let the students discuss the detail. The ideological and political workers in colleges and universities should learn to be like a conductor in their daily team guidance, not a participator, who focus their energies on teaching people how to interact, how to inspire each other, and how to reach a common understanding.

### **3.2 Creatively Design the Guiding Project for Ideological and Political Work**

The use of effective tools in the right environment will have a multiplier effect with half the effort. At present, a large number of active projects have been gradually established in the guiding

process. Whether it is the CSA (clarification-solution-action plan) system, the ME-WE-US method, or Art Gallery Street, open space, idea exchange, World Cafe and so on, they all can be introduced to the campus according to the actual situation.<sup>[3]</sup> In the use of specific tools, we should combine the actual situation of students and colleges and make creative selection and transformation. For example, when a student team is eager to find a solution to a particular job, “World Cafe” can be applied to the organization of the conference. The core of this technology is to find out the questions that can be enlightening and targeted, which put forward higher requirements for college students. Therefore, ideological and political workers must participate in the problems design in advance, in order to better apply “World Cafe” to university campuses.

Introducing the effectuation theory into the field of ideological and political education in colleges and universities and innovating the research angle and method, which enrich the research connotation of ideological and political education greatly. What is more, it will further improve the timeliness and influence of ideological and political work in colleges and universities.

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