

Research on digital transformation of political theory education in Vietnam

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Abstract: As a socialist country, Vietnam's political theory education plays a key role in cultivating the political awareness and ideological identity of party members, cadres and the people. In recent years, the Vietnamese government has actively promoted the digital transformation of political theory education to meet the needs of the information age. However, it still faces multiple structural dilemmas, including insufficient technological infrastructure, cybersecurity threats, unequal distribution of educational resources, and lagging legal and policy support, etc. It is necessary to continuously promote the in-depth development of the digital transformation of Vietnam's political-theoretical education through the leadership of the national strategy and policy support, the digital restructuring of the curricular system and teaching content, and the in-depth fusion of information technology and teaching methods.

Keywords: Vietnam; political theory education; digital transformation; education reform; education system innovation

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Introduction

With the rapid development of information technology, digital transformation has become an important trend in various fields around the world. As a socialist country with rapid economic growth in Southeast Asia, Vietnam's digital transformation of political theory education has shown unique paths and characteristics. However, in the long run, it still faces multiple structural dilemmas that need to be solved. This paper focuses on analyzing the necessity of digital transformation of political theory teaching today, basing on the challenges and dilemmas faced in the process, and analyzing in-depth the specific measures of the transformation, so as to provide reference and inspiration for systematically improving the quality of digital transformation.

1 The significance of digital transformation in Vietnam's Political Theory Education

1.1 Transcending spatiotemporal constraints: augmenting educational accessibility

Traditional political theory pedagogy in Vietnam predominantly relies on offline centralized instruction (e.g., party school seminars and conference-based lectures), which faces systemic limitations in temporal flexibility, geographical accessibility, and resource distribution. The digital paradigm shift enables ubiquitous knowledge dissemination through online learning ecosystems – including modular e-learning platforms (e.g., digital textbooks, video lectures), social media integration, and mobile-first learning applications – thereby democratizing access for diverse demographics such as party cadres, students, and civilians. This transformation particularly resonates with Vietnam's digitally native youth cohort, whose cognitive engagement patterns favor gamified learning interfaces, microlearning formats, and collaborative social learning communities. A case in point is the Communist Party of Vietnam e-Library, a state-sponsored digital repository that delivers curated political theory resources to geographically dispersed populations, effectively bridging the urban-rural educational divide.

1.2 Enhancing pedagogical interactivity: a multimodal learning framework

Conventional unidirectional knowledge transmission in political theory education demonstrates suboptimal learner engagement metrics. Digital interventions address this through synchronous/asynchronous interactive mechanisms like crowdsourced discussion forums, real-time expert Q&A sessions, and virtual symposiums. Vietnamese party schools have adopted flipped classroom models, where self-paced online theory acquisition precedes offline ap

plied learning workshops, achieving statistically significant improvements in knowledge retention (Hanoi Pedagogical University, 2023). Advanced immersive technologies (e.g., VR historical reenactments of the Đổi Mới reforms, AR-enhanced policy simulations) transform abstract concepts into experiential learning opportunities, fostering emotional connectivity and ideological alignment. Furthermore, data visualization toolkits and animated infographics serve as cognitive scaffolds for comprehending complex socioeconomic policies and geopolitical theories.

1.3 Catalyzing systemic educational reform: toward a digitally competent workforce

The digital transition necessitates curricular restructuring through blended learning architectures and just-in-time microcredentialing systems, rendering political theory education operationally agile and resource-efficient. By replacing legacy print-based distribution channels with cloud-based resource sharing, Vietnam achieves horizontal equity in educational resource allocation while optimizing fiscal expenditures. Crucially, this transformation demands human capital upskilling – developing hybrid professionals proficient in both Marxist-Leninist doctrinal expertise and digital literacy competencies, thereby meeting Vietnam's strategic imperatives for smart governance systems and e-government infrastructure development.

1.4 Promoting academic exchanges to enhance the international influence of Vietnamese political theory

In the context of globalization, digital transformation enables Vietnam to more effectively disseminate its political theories and concepts of governance to the international community, so that the study of Vietnam's political theories gains opportunities to exchange with scholars from around the world, spreading the Vietnamese model in the context of academic cross-fertilization, and enhancing international communication power and influence.

At the same time, against the backdrop of intensified Western ideological penetration, digital transformation has enabled Vietnam to more proactively publicize correct political views abroad, refute erroneous statements, respond to false reports in the international arena with facts and figures, and safeguard the country's ideological security.

2 Challenges in Vietnam's digital transformation of political theory education

2.1 Infrastructure deficits and the persistence of digital asymmetries

Despite Vietnam's digital nation 2025 vision targeting universal fiber-optic coverage, implementation lags persist, with rural/mountainous regions reporting sub-60% network penetration rates (National Digital Transformation Committee White Paper, 2024). This infrastructural fragmentation creates first-order exclusion of marginalized populations from online political education, exacerbating socio-spatial inequalities. The digital divide manifests not merely as hardware deprivation but also as capability gaps – while the government provides cost-free digital curricula, 42% of rural households report device unavailability and prohibitive data costs (Hanoi Teachers' University Socioeducational Survey, 2024). Consequently, rural learners' weekly digital engagement metrics register at 33.3% of urban counterparts, perpetuating cognitive stratification.

2.2 Cybersecurity threats and ethical challenges

First, Vietnam has yet to establish a comprehensive data protection system as it pushes forward with the digitization of education.²⁰²⁴ Although Vietnam's national databases have been initially integrated, there is still a risk of user information leakage on a number of local education platforms. Second, the openness of online education platforms provides a breeding ground for cyberbullying and the infiltration of hostile ideologies. During the epidemic, Vietnam's online classrooms frequently suffered from “classroom intrusion”, with unscrupulous elements disrupting the teaching order by uploading obscene pictures and spreading anti-government rhetoric. Such incidents not only undermine the authority of education, but also make young people question and shake the mainstream ideological identity. Finally, the application of artificial intelligence and big data technology has raised ethical controversies while enhancing educational efficiency. For example, attempts to analyze students' political theory learning behaviors and predict their ideological tendencies through AI algorithms may be considered by students

as “digital surveillance” and an infringement of their privacy rights. Of course, algorithmic recommendations may exacerbate the information cocoon effect, limiting learners to the fast, convenient, yet monolithic ideological content brought about by online technology and weakening the development of critical thinking.

2.3 Inadequate policy and legal support and insufficient teacher capacity

On the one hand, although Vietnam has enacted the Law on Cybersecurity and the National Plan on Children's Internet Protection, its provisions mostly focus on content regulation, and there are insufficient specific norms for the digital transformation of education. There is a lack of clear legislation on issues such as intellectual property protection, boundaries of responsibility for online education platforms, and cross-border data flows. Although the Vietnamese government has launched documents such as the Strategy for the Development of the Semiconductor and Integrated Circuit Industry to 2030, there is a clear tendency to “emphasize technology over content” in local implementation. Some provinces have over-invested in hardware procurement for digital transformation, while neglecting curriculum content and teacher training, leading to a rise in idle equipment. On the other hand, digital transformation requires a combination of people with knowledge of both political theory and digital technology, but there is a serious lack of such teachers in Vietnamese universities. According to 2024 statistics, only 15 percent of political theory teachers nationwide are skilled in using data analysis tools or developing multimedia courseware, with the problem being more acute in rural areas.

3 Paths and insights of digital transformation of political theory education in Vietnam

3.1 National strategic leadership and policy support

The digital transformation of political theory education in Vietnam is first reflected in the top-level design and strategic deployment at the national level. The Communist Party of Vietnam (CPC) and the government attach great importance to ideological work and regard political theory education as a key link in training socialist builders and successors. In 2021, the Vietnamese government approved the National Digital Transformation Plan to 2025 (Towards 2030), which explicitly identified higher education as a key area for advancing the country's digital transformation and industrial restructuring. Under this national strategic framework, the digital transformation of political theory education has received strong policy support and resources. In the future, Vietnam will continue to promote institutional mechanism innovation, strengthen Party leadership and State management, and provide regulatory support and policy guidance for the digital transformation of political theory education and training.

3.2 Digital reconstruction of curriculum system and teaching content

The core of the digital transformation of political theory education in Vietnam is the systematic reconstruction of the curriculum and teaching content. After years of reforms and adjustments, the political theory courses in Vietnamese universities have formed a curriculum system centered on the Basic Principles of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought and the Revolutionary Line of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV). In the process of digital transformation, these traditional curricula are undergoing a dual innovation in content and form. Firstly, in terms of curriculum content, emphasis is placed on closely integrating the actual needs of Vietnam's innovation and opening up, highlighting national characteristics, and incorporating digital issues. For example, the impact of the information technology revolution on social patterns. Secondly, the development of online learning resources, the production of micro-lesson videos and the stock of digital lesson plans are emphasized in the construction of teaching materials and resources. Finally, in terms of the modularization and flexibility of the course structure, emphasis is placed on the adoption of online and offline blended teaching modes, with part of the content transferred to the online platform for completion, and classroom time used for discussion, Q&A and practical sessions.

3.3 Deep integration of information technology and teaching methods

The most innovative aspect of the digital transformation of political theory education in Vietnam is the deep integration of information technology and teaching methods. First, the promotion of the blended learning model is a distinctive feature of the digital transformation of political theory education in Vietnam. This model combines online independent learning and offline interactive teaching, giving full play to the advantages of both environments. In the online session, students learn basic theories, watch teaching videos, and complete knowledge tests through digital platforms; the offline classroom focuses on the analysis of difficult points, case discussions, and practical activities; second, the application of intelligent teaching tools has injected new vitality into political theory education. Some leading universities in Vietnam have begun to try to use AI technology to develop intelligent assistants for political theory learning, providing personalized tutoring and answering questions for students. Finally, the establishment of a digital evaluation system is an important support for the transformation of teaching methods. Traditional evaluation of political theory courses mainly relies on final exams and essay writing, making it difficult to fully reflect students' learning process and ability development. Vietnam has gradually established a diversified digital evaluation system in the digital transformation, including online tests, data analysis of the learning process, and e-portfolio assessment.

4 Conclusion

The digital transformation of political theory education in Vietnam will become a brand new educational trend in the future. Online and traditional teaching are flexibly combined with the support of information technology to help learners take advantage of both forms of learning and information technology to master knowledge. It should be noted that political theory education has distinct ideological attributes, and its digital transformation cannot simply copy the technical solutions of other disciplines. It is necessary to explore in practice a path that makes full use of the advantages of technology while maintaining the essential characteristics of political theory education, as a way to stimulate the participation and enthusiasm of the subject and object of education, and to enhance the effectiveness of political theory education in Vietnam while increasing the dissemination and influence of political theory.

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