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# Research on the Dilemmas and Strategies of Value Guidance for Vocational College Students in the Self-Media Era

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**Abstract: As self-media has become a vital channel for vocational college students to access information and develop value systems, the mechanism of value formation is undergoing a profound transformation from "passive reception" to "active construction". Based on empirical research at NT Vocational College and incorporating perspectives from communication studies and educational psychology, this paper systematically analyzes the dual impacts of the self-media environment on students' value cognition, emotional identification, and behavioral choices. The study reveals core challenges in current educational practices, including students' weak value judgment capabilities, teachers' diminished educational discourse power, and lagging school guidance mechanisms. Building on this foundation, the paper innovatively constructs an integrated "cognitive-emotional-behavioral" guidance model and proposes systematic educational strategies across four dimensions: curriculum system, platform development, evaluation mechanisms, and educational communities. These strategies aim to provide theoretical reference and practical pathways for enhancing the timeliness, relevance, and effectiveness of value education in the self-media context.**

**Keywords: Self-Media; Vocational College Students; Value Guidance; Educational Strategies**

## 1. Introduction

We live in an age dominated by digital information. Weibo, TikTok, Bilibili, and other self-media platforms have deeply integrated into the daily lives of vocational college students. For them, these platforms are more than just entertainment; they form a foundational environment for acquiring information, engaging in social interactions, and understanding the world. This transformation not only reshapes the way knowledge is disseminated but also profoundly influences the formation of students' values. This new environment is characterized by unprecedented interactivity, concealment, and complexity.

Vocational college students are typically intellectually active and practice-oriented. However, their value systems are still in a critical period of maturation and are therefore quite vulnerable. Under the impact of diverse, massive, and often uneven self-media information, they are prone to value confusion and cognitive bias. The problem is that current value education in many vocational colleges largely continues the traditional classroom "indoctrination" model. This old approach is significantly disconnected from the cognitive habits and emotional structures students have developed within the self-media ecosystem. This disconnect is a key reason for poor educational effectiveness [1].

Therefore, exploring how to effectively guide students' values through in-depth dialogue with self-media has become an urgent task in the reform of ideological and political education in vocational colleges [2]. This paper aims to go beyond simply describing these phenomena. Instead, it conducts empirical analysis and theoretical construction to deeply analyze current challenges and seek systematic solutions. The goal is to provide theoretical support and practical approaches for building a value guidance system that aligns with the dynamic characteristics of the digital era.

## 2. The Dual Influence of Self-Media on the Values of Vocational College Students

Self-media is not a value-neutral tool. Its technical characteristics and content ecology together create a powerful "simulated environment" that shapes students' values, showing a distinct dual influence.

## 2.1 Positive Influence: Expanding Value Horizons and Stimulating Subject Consciousness

On the positive side, self-media has broken down the traditional educational boundaries of time and space. It offers students a window to diverse cultures and cutting-edge ideas from around the world. For example, by following high-quality content creators in fields like technology, environmental protection, and public welfare, students can transcend the limitations of their campus and academic disciplines. This exposure broadens their social perspectives and can strengthen their civic awareness and sense of responsibility [3].

A concrete example can be found on Bilibili's knowledge section. Here, creators produce in-depth analyses of precision manufacturing processes. These videos do not just convey technical knowledge; they inspire professional pride among engineering students and plant the seeds of "craftsmanship spirit" in their hearts. Furthermore, the low entry barriers and strong interactivity of self-media empower students. They are no longer just passive value recipients. They can express their own values, engage in public discourse, and become active explorers, builders, and disseminators of values. This active participation significantly promotes the awakening of their self-awareness and critical thinking.

## 2.2 Negative Effects: Loss of Value and Increased Risk of Cognitive Bias

However, the self-media environment also carries significant risks. Algorithmic recommendation systems, while designed to provide personalized services, often create rigid "information cocoons" and "echo chamber effects." These algorithms continuously reinforce students' existing biases and interests, narrowing their value perspectives over time. A student who only watches entertainment content may never see news about scientific discoveries or social issues.

More alarmingly, some self-media outlets, in a relentless pursuit of online traffic, deliberately promote non-mainstream values like consumerism, hedonism, and the "lying flat" culture. These messages directly undermine the cultivation of a vocational spirit—a spirit marked by hard work, dedication, and the pursuit of excellence. Additionally, students often face online rumors that are difficult to

distinguish from truth, and extreme viewpoints packaged in emotional appeals. Without strong critical thinking skills, they are prone to value confusion and cognitive bias, which can shake their rational identification with positive values. A typical case involves students who, after prolonged immersion in gaming and entertainment content, exhibit marked detachment and apathy toward current political affairs and social welfare issues. They may see no value in participating in community activities or following the news.

## 3. The Practical Dilemma of Value Guidance for Vocational Students

Currently, colleges face multiple challenges at the student, teachers and institutional mechanisms in the process of using self-media to guide values.

## 3.1 Student Level: Weak Value Judgment and Media Literacy

Vocational college students often demonstrate strong practical skills and an openness to new ideas. Yet, they may lack systematic theoretical knowledge and well-honed critical thinking abilities [4,5]. When confronted with the overwhelming, fragmented, and emotionally charged content on self-media platforms, many students struggle. They find it hard to discern the authenticity of information and to make sound, rational value judgments.

Our research reveals that over 65% of surveyed students find it challenging to quickly assess the credibility and underlying value orientation of self-media content. They tend to be more drawn to visually engaging and emotionally charged material than to content that is factually accurate, logically coherent, or ethically considered. In other words, a flashy video is often more influential than a well-reasoned article. This deficiency in immunity against poor value judgment exposes them to a heightened risk of being misled by distorted or harmful values.

## 3.2 At the Teacher Level: Challenges to Educational Discourse Power and Digital Competence

In a traditional classroom, teachers maintain a position of discourse dominance, largely based on their authoritative knowledge. However, in the virtual space created by self-media, this authority is easily diluted by the overwhelming presence of popular internet influencers and

opinion leaders [6]. The teacher's voice is just one among millions.

Compounding this problem, many ideological and political education teachers have not fully adapted. They often use self-media platforms only for one-way information dissemination, much like a digital bulletin board. Their unfamiliarity with students' online language, humor, and communication styles (the online discourse system) makes it difficult for them to create content that is truly engaging and impactful. The result is often an awkward situation where teachers feel "speechlessness" or are essentially "talking to themselves," with little real engagement from students. This digital divide and disconnect in communication styles severely weaken the penetration and influence of value guidance.

### 3.3 School Level: Lagging behind in Collaborative Guidance Mechanism and Content Construction

While most vocational colleges have recognized the importance of self-media, they often still lack systematic planning and effective resource integration for value-oriented guidance. Firstly, different departments—such as ideological education, student affairs, publicity, and the various secondary colleges—often operate their self-media accounts independently. There is little coordination. The content they produce tends to be homogeneous and repetitive, lacking a unified and compelling value-guiding thread. This makes it difficult to form a cohesive educational synergy that reinforces the same messages.

Secondly, the ideological content on official school self-media platforms often remains overly formalized and propagandistic. It features rigid, bureaucratic language and monotonous formats, such as long text articles. This type of content fails to connect with students' real lives, interests, and emotional needs. It does not spark joy or curiosity. Consequently, student engagement is low, and interactivity is weak. The school's official channels, therefore, often fail to effectively occupy the main arena of online education, leaving that space open to other, less constructive influences.

### 4. Theoretical Framework and Practical Turn of Value Guidance in the Era of Self-Media

To systematically resolve these dilemmas, we must move beyond making small, piecemeal adjustments. We need a solid theoretical foundation to guide an overall transformation of educational practice.

### 4.1 Theoretical Framework: Developing an Integrated 'Cognitive-Affective-Behavioral' Guidance Model

Drawing on theories from social psychology and communication studies, we understand that a solid establishment of values results from the synergistic interaction among three elements: cognition (thinking), emotion (feeling), and behavior (doing) [7]. You cannot just tell someone what to value; they must think it, feel it, and do it. In light of the self-media era's characteristics, we propose the following integrated guidance model:

4.1.1 Cognitive Anchoring: Cultivating Critical Thinking Beyond Information Silos. The core objective is to develop students' ability to process complex information. Educators should implement critical media literacy education, teaching students to deconstruct information sources, intentions, and narrative frameworks while identifying algorithmic biases. This enables them to anchor rational judgment amidst the cacophony of value pluralism, thereby breaking free from the constraints of information silos.

4.1.2 Emotional Resonance: Cultivating Emotional Connection in Virtual Experiences. Value education must shift from "reasoning" to "empathizing". Educational content should establish strong connections with students' life experiences and emotional needs. By exploring inspiring stories from daily life and showcasing the touching dedication of master craftsmen, we can transform mainstream values into tangible, relatable emotional experiences, facilitating a profound transition from "knowledge" to "belief".

4.1.3 Behavioral Synergy: Empowering Participatory Action to Realize Value. The ultimate establishment of values relies on sustained behavioral practice. Education should focus on transforming online value recognition into offline practical actions, such as converting public welfare campaigns into volunteer service projects. By designing a closed-loop system of "online learning-offline practice-online sharing," students are encouraged to experience, validate, and internalize values through action, thereby achieving the unity of knowledge and practice.

**4.2 Practice Shift: from "Authoritative Indoctrination" to "Interactive Construction"**

Under the above theoretical framework, educational practice needs to achieve three fundamental shifts:

4.2.1 Role Shift: From "Truth Dispensers" to "Facilitators of Dialogue". Teachers need to transition from being the sole source of knowledge ("truth dispensers") to becoming facilitators of dialogue. They are no longer the only authority in the room. Instead, they become designers of engaging learning environments, guides for intellectual exchanges, and catalysts for thoughtful value analysis [8]. Their role is to ask good questions and guide discussions, not just provide all the answers.

4.2.2 Field Transformation: From the 'Closed Classroom' to the 'Open Community'. The core location of values education must expand beyond the physical and temporal limits of the "closed classroom." It should actively extend to the online communities where students naturally gather—the group chats, forums, and social media platforms. The goal is to create a ubiquitous 'cloud-based ideological and political education platform' that is integrated into their digital lives.

4.2.3 Evaluation Shift: From "Knowledge Assessment" to "Behavioral Observation". The focus of evaluation must evolve. It can no longer be primarily about testing what facts students remember ("knowledge assessment"). Comprehensive assessments should now emphasize students' real-world verbal and behavioral expressions, the value choices they make in project practices, and the emotional tendencies they reveal through their online interactions, which can be understood via big data analysis. We need to see if they are living the values, not just learning about them.

**5. Systematic Education Strategies for Value Guidance of Vocational College Students in the Era of Self-Media**

To address the mentioned difficulties and support this necessary turn, it is essential to take the "cognitive-emotional-behavior" model as the core guide. We propose taking systematic measures from the following four dimensions to build a new, effective pattern of value guidance.

**5.1 Building a Dual-Track Curriculum System Integrating "Cognition and Literacy"**

The foundation for achieving "cognitive anchoring" is to integrate media literacy education directly into the ideological and political courses and the general education system. Schools should establish specific courses or workshops with practical focuses, such as "New Media and Society" and "Critical Thinking and Information Verification." The goal of these courses is to cultivate students' abilities in information deconstruction, value analysis, and responsible expression as digital citizens.

During teaching, educators should not rely on outdated examples. They must actively incorporate trending self-media events as real-time case studies. Teachers can organize students to engage in value debates about these events or write reflective essays. This method achieves an organic integration of knowledge transmission and value guidance, making the lessons immediately relevant.

**5.2 Build a Teacher-Student Co-Construction Platform Driven by "Emotion and Interaction"**

We must break away from the traditional one-way communication model. Instead, we should build political education platforms that are designed to spark genuine "emotional resonance." One effective way is to encourage political education teachers, subject teachers, and student leaders to form content creation communities. Together, they can jointly operate distinctive and warm-hearted political education self-media accounts.

For instance, a school could develop a short video series like "Craftsmanship Stories" or "Positive Workplace Energy." These series could invite outstanding alumni and corporate artisans to appear on camera, interpreting professional spirit in a way that is friendly and relatable to students. Meanwhile, schools can implement programs like the "Campus Positive Energy Host Training Program" to identify and train student leaders. These trained students can then become "peer educators," creating content and leading discussions. This approach significantly enhances the approachability and penetration of ideological guidance, as students often listen more attentively to their peers.

**5.3 Establish a Dynamic Evaluation Mechanism of "Data-Behavior" Feedback**

To achieve "behavioral synergy", we can

leverage educational big data to establish a dynamic evaluation and intervention mechanism. This involves tracking and analyzing data points like student comments, interaction patterns, and content preferences on campus self-media platforms. By doing this, educators can sensitively identify evolving value orientations and spot emerging negative tendencies early.

Implementing a regular value recognition survey system can also help periodically assess the effectiveness of educational strategies. Based on this continuous data feedback, schools can promptly adjust their content creation and educational activities. More importantly, it allows for early identification and personalized guidance for students who show signs of value confusion. This data-driven approach facilitates a crucial transition in value education: from a scattered "flooding" of messages to targeted "precision irrigation."

## 5.4 Promote the Construction of a Multi-Functional Collaborative Education Community of "Home-School-Community Platform"

The cultivation of students' values is a systematic endeavor that cannot be done by the school alone. Vocational colleges must proactively strengthen communication with students' families. They can guide parents on how to constructively monitor their children's digital engagement and discuss value orientation with them.

Simultaneously, institutions should actively collaborate with mainstream self-media platforms (such as Douyin and Bilibili). The goal is to secure resource support, such as traffic promotion for positive content. Together, they can jointly organize positive-energy campaigns and expand the reach of quality educational content to a wider audience.

Furthermore, by engaging other stakeholders like enterprises and social organizations, we can collectively build an open, interconnected, and supportive value education ecosystem. This collaborative approach ensures that students receive consistent and positive value guidance across their diverse environments—at home, in school, and online. It creates a cohesive educational force that positively shapes their growth from all sides.

## 6. Conclusion

Guiding the values of vocational college students in the age of self-media is a strategic mission. It requires both immediate action to address current shortcomings and a long-term commitment to continuous adaptation. Educators must fundamentally shift their perspective. They need to move beyond viewing self-media as merely a distracting tool or a problem to be solved. Instead, they must recognize it as an indispensable new arena for value education—a space where students are already living and learning.

Only by actively engaging with students' digital lives, making an effort to understand their unique online discourse systems and emotional frameworks, and diligently applying the integrated "cognitive-emotional-behavioral" model, can we drive meaningful systematic innovation. This innovation must span curriculum design, platform development, institutional mechanisms, and community building.

This comprehensive approach will enable educators to take the initiative in the competition for young minds. It will empower vocational students to navigate complex digital environments with confidence and critical thinking, cultivate personal resilience, and ultimately grow into the capable new generation ready to shoulder the great mission of national rejuvenation. The task is challenging, but by embracing the very tools that define this era, it is undoubtedly achievable.

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