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# Research on Practical Challenges and Optimization Paths of Students' Value Guidance in Higher-Vocational Colleges in the Digital Age

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**Abstract:** Digital technology has deeply permeated the entire educational scenarios of higher vocational colleges, and the adaptability of the traditional value guidance system has gradually become a prominent issue. Based on the actual situation of higher vocational education, this paper analyzes the current real challenges faced by value guidance work and dissects the core causes behind these challenges from three dimensions: content adaptation, method matching, and subject capability. It proposes targeted optimization paths, which can provide feasible references for adjusting the value guidance system of higher vocational colleges to adapt to digital scenarios, improving educational effectiveness, and helping students form positive value orientations.

**Keywords:** Digital age; Higher vocational colleges; Student value guidance; Enhancement of educational effectiveness

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## 1. Introduction

Digital communication technology has restructured the information acquisition paths and social interaction scenarios of higher vocational students, and also brought a brand-new external environment to the value guidance work of colleges. Most existing value guidance systems originated from the offline traditional education framework, and their content supply, guidance paths, and team capabilities have not fully adapted to the educational needs of digital scenarios. The acceptance of guiding content by students and their willingness to participate in guiding activities have continued to decline, and the actual effectiveness of positive value transmission has significantly weakened. Systematically analyzing the real challenges and causes of value guidance work for students in higher vocational colleges in the digital age, and proposing feasible optimization paths, is not only a necessary measure to respond to the educational needs of digital scenarios, but also a core support for improving the higher vocational education system and helping students form stable positive value orientations. It can provide a reference framework for similar colleges.

## 2. Real challenges of value guidance for students in higher vocational colleges in the digital age

Based on the actual situation where digital communication technology deeply penetrates the entire educational scenarios of higher vocational colleges, the external environment for value guidance work has undergone significant changes. The existing value guidance content still mostly follows the framework of the traditional offline education system and has not made adaptive adjustments to various subculture trends and common public issues of students in the digital space. It is difficult to align with the cognitive focus points of students in the digital space, resulting in a significant decline in students' acceptance of the guidance content. Further observation reveals that the current path for value guidance work still mainly relies on offline theme lectures and concentrated course indoctrination, which do not match the characteristics of students' daily information acquisition preferences of fragmentation, scene-based, and interactive. Students are mostly in a passive receiving state, and their willingness to actively participate in various guiding activities is generally low. Considering the current composition of the teaching staff responsible for value guidance, the teachers' familiarity with the basic logic of digital communication and the operation rules of common digital tools is insufficient, making it difficult to accurately capture the deviations in students' expressed value orientations in the digital space and timely intervene to conduct positive guidance. The actual guidance effect often fails to reach the expected level [1].

## 3. Analysis of the causes of real challenges of value guidance for students in higher vocational colleges in the digital age

### 3.1. Insufficient adaptability of value guidance content to the digital environment

Based on the actual scenario of rapid information flow in the digital space, the supply side of existing value guidance content has not completed systematic adjustments for the digital scenario. The core framework of the guiding content remains within the scope of the traditional offline education system and has not included content related to the boundaries of online behavior, personal information protection, and digital media literacy cultivation that are adapted to the digital era. There is a significant mismatch between this and the various information topics that students encounter in the digital space. Considering the actual needs of higher vocational students' digital life, the existing content mostly focuses on the value standards of offline scenarios and does not make targeted responses to the common public hotspots and subculture trends that students pay attention to in the digital space. It is difficult to arouse students' active attention, resulting in a continuous decline in the attractiveness of the content.

From the perspective of the adaptability of the dissemination of guiding content, the current expression methods of the existing content are still mainly based on relatively serious theoretical explanations, failing to meet the lightweight and concrete characteristics of content dissemination in the digital space. Students are likely to develop a resistant mentality during the reception process, ultimately making it difficult for the actual guiding effect of the content to reach the expected level [2].

### 3.2. Disconnection between value guiding methods and students' cognitive habits

Based on the formation background of the digital information acquisition habits of vocational college students, the current implementation paths of value guiding work have not yet completed the systematic adjustment to adapt to the laws of digital communication. The conventional offline guiding mode mainly

relies on one-way theoretical output, and throughout the process, students are always in a passive receiving state, making it difficult for them to express their own value confusion and differentiated demands at the cognitive level. From the perspective of students' cognitive characteristics, students have developed the habit of fragmented information reception and interactive expression of viewpoints in the digital space, and are more willing to actively convey their own ideas in an equal communication scenario. The one-way indoctrination model makes it difficult to mobilize students' subjective willingness to participate in the guiding activities. Based on the actual implementation effect of the guiding activities, the traditional guiding forms have clear limitations on the duration and scenarios, making it difficult to match students' daily behavior patterns of accessing information online at any time. The reach of the guiding content can only cover limited offline activity periods and cannot extend to the various digital scenarios frequently used by students. Ultimately, the actual effectiveness of value guiding shows a significant decline [3].

### 3.3. Improving the digital literacy of value guiding entities

Combining the current situation of the team building of value guiding work in vocational colleges, the shortcomings in the digital literacy of the responsible teaching staff have become the core factor restricting the exertion of guiding effectiveness. The teaching staff are not familiar with the operational logic of the digital social interaction and content platforms that students commonly use, and rarely actively use such digital tools to establish stable communication channels with students during the implementation of guiding work. It is difficult to deeply understand the real ideological dynamics in the digital space where students gather. From the perspective of handling sudden situations in the digital environment, the teaching staff has insufficient knowledge of the laws of public opinion fermentation in the digital space. When facing value-orientation deviation remarks in the student group, they find it difficult to grasp the appropriate intervention timing and communication scale, easily turning small cognitive differences into emotional opposition. Regarding the iterative level of guiding methods in digital scenarios, most teaching staff are accustomed to using the communication and guiding experience accumulated offline and have not actively adjusted the discourse system and guiding logic to adapt to the digital scenarios, making it difficult to obtain students' emotional recognition. In the actual implementation of guiding work, it is also difficult to conform to students' communication habits in the digital space, and the final guiding effect often fails to reach the preset expectations [4].

## 4. Optimization paths for value guiding work in vocational colleges in the digital era

### 4.1. Updating content and enhancing the adaptability of value guiding to digital scenarios

Various value trends in the digital space interweave and permeate students' daily learning and life. The iterative adjustment of the content system is the core support for improving the adaptability of value guidance to digital scenarios. It is not necessary to completely overthrow the core framework of the original offline educational content. It should be carried out with targeted supplementation and expansion. Relevant content such as digital ethics, network responsibility, and data security should be included in the content framework of the regular value guidance, supplementing the behavioral guidelines not covered by the original offline educational system in digital scenarios, clearly defining the boundaries of words and deeds in different digital scenarios, filling the coverage gaps of existing guidance content in the digital domain,

and guiding students to form digital behavior habits in line with public order and good customs. Based on the actual demands of vocational college students in digital life, design guiding themes that focus on the common public issues in the digital field that students are frequently concerned about. Build content modules corresponding to the various real-life problems encountered by students in the digital space, actively respond to the value judgment issues they encounter during online interaction and information screening, reduce the mismatch between the guiding content and students' actual needs, and make the guiding content truly match the cognitive focus points of students. Starting from the adaptability of content dissemination, optimize the expression methods of the original content, conform to the lightweight and concrete characteristics of content dissemination in the digital space, replace overly formalized theoretical explanations with more accessible and plain expressions that students can accept, reduce the resistance of students when receiving the guiding content, and make the guiding content naturally integrate into students' daily digital life scenarios, gradually enhancing students' acceptance and recognition of the guiding content [5].

## 4.2. Innovate methods and align with students' cognitive habits in the digital era

The daily digital information acquisition habits of vocational college students tend to be fragmented and interactive. The adjustment and optimization of the guiding methods need to fully align with the cognitive characteristics of students in digital scenarios. Gradually break the limitations of the traditional one-way indoctrination model. The teaching staff responsible for value guidance use more interactive digital communication carriers to carry out guiding activities, take advantage of various short-video content platforms that students frequently use as new channels for value transmission, and release short and concrete guiding content to the corresponding platforms, which are in line with students' daily habits of browsing information in fragmented time, expand the reach of the guiding content, and mobilize students' active participation in likes, comments, and forwards. In the two-way interaction, they can grasp the real value demands of students. The construction of immersive guiding scenarios can effectively reduce students' resistance to the guiding content. The teaching staff uses virtual simulation technology to build corresponding digital scenarios, integrate various value norms into scenario-based interactive tasks, and enable students to complete the perception and recognition of related value concepts in the process of independently participating in the digital space tasks, avoiding the alienation caused by one-way theoretical output, and aligning with students' preference for visual content. The adjustment of the guiding methods should also take into account the collaborative linkage of online and offline scenarios. The teaching staff collects common problems that students generally have from online digital scenarios and integrates them into the design of offline guiding activities. The cognitive confusions collected through online interaction can be used as the core theme of offline discussions, and the relevant content of the offline guiding activities can be edited into lightweight content and released to online channels, forming complementary guiding effects in the two scenarios, gradually enhancing students' participation and recognition of the guiding activities, and allowing the guiding effect to naturally permeate into various daily scenarios of students' learning and life.

## 4.3. Enhance literacy and strengthen the construction of the value guiding subject's ability

Based on the current reality situation where the digital capabilities of the value guidance team in vocational colleges do not match their actual work needs, the school conducts regular and classified digital literacy training. The basic logic of digital communication, the operation rules of students' commonly used digital

platforms, and the characteristics of digital space discourse expression are included in the core modules of the training to help the teaching staff responsible for value guidance systematically master communication methods and guiding logic in digital scenarios, fill the knowledge gap in the digital field, and enable the teaching staff to proficiently use various digital tools commonly used by students to establish regular communication channels, actively delve into the digital spaces where students gather to collect real ideological dynamic information, and promptly grasp the changes in students' value orientations. In light of the practical needs of value guidance work in the digital environment, the school organized its teaching staff to conduct regular simulation practice exercises. They set corresponding exercise themes based on common value orientation deviations in digital spaces and typical scenarios of public opinion fermentation, guiding the teaching staff to summarize their handling experiences during the simulation exercises. This gradually enabled them to master the appropriate timing and communication scale for handling public opinion in digital spaces, avoiding the escalation of minor cognitive differences into emotional conflicts during actual guidance. This effectively enhanced the teaching staff's ability to detect potential value deviations in students and their ability to handle emergencies quickly. From the perspective of long-term team building, the school established a feedback mechanism for the effectiveness of digital guidance work and a mechanism for capacity iteration. They incorporated the actual effectiveness of teaching staff's value guidance in digital scenarios into the reference scope of daily work assessment, guiding the teaching staff to adjust their discourse systems to adapt to digital scenarios actively, continuously optimizing their guidance methods, and gradually gaining students' emotional recognition. This enables the value guidance work in digital scenarios to align with students' daily communication habits, effectively enhancing the practical effectiveness of value guidance and meeting the overall development requirements of educational work in higher vocational colleges in the digital era.

## 5. Conclusion

The optimization of value guidance for vocational college students in the digital age is a systematic project that requires continuous iteration and cannot achieve long-term goals through a single adjustment. When conducting related work in the future, the content supply should always be adjusted based on the actual needs of students' digital life, innovative guidance forms should be created to align with students' digital cognitive characteristics, the digital literacy of the guidance team should be continuously upgraded regularly, and the collaborative linkage of online and offline educational scenarios should be taken into account. Gradually, positive value concepts should naturally permeate the entire scenario of students' learning and life, effectively enhancing the practical effectiveness of value guidance, and providing solid support for vocational colleges to cultivate high-quality technical and skilled talents with both professional capabilities and positive value orientations.

## Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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