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Exploring Practical Pathways for Empowering Ideological and Political Education with New Quality Productive Forces

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Abstract
Emerging as a new qualitative form of productive forces in China"s socioeconomic development, the new qualitative productive forces represent innovative-driven resources characterized by novel configurations and production relations. To empower ideological and political education practices with these new productive forces, it is imperative to further innovate educational carriers, reform institutional frameworks, and modernize educational philosophies. This transformation will better fulfill the fundamental mission of ideological and political education - fostering virtue and cultivating talents for socialist construction.

Keywords
New Qualitative Productive Forces; Ideological and Political Education; Technology

1 Introduction

In September 2023, during his inspection tour of Heilongjiang Province, General Secretary Xi Jinping first proposed the concept of "new quality productive forces." He emphasized the need to "integrate scientific and technological innovation resources, lead the development of strategic emerging industries and future industries, and accelerate the formation of new quality productive forces." [1]At present, a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation is accelerating. Cultivating and expanding new quality productive forces holds significant strategic importance for advancing high-quality development and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. As emphasized in the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, "Building China into a country strong in education is a foundational project in the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation." [2]How to leverage the achievements of scientific and technological innovation in shaping new quality productive forces, along with its theoretical framework, to empower education constitutes a crucial theoretical and practical issue.

1 Xi, J. P.(2023). Xi Jinping emphasizes firmly grasping the strategic positioning in the national development landscape and striving to create a new chapter in high-quality development in Heilongjiang during his inspection, with Cai Qi accompanying the inspection. Fendou, 18, 4–13.

2 Xi, J. P. (2017, October 28). Secure a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and strive for the great success of socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era. People's Daily, p. 001.

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The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China underscores the imperative to "fully implement the Party's educational policy, fulfill the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, and cultivate well-rounded socialist builders and successors with moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education."[1] As a vital educational practice, ideological and political education pursues the satisfaction of human socialization needs. "Understanding the current state and phased evolution of human needs is the core essence of constructing ideological and political education relationships." [2]As Karl Marx stated, "Man is the ensemble of social relations," highlighting that sociality constitutes the essential attribute of humanity. Given the unique relationship between individuals and society, human needs must align with societal demands, achieving unity between the two. In this context, the theory of new quality productive forces proposed by General Secretary Xi Jinping carries profound strategic significance for advancing the development of ideological and political education.

2 The Fundamental Connotation of New Quality Productive Forces

To empower ideological and political education with new quality productive forces, it is essential to first clarify the fundamental connotation of this emerging concept. Rooted in the materialist historical perspective, productivity remains an eternal theme in analyzing societal development. At its core, new quality productive forces are still a form of productive forces, defined as humanity's capacity to transform nature through labor and tools. In the contemporary era, driven by technological revolutions (e.g., AI, biotechnology) and the deepening human understanding of nature, the relationship between humans and the natural world is undergoing profound shifts. Traditional productivity models, which prioritize resource extraction and linear growth, increasingly fail to meet the demands of modern ecological and technological realities. New quality productive forces thus emerge as an inevitable response, integrating sustainability, innovation, and human-nature synergy into productive frameworks.

This evolution necessitates a parallel transformation in ideological and political education. Rather than merely updating teaching tools, educators must embed the principles of new quality productive forces—such as systemic thinking, ethical responsibility, and interdisciplinary collaboration—into curricula. For instance, courses could emphasize how green technologies redefine economic value or how digital governance reshapes social ethics. By aligning educational goals with the dynamics of new quality productive forces, ideological and political education can cultivate individuals who not only adapt to technological advancements but also drive human-centered progress. Ultimately, this integration bridges Marxist theoretical foundations with practical challenges, fostering a generation capable of harmonizing individual aspirations with collective sustainability.

2.1 New Drivers: Innovation as the Core

The term "new quality" refers to a novel state or form. The essence of new quality productive forces lies in innovation—it is an advanced productive force dominated by innovation, characterized by high technol-

1 Xi, J. P. (2022, October 26). Hold high the great banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics and strive in unity to build a modern socialist country in all respects. People's Daily, p. 001.

2 Gao, D. S., & Wang, Y. R. (2022). Human needs: The logical starting point of ideological and political education relationships. Ideological and Political Education Research, (4), 37-43.

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ogy, high quality, and high efficiency, and aligned with the philosophy of innovative, coordinated, green, open, and shared development. From the perspective of driving forces, new quality productive forces are "new" in their momentum. Scientific and technological innovation serves as the core element in developing new quality productive forces. Compared to traditional productive forces, new quality productive forces place greater emphasis on innovation. They are inherently developmental; their "newness" is relative to traditional productive forces and evolves continuously.[1] Today, the achievements of the third scientific and technological revolution, centered on the internet, have been widely applied, while emerging outputs like generative artificial intelligence are poised to emerge. To cultivate and expand new quality productive forces, it is imperative to strengthen scientific and technological innovation, particularly original and disruptive innovations, accelerate the realization of high-level self-reliance in science and technology, and foster new drivers for their development.

2.2 New Configurations: Optimized Allocation of Production Factors

From the perspective of constituent elements, new quality productive forces are "new" in their optimized configurations. They are catalyzed by revolutionary technological breakthroughs, innovative allocation of production factors, and deep industrial transformation and upgrading. Production factors generally refer to resources involved in social production, including land, capital, knowledge, technology, management, information, and talent. As productive forces evolve, the connotation of production factors continuously expands. In the pre-information era, basic factors such as land, labor, and capital dominated production. However, with the gradual advancement of information technology, emerging factors like talent, information, management, and technology have gained increasing prominence. The innovative allocation of these new production factors constitutes a critical element of new quality productive forces. To cultivate and develop them, it is necessary to prioritize the role of new production factors in social production, optimize their allocation, and enhance total factor productivity.

2.3 New Institutional Mechanisms: Aligned Production Relations

From the perspective of institutional mechanisms, new quality productive forces are "new" in their alignment with advanced production relations. As Karl Marx noted, "The hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist."[2] While productive forces determine production relations, outdated production relations that fail to meet the needs of productive forces will hinder their development. To "monetize" the achievements of new quality productive forces and apply them to concrete industries, it is crucial to deepen reforms in economic, scientific, and technological systems, dismantling institutional bottlenecks that constrain their growth. Simultaneously, innovative approaches to allocating production factors must be adopted, building industrial chains around the development of new quality productive forces and swiftly applying the latest scientific and technological innovations to industries. Only by accelerating the practical application of these achievements can new quality productive forces be further nurtured and expanded, enabling productive forces to evolve from "new" to "newer."

1 Li, Z., & Cui, H. Y. (2024). New quality productive forces from the perspective of historical materialism: Connotation, formation conditions, and effective pathways. Journal of Chongqing University (Social Science Edition), 1, 129-144.

2 Central Compilation and Translation Bureau. (2009). Collected works of Marx and Engels (Vol. 1). People's Publishing House. p. 634.

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3 Practical Pathways for Empowering Ideological and Political Education with New Quality Productive Forces

Ideological and political education is a vital social practice and a critical pathway for cultivating talent. To remain relevant, it must align with evolving social realities, adapt to emerging societal needs, and integrate closely with new quality productive forces to forge a new paradigm of ideological and political education.

3.1 Carrier Innovation: Empowering New Content with New Carriers

In the development stage of new quality productive forces, the primary innovation must focus on the technological carriers of ideological and political education. These carriers refer to the mediums that transmit educational content. While internet technologies have already been deeply integrated into ideological and political education, emerging innovations like generative AI and big data—core outputs of new quality productive forces—are reshaping educational paradigms. Leveraging interactive media, intelligent teaching platforms, and AI-driven analytics can further informatize and intellectualize ideological and political education. For example, AI chatbots could simulate real-world ethical dilemmas, allowing students to practice decision-making in immersive scenarios.

Secondly, innovation is needed in the activity carriers of ideological and political education, which are extracurricular initiatives designed to enhance students' moral and ideological ability. Traditional activities, such as lectures or group discussions, must evolve to align with the dynamics of new quality productive forces. Virtual reality (VR) could recreate historical events for experiential learning, while blockchain-based platforms might facilitate transparent, student-led community projects. Collaborative online seminars with global participants could also broaden perspectives on societal issues like climate justice.

By integrating cutting-edge technologies and reimagining engagement methods, ideological and political education can transcend conventional boundaries. This dual innovation—in both technological and activity carriers—ensures that education not only adapts to the demands of new quality productive forces but also cultivates individuals capable of navigating and leading in an era defined by rapid technological and social transformation.

3.2 Institutional Innovation: Regulating New Technologies with New Systems

Empowering university ideological and political education with new quality productive forces necessitates establishing a new regulatory framework to govern its evolving dynamics. While innovations like interactive media and generative AI enhance educational engagement and expand pedagogical boundaries, they also introduce risks. For instance, interactive media may weaken educators' leading role and heighten ideological vulnerabilities by overemphasizing student autonomy. Similarly, generative AI, despite increasing classroom interactivity, risks fostering student over-reliance on technology, detaching them from the core educational process.

Addressing these challenges requires institutional reforms. A new quality ideological and political education system must prioritize technical and data governance. For example, develop cybersecurity protocols to mitigate risks from AI-generated content; integrate ethical guidelines into AI deployment to ensure align-

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ment with socialist values; redefine educator roles as facilitators who balance technological tools with critical guidance.

Furthermore, institutions should establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate technology's impact, ensuring it complements rather than replaces human-centered pedagogy. By formalizing these practices, universities can harness new quality productive forces to advance ideological education while safeguarding its mission to cultivate responsible, ethically grounded citizens.

3.3 Conceptual Innovation: Cultivating New Talent with New Philosophies

While social existence determines social consciousness, the latter also constrains the former to some extent. Similarly, empowering ideological and political education with new quality productive forces necessitates updating its underlying philosophies. Historically influenced by the Soviet-style "indoctrination theory," early ideological and political education prioritized ideological transmission. However, in an era marked by evolving social contexts and the application of new quality productive forces, students have become active agents in both receiving and disseminating information. Traditional indoctrination methods are increasingly inadequate, demanding a paradigm shift toward student-centered, developmental educational philosophies.

The ultimate goal of ideological and political education should be the free and comprehensive development of individuals, which requires liberating and nurturing human capabilities. As Sun Fusheng (2019) notes, "The liberation and development of human capacities are not innate but cultivated through education and training".[1] Here, education plays a pivotal role. For example, in higher education settings, leveraging technologies like AI-driven adaptive learning systems can personalize ethical and political training, aligning with students' diverse needs while maintaining ideological rigor.

To achieve this, universities must balance ideological security and student empowerment, safeguard core socialist values through structured curricula and critical discourse and integrate participatory methods, such as debate platforms and project-based learning, to foster autonomy and creativity.

New quality productive forces—such as big data analytics—enable real-time monitoring of student engagement, allowing educators to refine content delivery dynamically. Simultaneously, gamified learning modules can enhance motivation without diluting ideological depth.

Ultimately, by harmonizing technological advancements with humanistic principles, ideological and political education can cultivate new quality talents: individuals who are both ideologically grounded and equipped to thrive in a rapidly transforming world.

1 Sun, F. (2019). An analysis of Marx and Engels' theory of human capabilities. Journal of Nanchang University (Humanities and Social Sciences), 50(2), 61–68.

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4 The Core Connotation of New Quality Productive Forces in Empowering Ideological and Political Education

The essence of empowering ideological and political education with new quality productive forces lies not merely in innovating its content, concepts, or methodologies, but in constructing a new quality ideological and political education system. Practice, defined as the material activity through which humans consciously transform the world, constitutes the fundamental mode of human existence. As an integral component of human practical activities, ideological and political education plays a pivotal role in transmitting social experiences, reinforcing social attributes, and enhancing individuals' capacity for social engagement. With the continuous emergence of achievements in new quality productive forces, the inherent relationships within ideological and political education must evolve in tandem. This evolution aims to strengthen its ability to "cultivate virtue and nurture talent," unleash its educational potential, and ultimately build a new quality ideological and political education system capable of adapting to the developmental demands of these advanced productive forces.

Ideological and political education is inherently a relational existence rather than a static, material entity. Humans, by nature, are practical beings who constantly interact with diverse objects in the world, and their identities are shaped by these multifaceted relationships. The mission of ideological and political education is to deepen these connections, enabling individuals to forge stronger bonds with their social, cultural, and technological environments, thereby fostering holistic development. The fundamental task of ideological and political education—"cultivating virtue and nurturing talent"—can be further elaborated as guiding students to internalize the principle that "I am us, and we are me." This principle extends personal values into the broader framework of national and societal development, embedding individual aspirations within collective progress.[1]

The advancement of new quality productive forces signifies three transformative shifts: the expansion of social boundaries, the proliferation of relational objects, and the deepening of practical engagements. These shifts redefine how individuals interact with society, technology, and global systems. In this context, ideological and political education must prioritize the dynamic relationship between individuals and society, emphasizing its generative and interactive nature. By doing so, it can unlock human potential more effectively, bridging personal growth with societal advancement. For instance, in an era marked by digitalization and globalization, ideological and political education should integrate emerging technologies—such as artificial intelligence and big data—into pedagogical frameworks. This integration not only modernizes teaching methods but also aligns educational practices with the realities of a technologically driven society, ensuring students develop critical thinking and adaptability.

To achieve this, the new quality ideological and political education system must be rooted in relational dynamics rather than rigid institutional structures. Traditional models, which often emphasize top-down knowledge dissemination, must give way to participatory and dialogical approaches. For example, collaborative platforms that connect students, educators, policymakers, and industry leaders can foster co-creation

1 Han, W. (2023). Analyzing the rationality of the relational value orientation in ideological and political education in the new era. Journal of Research on Marxist Theory Disciplines, 9(5), 105–114.

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of knowledge, blending theoretical insights with practical challenges. Such platforms would not only enhance students' understanding of societal issues but also cultivate a sense of shared responsibility. Moreover, the system should emphasize interdisciplinary integration, merging insights from ethics, sociology, and technological studies to address complex global challenges like climate change and ethical AI governance.

The development of this system also demands reimagining assessment metrics. Instead of focusing solely on academic performance, evaluations should incorporate students' ability to navigate relational complexities, resolve ethical dilemmas, and contribute to community well-being. This shift aligns with the Marxist vision of human emancipation, where education serves as a catalyst for both individual liberation and collective flourishing. By embedding relationality into institutional design, ideological and political education can transcend its traditional boundaries, becoming a driving force for societal innovation.

Ultimately, the synergy between new quality productive forces and ideological and political education is not a unidirectional process but a dialectical one. As education adapts to technological and social transformations, it simultaneously fuels the further liberation and development of these productive forces. This mutual reinforcement creates a virtuous cycle, advancing human-centered development and fostering a society where individual aspirations harmonize with collective goals.

5 Conclusion

New quality productive forces represent the latest achievements in China's productive forces development. Empowering ideological and political education with these forces serves a dual purpose: it enhances the efficacy of ideological and political education while simultaneously allowing the innovations of new quality productive forces to evolve through practical application in educational contexts. Only by organically integrating the advancements of new quality productive forces into the practice of ideological and political education can we further advance educational modernization, cultivate a new generation of talent, accelerate the building of a strong education nation, and ultimately realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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