

The Predicament and Path of Ideological Risk Prevention and Control in Colleges and Universities in the New Era

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Abstract

Ideology is an extremely important task of our party. In the new era, with the deepening of economic globalization, the rapid development of information technology, the infiltration and fusion of multicultural values, and the struggle and situation in the ideological field becoming increasingly complicated and severe, how to fight a battle of risk prevention and control in the ideological field risk has become a topic of the times. Colleges and universities, standing in the foremost position of ideology, are facing practical difficulties such as weakening and generalizing ideology, weak ability to prewarn risk, prevention and control synergy not-yet-formed, and lack of accountability for discipline practice and other predicaments in reality. Ideological risk prevention and control is a gradual process, systematic project, and overall action, for which we must attack our opponent through multiple strikes to achieve an organic combination of prevention and control and to strengthen the leading force of mainstream ideology, at the same time we must also be good at improving our ability to prewarn by means of IT, strengthen accountability for discipline practice in ideology and effectively achieve prevention and control in the active, scientific and coordinated way.

Keywords

Colleges and universities, ideology, risk prevention and control.

1. Introduction

The so-called ideological risk refers to the sum of various uncertainties in the field of ideology, which will threaten national political security and cause risks in other areas. Our party has always attached importance to the prevention and control of ideological risks. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, this task has been placed in a more prominent position. At the second plenary session of the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee, General Secretary Xi Jinping, for the first time clearly put forward the proposition of "ideological risk". Since then, the importance and urgency of ideological risk prevention and control have been emphasized repeatedly in the report of the 19th National Congress of the CPC, in other important occasions such as the opening ceremony of Symposium on Principal Provincial and Ministerial Leaders' Adherence to Bottom-line Thinking and Exertion to Resolve Major Risks. Standing in the foremost position of ideological construction, universities and colleges, are having a higher probability of risk occurrence, and facing risk with higher complexity and with higher energy levels of destruction, therefore strengthening ideological risk prevention and control has become an urgent task for them.

2. Practical Considerations for Strengthening Prevention and Control Of Ideological Risks in Universities and Colleges

In Marx's view, ideology, as a superstructure, which is political in nature and an ideological system that can reflect social development, economic forms, and political systems consciously and comprehensively. Ideological construction which influences political issues, for example, the direction of road and flag development, is fundamental, strategic and global. Since time immemorial, ideological leadership has become the focus of contention between political powers. Mao Zedong once emphasized: "whenever a regime is to be overthrown, public opinion must always be mobilized first, and ideological work must always precede".[1] On this issue, Xi Jinping also clearly stated: "The collapse of a regime often starts in the ideological field. Political turmoil and regime change may befall overnight, but ideological evolution is a long-term process. If the ideological defensive line is breached, it will be also difficult to resist other defensive lines".[2] Without timely control and regulation, ideological risk will become likely to interweave with political, economic, and social risks to form a risk complex, thereby threatening state security. The so-called "fragility of political system" proposed by Andrew Heywood will appear.

Especially with the socialism with Chinese characteristics entering a new era , multiple contradictions are interwoven internally and externally, domestic overall deepening reforms have entered the deep-water area, foreign hostile forces have implemented strategical pursuit and blockage on us, and multiple cultures have agitated each other, and some erroneous thoughts have infiltrated and spread by means of new carrier, directly impacting ideological security, inducing ideological risk, and surrounding us with danger. Vividly General Secretary Xi Jinping likened the struggle in the ideological field to the smokeless war. He pointed out: "everywhere are smokeless wars in the ideology field today, and never ceased have competitions without arms in the political field". As one of the foremost positions and main battlefields of ideological work, colleges and universities have never been an ivory tower or a utopia. Instead, they bear the brunt of this smokeless war. It is a common saying that with young people, you win the future. Being lack of discriminability and judgement, university and college students, wanted by every side in ideological struggle, in their critical period of values formation, they are extremely susceptible and easy to become focus people infiltrated ideologically by western hostile forces. The riots in Hong Kong also reflect that ideology in colleges and universities are facing much more complexity than before, and it's more urgent to prevent and control ideological risks. To implement ideological risk prevention and control in colleges and universities, does not only consolidate the important foundation for the state ideological security, but also carries out the fundamental requirements of strengthening morality education, being related to the times mission of talent cultivation: what kind of talents to cultivate, how to cultivate them and for whom to cultivate them. General Secretary Xi Jinping in various occasions, such as the National Education Conference and the Teachers' Symposium on Ideological and Political Theory since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, has emphasized that importance should be attached to ideological risk prevention and control in colleges and universities analyzed profoundly the struggle situation and proposed prevention and control requirements, pointing out the way forward for colleges and universities in good implementation of ideological risk prevention and control.

3. Practical Predicament That Ideological Risk Prevention and Control In Colleges and Universities Are Facing

In the new era, in order to win the critical battle against ideological risk in colleges and universities, they need to be aware of the severe situation and real predicament that they are

facing in the ideological field so as to act with a well-defined objective in mind and improve the quality and efficiency of risk prevention and control.

3.1. The First Predicament Is the Lack of Strategical Awareness and Initiative in Risk Prevention and Control, Ideology Being Undermined and Weaken to Varying Extents

To implement risk prevention and control, the first thing to solve is how to occupy the commanding heights from the ideological level and grasp the initiative. But observing from the actual situation, some colleges and universities obviously do not attach importance to it, having not yet fully realized the sharp and complicated struggle situation in the ideological field, and deficient in sense of urgency and mission, which concretely reflects in the following phenomenon: weak awareness of occupying positions of propaganda and public opinion with Marxism as well as socialism with Chinese characteristics; stay inadequately vigilant and uneffectively preventive against various wrong thoughts; low alertness to issues that threaten the campus culture security; and lack of ability to prevent risk. Also ideological task is implemented without close attention paid to and by means of backward method in class teaching, academic research and campus culture construction. Tendency appearing in some colleges and universities where imparting knowledge and educating people are separate and academic matters and ideology are in opposition to each other, especially with the continuous advancement of "Double First-Class"construction and the proportion of returnee scholars increasing step by step, who often confuse boundaries of academic freedom and academic self-discipline, causing inconsistencies on class and off class, on line and off line, and breaching seriously teachers' morals.

3.2. The Second Predicament Lies in The Difficulty in Supervising Information Channels, and the Insufficient Ability to Use Big Data for Risk Prevention and Control

In the new media environment that advocates freedom, democracy, and equality, various self-media have emerged, and its open, pluralistic, and fragmented modes of communication have threatened the ideological construction environment in colleges and universities. Facing the trend of "decentralization" in cyberspace and the information being highly liberalized, universities lack adequate methods for ideological changes, and have few innovative measures for monitoring ideological changes. There are blind spots in the ideological control for the self-media, and there is a general lack of cloud platform for teaching, scientific research, social practice and other information in the ideological field at the integral level of colleges and universities. The definition criteria of bad information by related departments are confusing and not unified, which causes ideology-related data fail to achieve platform docking, sharing and fusion, and the digital great gulf leads to information lone islands. In addition, ideological workers are weak in statistical analysis of data, by either neglecting data collect, analysis and mining or not knowing how to implement these tasks, not to mention how to use the advantages of big data to timely predict potential risk in the ideological field in colleges and universities, thus missing the best window period.

3.3. The Third Predicament Lies in Prevention and Control Synergy Not-Yet-Formed, and Lack of Accountability for Discipline Practice

Ideological risk prevention and control is a systematic and overall project, which requires the coordinated operations of related subjects. However, observed from the current actual situation, on the one hand, the implementation of the ideological work accountability is inadequate and the accountability is not sufficiently consolidated. To various degrees, there exist such problems as unclear responsibilities among subjects of ideological risk prevention and control subjects, inadequate ability to coordinate operations, intermittent implementation

of ideological risk prevention, and synergy of prevention and control not-yet-fully-formed. On the other hand, there is lack of willingness, courage, and wisdom to solve ideological issues, as well as lack of accountability for discipline practice. In case of ideology being out of control or out of standard, people related are often treated by means of persuasion and education in many colleges and universities, or merely regarded as general academic misconduct, neglect of duty, or malversation, which, due to the absence of a serious accountability system, does not address the root cause; the inspection of ideological system implementation in colleges and universities is inadequate, and the ideological accountability system exists in name only, resulting in the failure to fully exert the role of main body frame of the ideological system.

4. Realistic Path of Ideological Risk Prevention and Control in Colleges and Universities

Ideological risk prevention and control of ideological risk is a political task oriented by strategy and policy, and cannot be regarded simply as a simple technical task. Colleges and universities should defend their main ideological positions by giving full play to their unique advantages. They must adhere to the organic combination of prevention and control so as to both be able to be offensive to prevent risk and have unique skills to deal with and resolve risk challenges, resulting in active and scientific prevention and control, winning the strategic proactive battle to head off a disaster and turn crisis into opportunity, and improving capacities to mitigate risk.

4.1. Strengthen Awareness of Ideological Risk Prevention Focusing on Campus Culture Construction

What kind of talents to cultivate is the fundamental issue of higher education. At the National Education Conference, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that our education must not cultivate socialist saboteurs and grave diggers, and we must not cultivate people who "have a Chinese face and a non-Chinese heart, have no sentiments towards Chinese, and lack Chinese flavor". Otherwise, our education will be a failure [3]. In order to implement ideological risk prevention and control in colleges and universities, we must adhere to the socialist college-running orientation, closely carry out the fundamental tasks of strengthening morality education, and use Marxist scientific theory to arm, guide, and nurture the values of college and university students and to stouter our ideals and faiths. Colleges and universities should cultivate cultural deposits, stouter "four self-confidences" through cultural cultivation, and strengthen mainstream ideology's capacity to guide. In the perspective of Marx's philosophy, man and the environment interact and create each other. In the process of influence and creation, man and nature are like two sides of a coin, being indivisible, interdependent and mutually restrictive. When placed in a college or university, nature can be simplified into a campus environment. The fundamental purpose of higher education is to cultivate talents with integrated development, and the comprehensive and free development of people is inseparable from a good ecological environment, especially a good campus environment, campus culture being the soul of the campus environment. To implement ideological risk prevention and control in colleges and universities, we must integrate the campus culture construction into the overall layout of ideological work, and by means of theoretical center groups, "Marxist Theory Course and Ideological and Political Education Course", and public lectures on situation in colleges and universities, do well in learning and publicizing the socialism of new era of Xi Jinping and create vigorously a campus cultural environment that is clean and righteous, decent and aspirant, and civilized and healthy; and participate in ideological education of college and university students by means of campus cultural activities, spreading the main theme and positive energy spread in a larger range, so as to stand up to the fierce multicultural confrontation and collision and withstand the surge of wrong thoughts.

This implicit guidance and cultivation by campus culture, is fundamentally different from simple risk control by means of blocking, sealing and deleting, etc. In the latter way, the so-called achieved ideological security is superficial and difficult to sustain. The purpose of ideological education is to apply the science of notions to society acting as a guide for action, such education being essentially equal and harmonious. In the new era, ideological risk prevention and control should treat the education objects with equality in the "being way", instead of examining them in the "controlling or dominant way". In the equal dialogue, subjects related to ideological construction, especially teachers of ideological and political theory, counselors and head teachers, as guardians of ideological security of colleges and universities, by means of public opinions, enhance the publicity and education of ideological security culture, sowing seeds of truth, kindness and beauty in the soul of students and guiding them to button up correctly the first button in their lives. At the same time, through environment nurturing and cultural guide of positive energy, continuously enhance the security and bottom line consciousness, increase the political sensitivity of ideological risk, always maintain a high degree of vigilance, and constantly improve the ability to discern and resist erroneous thoughts to win the "strategic proactive battle" emphasized by General Secretary Xi Jinping.

4.2. Fully Implement Ideological Accountability System and Consolidate Risk Prevention and Control Synergy

The ideological risk prevention and control involves a wide range of issues. It is a systematic and overall project, the responsibility of all people. All the work done by every teacher, management member, and staff member embodies the value orientation of strengthening morality education. Mutual benefit and symbiosis being the premise and basis for good performance of ideological risk prevention and control in colleges and universities, relevant subjects of risk prevention and control should work together from the perspective of benefit community, make concerted efforts in the same direction, implement prevention and control throughout the whole process of discipline system, teaching system and management system, fully carry out the ideological accountability system, and unit the synergy of ideological risk prevention and control. Firstly, a cooperative and responsibility sharing mechanism for ideological risk assessment must be established and improved. An ideological risk prevention and control work leading group must be established with leadership of CPC committee, in coordination with Propaganda Department of CPC committee, Student Affairs Management Division, Information Construction Management Office and other relevant responsible departments. Within the group, systems such as work communication, inspection and assessment and joint meetings must be established to clarify responsibility division and do a good job in the ideological task within scopes of management, integrating the previously relatively fragmented and independent countermeasure, and exerting efforts in the interlocked and coordinated way at multiple points. Secondly, special inspections must be conducted on the implementation of ideological work accountability system. Relevant responsible departments related to ideological construction shall jointly carry out regular activities to inspect ideologically inspection on scientific research achievements and the release of ideology of media at all levels; focus on strengthening the supervision and inspection of key groups, key areas and key links with high ideological risk, being both cautious with the "Black Swan Incident" and preventive against "Grey Rhino Incident". Thirdly, accountability for discipline practice must be strengthened. CPC committees and discipline inspection commissions in colleges and universities must truly take up the responsibility of "Two subjects", intensify supervision over the ideological field, and attach importance to the construction of ideological management system, as well as comprehensively review the remaining empty space in the ideological system construction, speed up the filling of shortcomings, and achieve full coverage. In addition, ideological system rooting must be strengthened. Risks that may be triggered in the

fields of talent introduction, academic research and classroom teaching must be limited in their rudimentary stage by means of system, to truly transform the advantages of system into the effectiveness of governance. In case of serious consequences arising from erroneous statements in violation of the principles of party spirit due to inadequate implementation, courage and wisdom for accountability must be shown, and the ideological vigilance among teachers and students must be constantly strengthened.

4.3. Value the Use of Modern Information Methods to Improve the Ability to Prevent Ideological Risks

As a superstructure, ideology is not a kind of "false consciousness" or utopia. It must always be related to a certain economic foundation. According to Marx and Engels, "With every great change in the social order, human opinions and ideas will also change"[4]. Ideological risk prevention and control being a dynamic process, attention must be paid to scientific prediction. Colleges and universities should keep abreast of the development of the times, accurately grasp the basic laws and trends of the development and evolution of ideological risks in the new era, keep pace with the times, innovate the methods of supervision and control, and improve the quality and effectiveness of risk prevention and control. In the era of big data, the national big data development strategy is advancing steadily. The core advantage of big data technology is to accurately predict the development status and trends of things through effective mining and statistical analysis of massive data, which will become a good countermeasure for the ideological risk development. Colleges and universities must seize development opportunities and fully tap the boosting role of big data technology in preventing ideological risks. It can provide scientific basis for scientific prevention of and accurate response to risks in the ideological field through the rational use of advanced data management methods such as integrated data management and network tracking. Firstly, the big data thinking must be established so as to apply the big data concept to ideological risk prevention and control. A good big data concept and technology application awareness must be formed, both paying attention to academic data investigation and research, and placing emphasis on talking, supervising, and decision making by using data, as well as analyzing data to establish information communication and coordination mechanism. Secondly, platform to monitor and prewarn risks at the level of college or university must be established. Cyberspace is a key area for ideological risk prevention and control in colleges and universities. Especially in the era of all-media and self-media, information is disseminated through wide channels, with high speed, high degree of concealment and poor controllability. It is necessary to make full use of mining and analyzing technology of big data to thoroughly explore in depth the current status of ideological work in colleges and universities, capture rapidly the existing or potential ideological risk information, analyze, compare and predict the source of ideological risk, as well as areas where problems occur with high frequency, by means of comprehensive analysis, accurate research and judgment, and mastery of the trend of ideological risk, to improve the energy level of monitoring and guidance and countermeasure of network public opinion, prepare emergency plans in advance, and prevent risk propagation and escalation to the greatest extent, preventing problems before they occur.

5. Conclusion

Ideological risk prevention and control is a strategic task that colleges and universities must shoulder in the new era. Colleges and universities need to focus on long-term effects, recognize the new situation and new challenges they are facing in the current ideological risk prevention and control, defend the ideological defensive line, and fully implement awareness accountability system for ideology, weaving densely safety nets for ideological risk prevention and control, and constantly strengthening the leading and cohesiveness of socialist ideology,

boosting to promote the governance capacity of colleges and universities and the modernization of governance systems.

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