

Identifying the educational philosophy of the Academy of Journalism and Communication in the digital age

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Abstract: Each era embraces its own educational philosophy that matches the educational purpose of the times. Currently, the digital age in which we are living poses an inevitable need for a new educational philosophy that is suitable with the times. Inevitably, the Academy of Journalism and Communication must also determine its own educational philosophy which crystallizes the educational philosophy of the nation, Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, the educational viewpoint of the Party and the progressive educational philosophy of the world to train journalists, communicators, theorists, teachers, ... to meet the requirements of the new era.

Keywords: educational philosophy, Vietnamese educational philosophy, educational philosophy in the digital age, educational philosophy of the Academy of Journalism and Communication.

1. About educational philosophy and history of Vietnamese educational philosophy

Education is the transmission of knowledge, skills and habits from one generation to another through various methods such as teaching, training and doing research. This is not only an activity guided by others, but also a process of self-learning where individuals or groups of people independently explore and develop themselves. The foundation of an educational process is the educational philosophy.

According to Professor Pham Minh Hac, educational philosophy “is the educational reality that has been experienced (felt, known, understood, and aware by people, communities, and society) and summarized into a value, with the essence embodied in short sentences, folk songs, proverbs, and phrases to convey, absorb, and manifest expressions in life, bringing a certain value to people, communities, and society, maintaining and developing the right, the good, and the beautiful as well as preventing, correcting, and eliminating the wrong, the evil, and the bad. Educational philosophy can be found at different levels: on individual, collective or national levels. There are

also philosophies of the entire education system (educational development guidelines, strategies, policies, attitudes toward teachers, toward students, applied to determining educational goals and plans, directing the development of programs and textbooks, etc.), of a school, a classroom, a teacher, a family (close to family traditions). It can also be said simply that philosophy is a philosophy of study that brings some practical values to people, communities, and society”⁽¹⁾.

To identify the educational philosophy of a country, it is necessary to address three questions: “Study for what?,” “What to study?,” and “How to study?.” The definite answer to the first question will bring about answers to the latter ones. In the history of Vietnamese education, each era posed and answered these three questions to determine its educational philosophy that was suitable with requirements of the reality.

Since the 10th century, after gaining national independence throughout the country, the Vietnamese feudal regime was formed and went through a transformation and development process until late 19th century and early 20th century. In the Confucian education system, the dominant ideology in Vietnam was “learning to become an official”. Therefore, the educational philosophy of Vietnamese education in the feudal period then, “learning to become an official”, was not only a goal for students but also a guide to orientate teachers⁽²⁾.

When French colonialists invaded Vietnam, they implemented a policy of “keeping the people ignorant” to make our nation backward for easier ruling. During the French colonial period, Vietnamese society witnessed a change in the educational philosophy of the rulers, from “learning to become an official” to “learning to become a civil servant serving the colonial government”. On the contrary, the educational philosophy of the patriotic intellectuals and the majority of the Vietnamese people with the idea of “patriotic education” set the important goal of regaining national independence. Therefore, concepts such as “enlightening the people” and “science, nation, popularity” not only reflected that goal but were also specific solutions to the patriotic educational philosophy.

Persisting in the educational development path according to Ho Chi Minh Thought, inheriting the tradition of studiousness, absorbing the quintessence of educational philosophy of humanity and the times, the Party proposed educational viewpoints and guidelines in the Renovation period. According to Professor Pham Minh Hac, the Party’s educational policy and guidelines express the educational philosophy in the Renovation period, which can be

summarized in the following points: Education is the top national policy; The mission of education is to enhance people's knowledge, develop human resources, and foster talents; People are both the goal and the driving force of socio-economic development; Investment in education is investment in development – the basic investment; learning is lifelong; The educational motto is standardization, socialization, diversification, and democratization⁽³⁾. The Congress documents recognized the important role of education and training and put forth ward specific guiding viewpoints: “Building institutions and policies synchronously to effectively implement the guideline - education and training together with science and technology is the top national policy, the driving force for national development”⁽⁴⁾.

2. Digital age and the need to establish a new educational philosophy for the Academy of Journalism and Propaganda

During his visit to the Nguyen Ai Quoc Central School (now the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics) in September 1949, on the first page of the golden book, President Ho Chi Minh penned: “Learn to work, to be a human being, to be an officer. Learn to serve groups and classes, the Fatherland and humanity”⁽⁵⁾. This is the philosophy and scientific basis for building and innovating the training program associated with science and social life to meet the social requirements for political theory and communication cadres. On the basis of this general philosophy, the teaching and learning direction will be: first, in terms of content, a combination of theory and practice; second, in terms of teaching and learning methods, the flexible teaching and learning, using new media, encouraging learners to actively participate in practical projects and engage in international cooperation. At the same time, attention will be paid to the specific characteristics of each field of journalism - communication, political theory, social sciences and humanities. Specifically,

Regarding journalism – communication, combining theory and practice and focusing on the knowledge foundation on digital journalism, online content management, and multimedia production skills.

Regarding political theory: thorough understanding and creative applying, inheriting and developing Marxism - Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought to solve practical problems, while focusing on studying political theories contemporary.

Regarding social sciences and humanities: developing a comprehensive understanding of social sciences and humanities, and the transformation of this field in the present day.

Looking back at history, our nation has constantly changed its educational philosophy to meet practical needs. Every time the era changes, a new

educational philosophy will come into being. That dialectical spirit needs to be continued in the present day. A new educational philosophy is an inevitable requirement for all educational institutions in general and the Academy of Journalism and Communication in particular.

Digital Age is a term that describes a period in the development of the socio-economy, when digital technology plays an important role in all aspects of life. The term "Digital Age" was first coined and became popular in the late 20th century and early 21st century together with the increasing popularity of digital technology and the Internet. Although there is no specific date for the birth of this term, it is related to the rapid development of personal computers, the Internet, and other digital technologies, marking the transition from the 20th century to the 21st century. Technological innovations such as the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), social, mobile, analytics and cloud (SMAC), and biotechnology are transforming the real world into a digital world and enormously affecting the way people live and work.

Following the general trend of the society, the press, media, and political theory are becoming quickly involved in the digital transformation process. Therefore, this revolution is posing an urgent need for the Academy of Journalism and Communication to build a new educational philosophy to train generations of journalists, media workers, and political theorists who meet requirements of the times. Those requirements are:

Firstly, giving the top priority to training digital journalism and digital journalists in the context of national digital transformation, international integration, and innovative journalism

Many modern press works have integrated digital technology and data to create a unique interactive experience with readers, creating its own appeal and bringing a sense of closeness. The application of digital transformation in press organizations has brought a wide array of benefits to journalists, making it more convenient for them to collect information, analyze data, and create content. The essence of this revolution is not only to change the mode of communication, but also to pave the way for continuous development and innovation. Artificial intelligence not only helps to optimize the content production process but also expands the ability to interact and personalize readers' experience. Smart data analysis provides in-depth insights into trends and readers' desires, thereby supporting journalists and editors to make intelligent and flexible well-informed decisions. All of this creates an online environment where users are not only audiences, but also active participants,

enjoying and contributing to a diverse and rich media culture. The digital media environment is formed by technical and technological platforms, changing the thinking capacity and working style of journalists as well as habits of readers, listeners and viewers, bringing new models and modes of communication. As a leading training institution in journalism and communication, the Academy of Journalism and Communication needs to innovate its training tasks which give the top priority to training digital journalists and digital journalists in the context of national digital transformation, international integration, and innovative journalism.

Secondly, training in digital technology skills, flexible and creative thinking, and cultivating digital ethics.

The digital revolution is not just a simple transition from print to electronic format; it opens up a new world of potential and innovation. It is a harmonious combination of modernization and creative application of advanced technologies. On top of that, the digital revolution also strongly promotes and utilizes advanced technology applications such as artificial intelligence (AI), smart data analysis and user experience optimization. This means that journalists must have novel knowledge and skills to adapt, overcome challenges and grasp potential opportunities. There has been an increasing need for automated news generation, along with the development of AI, natural language processing (NLP), machine learning and data mining. AI helps support articles writing at high speed, with high accuracy, diversify different news and video models. The content is created continuously and more diversely, helping to increase interaction and boost sales for press organizations, especially in marketing and advertising... Content creation software such as ChatGPT can automatically create news within seconds. This is a huge challenge for media workers who are even directly competed. As for the work in political theory, which seems to be difficult to be in charge by machines, is now also being partly digitized thanks to modern tools, helping the lectures of teachers and experts to be easily recorded and widely published.

Therefore, to unlock great potentials of technology, journalists, media workers, and theorists need to be well-equipped with the skills to apply technology in their work. At the same time, with the current speed of AI development, in order to help graduates avoid being eliminated from the labor market, training institutions also need to train learners to think flexibly, creatively, and proactively, characteristics where machines have not been able to replace humans.

To adapt to the digital age, it is necessary for people to cultivate digital ethics. For those working in journalism, media, and theorists, digital ethics are standards, ethical principles, conscience and responsibility in applying technology to the working process. Therefore, training skills in using digital technology, flexible and creative thinking and digital ethics for journalists, media workers and political theorists is the second important task that the Academy of Journalism needs to carry out.

The Academy of Journalism and Communication has the mission of being a Party's school, a national key university, with the mission of conducting scientific research, training, and fostering high-quality human resources in the fields of political theory, ideology - culture, journalism, communications, and a number of other social sciences and humanities. Simply put, the Academy of Journalism and Communication has the mission and task of training workers in the fields of journalism, communications, and political theory. This reality poses the requirement for the Academy of Journalism and Communication to pursue a new educational philosophy. How to find an educational philosophy that is suits the digital age and reflects the Party's spirit. This is the question we need to address in the current context.

3. Some suggestions for identifying the educational philosophy of the Academy of Journalism and Communication in the digital age

Firstly, training according to the educational philosophy of "comprehensive human development"

Currently, each person focuses on a certain narrow major because most educational institutions are training their undergraduates to become specialized workers to increase labor productivity. However, the nature of AI is to digitize human repetitive information processing methods. AI is just a form of machine, not capable of thinking and being involved in creativity, but as long as it is superior to humans in a certain narrow aspect, it will push humans out of the labor market. Therefore, in the digital age, the more specialized, the easier it is to be replaced by machines. To create a future generation of journalists, communicators, and theorists who are superior to machines, we need to return to K. Marx's educational perspective, which is "comprehensive human development".

In the "Communist Manifesto" in 1848, Marx Engels expressed the educational philosophy that "the free development of each individual is the condition for the free development of all"⁽⁶⁾. Marxism-Leninism affirms that the purpose of socialist education is: "to enable members of that society to

fully utilize their all-round development capacity”⁽⁷⁾. All-round development is not about being good at all areas, but about fully developing four aspects: physical well-being, intellect, spirit, and emotion. Capitalist education educates people according to the social division of labor to meet the immediate needs of the economic system, thereby causing people to develop as one-sided and deviated, causing their labor to be “degenerated”. Socialist education must be an education that liberates people from “alienated” labor, that is, specialized labor determined by the social division of labor. Let people work with their own passion and needs. K. Marx penned: “Each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a herdsman, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic.”⁽⁸⁾. That is, workers are not tied to a single specialized field but can freely express their personal abilities and interests. Labor then is not forced, not boring repetitive processes but a passion urged by self-motivation. According to this philosophy, journalists, media workers, political theorists will be multi-talented, multi-tasking workers. For them, journalism, media work, political theory is not simply a job to earn a living but a passion, love, pride, from which they will voluntarily make contributions.

Secondly, educating according to the philosophy of liberal education

“Liberal” means to open up to new ideas, liberalization can be understood as opening up and liberating, helping people escape from constraints and prejudices to become free, creative and capable of all-round development. Liberal education is an educational philosophy that emphasizes human development in many aspects, including: knowledge, skills, ethics, qualities and attitudes. Liberal education not only focuses on imparting specialized knowledge but also focuses on developing the ability to think critically, solve problems, communicate effectively and creatively. The essence of liberal education is to open up new things, maximize individuals’ creative thinking, liberate people’s thinking and capacity, facilitate for people to unlock their full potentials, and develop as a good citizen for society. The model is

featured by flexible subject training in both breadth and depth, encouraging interdisciplinary subjects, providing many choices for learners. In the age of digital media, the skills of writing articles, processing information, etc., are repeated to the point where proficiency is not enough. Even these skills are gradually being replaced by machines today. Therefore, journalists, communicators, and political theorists need to surpass machines, that is, possessing capacities, skills, and qualities that machines cannot replace. That is the ability to innovate, to be emotional, to be individual, to have personal temperament, etc. These are capacities and qualities that are inherently found in humans. Journalists in the digital age and information explosion must be multi-talented and multi-tasking, professional in all stages of the process of making a journalistic work. He should be a journalist, a photojournalist who knows how to edit videos, makes infographics, and knows how to use multimedia technical equipment; has a solid cultural and social knowledge, masters the skills of using language, images, and titles according to prescribed standards, and has a strong personal creative style; continuously cultivates and accumulates specialized knowledge and is able to perform tasks proficiently and independently in many stages to fulfil all assigned tasks; is energetic and has an increasingly widespread social influence. The same is true for political theorists who not only teach theory in a dogmatic way but also know how to apply theory in practice in each specific context, know how to innovate the communication, have a unique style and temperament in each lecture or research work.

Thirdly, training revolutionary ethics and digital age ethics

In Vietnam, the prerequisite for a journalist, communicator and political theorist of all eras has always been the loyalty to the Fatherland, the people, serving the revolutionary cause led by the Party. That is revolutionary ethics at work. Nowadays, revolutionary ethics need to be combined with civic ethics and professional ethics in the digital age. In the era of information explosion, working in the market mechanism and digitalization, journalists face countless challenges: from the pressure of information competition to material temptation and social negativity. In particular, the explosion of online information and the digital age has created favorable conditions for journalists in the working process, but also has posed significant challenges due to the flood of confusing and difficult-to-verify information including fake, bad and toxic information. That AI technologies are increasingly sophisticated highlights the need for journalists to understand and apply these tools with

conscience and responsibility. That forces journalists to be courageous, alert, responsible, not to be tempted by the topical and unaware of the accuracy, authenticity and humanity of each piece of information brought to readers; journalists are not expected to be hasty, exaggerate the truth, distort the nature of the matter just for sake of views, for profits. Information provided by the official press must foster trust of the public in the truth, in the good things in life, in the strictness of the law and absolutely in the leadership of the Party and in the future of the country.

It can be said that morality is the “constant” in the “ever-changing” era. During his lifetime, President Ho Chi Minh used the philosophy of “using the unchangeable to respond to the changeable” to successfully lead the Vietnamese revolution. This philosophy means that we respond to the ever-changing but not stray from, abandon, or lose the unchangeable; absolutely not sell or barter the unchangeable. Circumstances are always changing, life as well as the revolutionary cause are always changing and developing, therefore, strategies in each specific field must also be flexible, adaptable (the changeable). But no matter how flexible, adaptable, and changeable they are, one must not forget the ultimate goal (the unchangeable), otherwise it is easy to get lost in the maze of the ever-changing and the trivial. Applying this philosophy in training journalists, communicators, and political theorists in the digital media era, the “unchangeable” here is political quality and professional ethics; the “changeable” are professional skills, expertise, profession, knowledge, and life culture, etc. that flexibly change with the times.

With a vision to 2050, “The Academy of Journalism and Communication becomes the leading institution in Vietnam in the fields of political theory, ideology - culture, journalism and communication. The Academy constantly strives to become a prestigious university in the region and the world”⁽⁹⁾. To realize this goal, the Academy needs to establish a correct educational philosophy that has a positive impact on teachers and learners. This philosophy both suits the digital age and maintains our inherent Party’s spirit, while inheriting the educational tradition of the nation. With a reasonable educational philosophy, we will have a direction to innovate teaching and learning methods. Theory-based learning methods will quickly become outdated because all knowledge can be digitized, only practice that constantly changes into many forms cannot. Therefore, practice-based teaching will be the right choice in today’s context. With a huge amount of information that

can be easily accessed via many different channels, learning in the digital age is self-study and multi-channel reception, and the teacher is not purely the one who passes knowledge but guides, orients, arouses learners' passion, love, desire to conquer problems, and encourages them to solve problems creatively. That process also trains future workers in the ability to innovate and shapes their unique working style./.

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