
DIGITAL PUBLISHING EMPOWERING THE INTEGRATION OF LOCAL CULTURE INTO IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL COURSES: CHALLENGES AND PATHWAYS

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Abstract:

In the context of a broader ideological and political education paradigm and the digital transformation of education, integrating local cultural resources into ideological and political courses across primary, secondary, and higher education has become an important task for strengthening cultural confidence and achieving a cohesive curriculum system. Digital publishing, as a new form of educational publishing integration, carries multiple empowering effects and is providing new pathways for systematically incorporating local culture into education. This paper starts by examining current challenges in publishing these resources, such as fragmented content, siloed mechanisms, and superficial technology adoption. It then analyzes the logical mechanisms by which digital publishing contributes to knowledge reconstruction, media expansion, and interactive learning experiences, and proposes strategies including building collaborative mechanisms, coordinated resource development, expanding multi-platform dissemination matrices, and optimizing technology application. The aim is to explore effective pathways for deep integration of digital publishing with ideological and political education. The study argues that digital publishing is not only a product of technological drive but should become a vital tool for realizing educational values. Only by promoting integrative innovation while upholding core principles can the fullchain potential of local culture's educational function be unleashed.

Keywords: digital publishing, local culture, ideological and political education, educational publishing integration, integrated primary-secondary-tertiary education.

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1. Introduction

Promoting the creative transformation and innovative development of China's excellent traditional culture has become a key component of national cultural strategy in the new era. The 20th National Congress report calls for "enhancing cultural confidence and strength to forge new glories of socialist culture," providing fundamental guidance for converting local cultural resources into educational content. In alignment, China's Ministry of Education issued the Implementation Plan for Integrated Construction of Ideological and Political Education in Primary, Secondary, and Higher Education, which emphasizes building a holistic cultivation system with coherent objectives, connected content, and shared resources across all school levels, thereby advancing ideological and political courses from basic framework construction toward high-quality development. Deep integration of local cultural resources into ideological and political courses at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels not only helps enhance students' cultural identity and value identification, but is also a crucial approach to making course content more localized and context-rich. Across China, various regions have actively explored incorporating resources such as Red revolutionary culture, traditional Chinese medicine culture, and intangible cultural heritage into ideological and political curricula, yielding some initial successes (Wang et al., 2024). However, from the perspective of publishing supply, these resources remain mostly confined to printed textbooks and readers, leading to issues of fragmented content, single media channels, and outdated material. Such problems hinder the effective support of integrated education needs—such as cross-grade continuity, digital teaching, and interactive dissemination—required for holistic talent cultivation.

At the same time, the publishing industry is rapidly entering a stage of deep digital integration. In April 2022, the Central Propaganda Department issued the Implementation Opinion on Promoting the Deep Integration and Development of Publishing, which laid out comprehensive goals, pathways, and measures for building a new publishing and communication system in the digital age. Scholars generally agree that "deep integration and high-quality integration" have become the development trend of China's publishing industry, with datafication and intelligentization as the new directions (Huang & Yang, 2022; Dong & Jia, 2022). The publishing sector has likewise proposed adhering to high-quality development and serving the national innovation strategy by accelerating the building of a strong publishing nation, thereby leading the integrated transformation and upgrading of publishing (Wu, 2021). As a new business form deeply combining content production and technological application, digital publishing not only increases publishing efficiency and expands the reach of quality resources, but also plays a critical role in restructuring content supply and empowering resources in the provision of educational content.

Given this context, an urgent theoretical and practical problem has emerged: how to leverage digital publishing technologies to connect the entire chain of local cultural resources—from collection and

processing to dissemination—realizing content reconstruction and platform convergence, and thereby providing systematic support for the integrated construction of ideological and political courses across all school levels. Existing research has mostly discussed the teaching models and approaches for integrating local culture into ideological and political courses from pedagogical or regional culture perspectives, with less attention to publishing mechanisms—particularly the systemic role of digital publishing in resource transformation and supply. Meanwhile, research in the publishing field has often focused on technological applications or platform development, paying insufficient attention to the structural alignment of education and publishing in the context of integrated ideological education, resulting in a gap between theoretical research and innovative practice (Gu, 2023). Furthermore, international review studies on the application of artificial intelligence in higher education have similarly found that most outcomes emphasize technical implementation, with relatively insufficient participation from educators (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). These observations indicate that there remains broad scope for improving the integrated supply of education and publishing, and that enhanced collaborative innovation is needed in practice.

In light of this, the present study focuses on the real-world issue of using digital publishing to empower the integration of local culture into ideological and political courses under the integrated education framework. It analyzes the main difficulties currently faced in the digital publishing transformation of local cultural resources, explains the inherent logic and optimal pathways by which digital publishing can enable local culture to enter ideological and political curricula, and provides theoretical support and practical insights for promoting deep integration of digital publishing with ideological and political education to achieve the goals of cultural education.

2. Current Publishing Status and Challenges in Integrating Local Culture into Ideological and Political Courses

In the context of advancing educational digitalization and the building of a culturally strong nation, leveraging digital publishing to effectively integrate local cultural resources into primary, secondary, and higher education ideological and political courses has become a critical issue in education content supply-side reform and publishing integration. Although some exploratory practices have emerged, significant systemic shortcomings remain as a whole, making it difficult to meet the requirements of the integrated education initiative for end-to-end resource coordination.

2.1 The Landscape of Publishing Transformation: From Print Dominance to Digital Exploration

- Print publishing laid the foundation but faces an iteration dilemma

Traditional print media once played an important role in transforming local cultural resources into educational content. Many local education departments, in collaboration with publishers, have

developed hometown textbooks, moral education readers, and local culture thematic courses, initially achieving a transition from oral heritage to textual education. For example, the Education Work Committee of the Fujian Provincial Communist Party Committee compiled and published the Fujian Red Culture Reader series (with editions for university, high school, junior high, and elementary levels), which became an important vehicle for telling Fujian's revolutionary stories and passing on the "red gene." Colleges in Guangdong Province incorporated Outline of Lingnan Culture into general education courses, using case-based teaching to deepen university students' cultural identity education. However, in the digital era, the rigidity and lag of print publishing have become increasingly prominent. On one hand, the traditional textbook publishing process is cumbersome and slow to respond, resulting in resources that cannot be updated in real time or dynamically match the pace of instruction (Guo et al., 2022). On the other hand, disjointed content across different grade-level textbooks and single-format teaching interactions fail to meet students' diverse learning styles and digital media preferences. This iteration dilemma prevents ideological education from promptly incorporating fresh local cultural elements, creating a gap between publishing supply and educational demand.

- Digital publishing shows initial success but remains fragmented

Driven by policy guidance and technological impetus, recent years have seen digital publishing achieve certain successes in converting local cultural resources for education, initially breaking through the dissemination boundaries of traditional print media. Various exploratory projects have been launched across the country, exhibiting a pattern of "point-like prosperity" in development. For instance, in resource database construction, Shandong Digital Publishing Media introduced a comprehensive Anthology of Poems on Qilu through the Ages database, integrating regional literary and geographical cultural resources to enable online convergence of local culture with teaching resources. In terms of immersive publishing, Sichuan Digital Publishing Media developed the "Metaverse Dongpo Study Room" project, which leverages VR technology to recreate a Song Dynasty study room scene and provides users with a virtual reality cultural immersion experience. In the application of artificial intelligence, Henan University Press published the bilingual series Origin of China: Henan Stories, innovatively employing AIGC (AI-generated content) digital avatar reading assistants to offer users a diverse, cutting-edge intelligent reading experience. Additionally, Guangxi Science and Technology Press built the Guangxi Digital Museum, integrating publishing with cultural tourism and education functions to create a platform-based, scenario-driven new model of digital publishing. These practices demonstrate certain innovative significance in technology use and media convergence. However, overall, current digital publishing explorations remain rather scattered and lack systematic planning and standard mechanisms. Most projects rely on unique local features or the resources of a single publisher, and have yet to establish a full-chain platform ecosystem necessary to serve the integrated ideological education needs across primary, secondary, and higher education. The inconsistency in content

structures, presentation formats, and platform interfaces also constrains the scalable reproduction and cross-regional sharing of quality resources.

2.2 Deep-Seated Challenges in Publishing Transformation

Local cultural resources' entry into the ideological and political course publishing system currently faces several deep-seated challenges. These issues are evident not only in the resource development process but also at structural levels such as mechanism design, technology integration, and educational collaboration. They directly affect the quality and efficiency of the integrated curriculum resource supply system.

- **Fragmented content supply with insufficient vertical alignment**

Current publishing of local cultural resources suffers from content fragmentation. On one hand, topic development is often carried out separately by different departments or units without overall coordination, leading to duplicated resources and homogenous content. On the other hand, most publications have yet to form an integrated content system that links enlightenment, reinforcement, and advanced stages of learning across school levels, nor have they built effective thematic cultural knowledge graphs to support resource integration and grade-specific adaptation. This results in course content that is fragmented and inefficient, struggling to support a closed cognitive loop for integrated character education. Research indicates that existing digitized local cultural content is generally piecemeal, lacking systematization and professional depth, making it difficult to form an educational content system that balances breadth and depth (Wang & Wu, 2023). Consequently, ideological course content at different educational stages is poorly articulated, leading to discontinuities in students' knowledge acquisition and values formation.

- **Lack of integration mechanisms leading to disjointed collaboration**

Empowering local culture education through digital publishing involves multiple steps, including cultural resource provision, content editing and processing, technical development support, and implementation in teaching. Yet most projects so far rely on ad-hoc cooperation or one-off connections, lacking a stable and efficient collaborative mechanism. Cultural departments control the resources, publishing institutions handle content development, and the education system is responsible for classroom use; but the three parties lack unified coordination in areas such as copyright definition, scope of resource use, and standards for presentation format. This creates structural barriers that undermine effective collaboration. Communication between publishing institutions and teachers or curriculum developers is insufficient, resulting in a disconnect between what is published and the actual needs of teaching. Content updates cannot be advanced in a timely manner based on classroom feedback, let alone leveraging platform data for precise optimization. This breakdown in collaboration means the publishing supply cannot truly make dynamic adjustments oriented by instructional scenarios. Researchers have analyzed that in the current digital transformation of ideological and political

education at universities, there is an urgent need to establish an ICT-supported inter-departmental collaboration mechanism to realize information sharing, task coordination, and resource integration among all stakeholders, thereby promoting the coordinated development of ideological education work (Yan & Li, 2025). In other words, to solve the “two skins” problem between education and publishing, it is imperative to break down the silos between cultural, publishing, and educational entities, improve digital education platforms, and establish data-driven decision mechanisms to truly achieve organic collaboration between publishing content and educational platforms.

- Shallow application of digital technology, with poor content–context integration

Although emerging technologies like VR/AR and artificial intelligence have gradually been introduced into the publishing process, many applications remain at a superficial display level and fail to deeply integrate content and functionality with teaching scenarios. Some digital publishing products only offer simple interactions such as “scan a code to watch a video” or basic AR overlays, which in essence do not break out of the traditional textbook mindset. In these cases, technology serves more as an added gimmick without a pedagogically meaningful trigger mechanism or cognitive feedback loop. More seriously, many projects operate in isolation with fragmented technical standards, closed platforms, and prominent data silos. This limits cross-platform dissemination of resources and cannot meet the diverse content presentation needs of different educational stages. As one scholar noted, in China’s academic publishing integration, there are tendencies of “chaotic use of technology, shallow fusion of elements, and simplistic content development” (Li, 2022). To address this challenge, it is necessary to strengthen the empowering role of technology and achieve deep fusion of technology with content production and dissemination, thereby propelling the publishing ecosystem from low-level content display toward high-level knowledge services.

- Rigid textbook development model and severely lagging updates

For a long time, textbook publishing has relied on a five-stage process (“compile, review, proof, print, distribute”) that is lengthy and inflexible, making it difficult to respond to rapidly changing teaching needs. Local cultural resources have a vivid “living” nature—such as newly recognized intangible heritage events, major archaeological discoveries, or local cultural creative practices—which, under the traditional textbook model, often take years to update. By the time such content is published, the optimal teachable moment may have passed. This lag in response causes ideological and political classrooms to miss timely incorporation of new local cultural content, leading to a disconnect between teaching and current reality. Meanwhile, feedback and update mechanisms for textbook content are unresponsive: issues and suggestions that teachers identify in teaching seldom make it back into the publishing process in time. Although tools like AI and knowledge graphs now have the capability for rapid updates and intelligent compilation, some publishing units still follow the logic of print media and do not regard

new technology as a core driving force, thereby missing the opportunity to shift from textbook production to content service provision.

In summary, despite initial successes in practice, the publishing efforts to integrate local cultural resources into ideological and political courses still exhibit significant shortcomings in content alignment, process collaboration, and technology integration. These gaps make it difficult to satisfy the systemic requirements of integrated education across primary, secondary, and higher levels. Tackling these structural challenges urgently requires synergistic solutions in terms of mechanisms and technological empowerment, so that publishing practice can progress from isolated explorations to coordinated, holistic advancement.

3. Theoretical Logic of Digital Publishing Empowering Local Culture Integration in Courses

Driven by the confluence of educational digitalization, deeply integrated publishing development, and the strategy of cultural confidence, digital publishing is not only a product of technological innovation but also a key mechanism for promoting the deep integration of local culture into ideological and political courses. From resource consolidation to dissemination channels to learning experiences, digital publishing constitutes a three-pronged empowering framework.

3.1 Knowledge Reconstruction: Digitally transforming cultural materials into course content

The educational conversion of local cultural resources is essentially a process of knowledge reconstruction – that is, transforming raw local cultural symbols, historical events, figures, and stories into ideological and political course content that aligns with the cognitive development of students at different educational stages. In this process, digital publishing plays a critical role. It facilitates more efficient structuring and standardization of cultural resources and, through digital content organization and knowledge-construction models, bridges the gap from cultural raw material to educational content. Specifically, digital publishing can leverage multimodal knowledge-element databases to disassemble traditional cultural resources and tag them, matching those elements to the core themes of ideological and political courses. For example, a region's Red culture (revolutionary heritage) events, figures, and locations can be presented in the form of a knowledge graph, constructing an introspective chain that links historical context, value implications, and contemporary significance. This can further be used to automatically generate gradient course materials tailored to different school stages (primary, junior high, high school), meeting the vertical articulation requirements of the ideological and political curriculum. Moreover, knowledge reconstruction emphasizes educational contextualization and situational embedding of content, avoiding simplistic collage or direct transplanting of source material. By using digital publishing tools for secondary creation and scenario design, local cultural materials are integrated into concrete teaching contexts, enhancing the perceptibility and inspirational quality of the knowledge. In sum, knowledge reconstruction under digital publishing provides a flexible and efficient

content conversion mechanism for bringing local culture into ideological and political courses, enriching the curriculum's knowledge system.

3.2 Channel Reshaping: From textbook-centered supply to multi-platform dissemination

In the traditional publishing system, integrating local cultural resources into ideological and political courses primarily relied on printed textbooks and readers. Dissemination channels were single-threaded and update cycles long, which cannot satisfy modern education's demand for multi-platform availability and rapid content updates. Digital publishing breaks through this limitation by reshaping content delivery channels from a textbook-centric model to a multi-end, coexistent model (Cao & Zhang, 2025). Through constructing an integrated "print, digital, platform" publishing system, digital publishing enables local cultural resources to be simultaneously disseminated via a variety of channels such as WeChat public accounts, micro-lecture platforms, and short video apps, achieving comprehensive reach "to the classroom, to the screen, and to personal devices." For example, for a piece of content on local intangible cultural heritage, multiple digital formats can be offered in parallel – such as illustrated articles, AR demonstrations, and interactive Q&A – for teachers to utilize or for students' self-directed learning. The development of diversified publishing and communication channels in turn forces content to become more modular and micro-unitized, making resources easier to flexibly deploy in teaching practice. This expansion of dissemination logic extends the spatial and temporal boundaries of publishing and broadens the ways teachers and students can engage with the content. More importantly, channel reshaping allows digital publishing content to be embedded into various smart education platforms and school learning management systems, forming an integrated loop of resource development, classroom application, and learning feedback. This supports efficient coordinated linkage across multiple educational stages and platforms.

3.3 Experience Innovation: From passive reception to immersive and interactive learning

Digital publishing's empowerment of local culture integration is also reflected in the innovation of learning experiences. By means of rich-media content and intelligent interactive design, digital publishing changes the traditional one-way, lecture-centric classroom model and promotes students' active participation and deep experience in the learning process. On one hand, AR/VR virtual scenes and situational simulations provided by digital publishing can place students seemingly into the historical and cultural setting, achieving an immersive "being there" emotional resonance. Such immersive experiences help spark students' interest and enhance their perception and understanding of the values embodied in local culture. On the other hand, digital publishing integrates features like online assessments, interactive Q&A, and gamified learning, offering students instant feedback and personalized support, and building a virtuous cycle of "learning by doing, and doing through learning." Through intelligent content recommendation and learning analytics on digital resources, students' learning behaviors can be recorded and diagnosed, which in turn assists teachers in dynamically

adjusting their teaching strategies to improve targeting and effectiveness. Incorporating these digital experiential elements into ideological and political courses can effectively increase the affinity, impact, and efficacy of teaching, enabling local culture education to truly achieve subtle, immersive nurturing of values.

Digital publishing's threefold framework of knowledge reconstruction, channel reshaping, and experience innovation provides systematic empowerment for integrating local culture into ideological and political courses at the levels of content, media, and learning process. This offers robust support for building a cohesive ideological and political curriculum resource system spanning primary through higher education, and provides students with a richer and more vivid educational experience in cultural identity and values.

4. Optimizing Pathways for Collaborative Integration of Publishing and Ideological Education

Based on the above analysis, to overcome the challenges in using digital publishing to empower local culture integration in ideological courses, and to achieve a bidirectional convergence of educational content supply and technology application, we must coordinate efforts across mechanisms, resources, channels, and technology. The goal is to foster a positive interactive cycle between publishing integration and ideological education.

4.1 Build robust collaborative mechanisms to form multi-stakeholder synergy

It is necessary to establish a regular collaborative mechanism among cultural, publishing, and educational entities, with clearly defined responsibilities and benefits for each party. Through unified planning and policy guidance, resource sharing and process integration can be promoted. For example, a regional digital educational publishing consortium could be formed by joining local cultural institutions, university Marxism institutes, publishing houses, and other stakeholders to co-create content development alliances and data sharing platforms. This would achieve closed-loop linkage in topic selection, content production, and teaching application. In terms of mechanism design, improving benefit distribution and outcome evaluation methods is important to ensure sustained motivation for all participants. By combining administrative support with market-driven incentives, institutional barriers can be broken down, truly realizing an “all-in-one chess game” collaborative education framework where multiple parties work in concert.

4.2 Strengthen coordinated resource development for systematic content supply

Centering on the objectives of ideological and political curricula across school levels, we should use cultural themes as the link to sort out content elements of common interest for each stage, and develop digital course resources in a stratified and categorized manner. The development process should emphasize both vertical continuity and horizontal integration. Vertically, construct a graduated sequence

of thematic materials following the progression of enlightenment – understanding – enhancement, ensuring that content at each educational stage builds on the previous and spirals upward in depth. Horizontally, integrate region-specific cultural case studies to enrich digital resource packages beyond the textbook, encompassing multiple formats such as text, audio, video, and interactive courseware, which teachers can select according to their instructional context. At the same time, introduce knowledge graph technology to link and integrate dispersed materials, forming a structured network of cultural knowledge that different grade levels can draw upon as needed. This systematic development approach helps avoid duplicate construction and resource waste, and enhances the professionalism and relevance of resource supply.

4.3 Expand dissemination channels and construct a multi-dimensional communication matrix

Utilize converged media technology to simultaneously push local culture ideological education resources to various endpoints such as campus networks, WeChat public platforms, and digital reading apps, so that course resources can be shared both inside and outside school. On one hand, develop series of micro-lectures, digital exhibitions, and virtual practice programs to extend the reach of ideological classes into online spaces, allowing students to encounter local cultural knowledge anytime and anywhere. On the other hand, promote the integration of digital publishing content into smart education platforms and learning management systems at all levels, so that textbooks, teaching aids, and extended readings are compiled online, making it convenient for teachers to flexibly retrieve resources during teaching. Meanwhile, use big data analytics on user engagement and preferences to continually refine channel distribution strategies, thereby improving the coverage and reach of resource dissemination. A multi-channel, integrated communication matrix will effectively boost the penetration and influence of local cultural educational resources.

4.4 Deepen technological empowerment while upholding integrity to enhance educational effectiveness

On one front, we should advance the judicious application of cutting-edge technology in educational publishing, ensuring that technical tools serve educational objectives. Leverage artificial intelligence to improve resource recommendation and learning analytics, achieving precise matching between teaching content and student needs. Utilize VR/AR to augment contextual immersion, enhancing the appeal and empathetic impact of ideological lessons. Develop functions such as digital human narrators and intelligent Q&A to enrich the interactive experience for students. At the same time, the degree of technology use must be carefully managed to avoid excessive reliance that lets flashy technical forms overshadow substantive teaching, or that diminishes students' agency in learning. As researchers have emphasized, we must be guided by value rationality in delineating the proper boundaries of technology application, ensuring that “human–machine” interaction always ultimately serves “human–human” educational engagement, thereby preventing any distortion of educational values (Zhu & Cheng, 2025).

On another front, it is essential to strengthen digital copyright protection and content review, improving regulatory mechanisms for digital publishing resources to guard against intellectual property infringements and ideological risks that could arise from misuse of technology. By combining technological innovation with a steadfast value orientation, we can push digital publishing to deeply integrate into ideological teaching practice—innovating while maintaining fundamental principles—to ensure the enhancement of educational outcomes.

It should be noted that the rapid development of artificial intelligence and related technologies presents both opportunities and challenges for the education field. Large-model AI technologies represented by ChatGPT and DeepSeek provide intelligent support for teaching, but also raise new issues such as academic integrity and algorithmic bias. Educators need to maintain a prudent stance: overcoming cognitive biases in the use of AI, embracing technological change with a positive attitude, and simultaneously establishing normative governance mechanisms to ensure the rational application of AI in education (Huang, 2023). Practice in higher education has shown that deep integration of AI and education can indeed promote improvements in educational quality, but it requires concurrent development of ethical norms and support for teacher competencies (Yang, 2024). Therefore, universities should focus on enhancing the digital literacy of teachers and students, cultivating “human–machine collaboration” teaching abilities, and creating an educational environment suited to the intelligent era. Through complementary strengths of humans and machines, the teaching model of ideological and political courses can be innovatively reformed (Pu & Xiong, 2021). Researchers have also proposed various strategies—such as strengthening the integration of diverse resources, fostering a coordinated framework for AI literacy, and reinforcing risk prevention and governance—to overcome obstacles in AI-empowered education transformation (Zuo et al., 2025). In the process of advancing the integration of publishing and education, we must fully leverage the efficiency and experience gains brought by technology, while always holding fast to the value-oriented mission of education, ensuring that digital publishing genuinely serves the inherent needs of student development and cultural inheritance.

5. Conclusion

The use of digital publishing to empower the integration of local culture into ideological and political courses sits at the intersection of education’s digital transformation and the integrated development of publishing. Starting from an analysis of the current status and challenges, this study has elucidated the systematic empowering logic of digital publishing in terms of content reconstruction, channel expansion, and experience innovation for ideological and political courses, and accordingly proposed optimization pathways in areas such as mechanism coordination, resource development, channel expansion, and technological empowerment. It also identified potential risks like algorithmic bias,

copyright disputes, and pedagogical alienation, offering countermeasures for each. Through the deep integration of digital publishing with ideological and political education, it is possible to realize an integrated publishing transformation of high-quality local cultural educational resources, open up the content supply chain for multi-level collaborative character education, and enhance the affinity and effectiveness of ideological courses. In the future, further exploration in practice is needed to innovate publishing mechanisms in tandem with educational reform, and to improve supporting policies and standards. This will push digital publishing to better serve the talent cultivation needs under the “big ideological and political education” framework, providing a continuous stream of high-quality content to strengthen students’ cultural confidence and love for their home country. This endeavor is not only an intrinsic requirement for the high-quality integrated development of the publishing industry, but also a strategic path for constructing a new ecosystem of cultural education in the new era.

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