



# Exploring the role of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union in guiding youth's ideals in the digital space

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## Abstract

In the context of profound digital transformation and the explosion of social media, guiding young people towards revolutionary ideals has become an urgent requirement for the work of the Youth Union. This study aims to explore the role of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union in guiding young people's ideals in the digital space, thereby evaluating the effectiveness of communication methods, the level of influence, and the digital capabilities of Youth Union officials. A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was used, with a survey of 209 young people from various groups, including Youth Union members, students, Youth Union officials, and independent youth, along with 17 semi-structured interviews with Youth Union secretaries, media experts, and policymakers. The results show that the majority of young people highly appreciate the role of the Youth Union in spreading positive values, inspiring dedication, and strengthening faith in socialist ideals through digital platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and Zalo. However, the study also points out limitations in digital communication capacity, content creativity, and two-way interaction mechanisms. Therefore, the article recommends improving the digital transformation strategy in the Youth Union's work, developing a "Digital Citizen of the Youth Union" model to adapt to the digital age and enhance the effectiveness of ideal orientation for Vietnamese youth today.

**Keywords:** Youth union, Digital space, Ideal orientation, Vietnamese youth, Youth policy

## Introduction

The Political Report of the 12th National Congress of the Vietnam Youth Union (2022) noted many innovations in the work of educating revolutionary ideals, ethics, and lifestyles for young people, through programs such as "Vietnamese Youth Studying and Following the Thoughts, Ethics, and Style of Ho Chi Minh," "Building a Model of Youth in the New Era," and "Youth Living Beautifully and Usefully." However, the report also pointed out limitations, noting that the content of propaganda is still one-sided, lacks interaction, and has not effectively exploited digital media to spread positive values (Tuyen & Van, 2025a). The rapid changes in social media usage behavior require the Youth Union to shift from a direct propaganda model to building dialogue spaces where information is shared two-way between the organization and young people.

Directive No. 42-CT/TW of the Secretariat of the Central Committee (2015) emphasizes the core role of the Youth Union in educating revolutionary ideals for the younger generation. The report summarizing five years of implementing Directive 42 (Central Executive Committee of the Youth Union, 2020) affirms positive results but also acknowledges challenges in updating educational methods to suit the digital environment. Many propaganda contents have not kept pace with information technology; the digital communication skills of Youth Union officials are still limited; and the fight against harmful and toxic information on social media is not

professional and lacks a systematic approach (Luongngoc et al., 2022).

Generation Z – typical digital citizens – spends most of their time on Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and other interactive platforms. Their ideals and personal values are not only shaped by family or school but are also strongly influenced by social discourse in cyberspace. Therefore, the Youth Union becoming a pioneering force in ideological guidance on digital platforms is a strategic requirement. The Youth Union Charter, adopted at the 11th National Congress (2017), sets the goal of "cultivating revolutionary ideals, ethics, and a cultured lifestyle; promoting the pioneering and creative role of youth in building and defending the Fatherland." In the context of digitalization, this goal needs to be concretized by creating a digital youth ecosystem – a place where Youth Union members can learn, exchange, create, and spread humanistic values.

The 2019 report of the Central Propaganda Department in coordination with the Central Youth Union emphasizes that ideal education must be linked to innovation in communication methods and the application of information technology. Many models have been implemented, such as online competitions, youth forums on social media, and livestream programs to spread positive values. However, the sustainability of these models depends on the digital capacity of Youth Union officials, the synchronization of communication tools, and the coordination mechanism with other political and social organizations.

The results show that the majority of young people positively assess the role of the Youth Union in inspiring a beautiful life and encouraging a spirit of dedication. However, many opinions suggest that the Youth Union's communication channels are not attractive enough, the language is rigid, and not suitable for the expressive style of young people. Some interviewees emphasized that increasing presence on social media is essential, but priority should be given to training young cadres in online communication and interaction skills.

The study focuses on answering four questions: How is the Youth Union fulfilling its role of guiding ideals in the digital space? What forms and content of digital communication are applied? How do young people perceive and evaluate the impact of the Youth Union? What factors influence the effectiveness of guiding ideals in the digital context? Based on this, the article not only contributes to clarifying the role of the Youth Union in political and ideological education but also suggests directions for applying technology in youth work in the period 2025–2030, in line with the goals of the 13th Party Congress on developing a generation of young people with patriotism, courage, knowledge, and integration capabilities.

### Literature review

From an international perspective, Allen and Light (2015), in their work “From Voice to Influence: Understanding Citizenship in a Digital Age”, argue that young citizens in the digital age are not merely recipients of information but also creators of content, using social media as a tool for self-expression and participation in socio-political life. This observation expands the concept of active citizenship, requiring a shift from a one-way communication model to a multi-way interaction model, in which youth organizations play a connecting, guiding, and supportive role in fostering critical thinking. Following a similar approach, Clément (2011) analyzes human rights through the lens of social movements, asserting that youth political participation is measured not only by direct action but also by their capacity to construct social discourse and engage in political debate in the online environment. This is an important theoretical foundation for better understanding how the Youth Union can unleash “social transformation agents” in Vietnamese youth.

Recent studies have highlighted the impact of social media on the formation of political awareness and behavior among young people. Alodat, Al-Qora'n, and Abu Hamoud (2023), in their study of Jordanian youth, pointed out that social media has the potential to expand the space for political participation, but also poses the risk of dispersing beliefs if there is a lack of value orientation from socio-political organizations. Sainz and Hanna (2023), in their study of the Fridays for Future movement, found that digital platforms can become environments for fostering human rights awareness, global citizenship education, and collective action. This confirms that ideal education for young people in the digital age cannot be separated from developing their capacity for social participation and awareness of global citizenship responsibility. Furthermore, Bajaj's (2019); Tuyen & Van's (2025b) research in the *International Journal of Human Rights Education* summarized the concept of a “transformative agency”, emphasizing that ideal education is not only about

transmitting values but also about helping young people recognize their own power in creating justice, peace, and sustainable development.

These findings contribute to clarifying the theoretical basis for evaluating the role of the Youth Union in the Vietnamese context, where ideal education for young people is placed under the direct leadership of the Communist Party. Resolution No. 25-NQ/TW (CPV, 2008) identifies youth work as a strategic issue in the cause of national construction and defense, emphasizing the Youth Union's task of “strengthening the education of revolutionary ideals, ethics, and cultural lifestyle” for young people. Following this direction, Directive No. 42-CT/TW of the Central Party Secretariat (2015) focuses on innovating the content and methods of education, encouraging the Youth Union to use new media channels to reach young people. Resolution No. 35-NQ/TW of the Politburo (2018) expands the tasks of the Youth Union to the field of protecting the Party's ideological foundation in cyberspace, affirming that this is a new ideological front requiring Youth Union officials to have communication skills and digital capabilities.

At the domestic academic level, many authors have analyzed in depth the role of the Youth Union in the context of digital transformation. Le Thi Chien (2021) argues that the Youth Union is not only an ideal educational force but also a pioneering entity in combating erroneous viewpoints, protecting the Party's ideological foundation, thereby affirming the political acumen of the younger generation. Nguyen Ngoc Diep's (2025) & Tuyen & Van's (2025a) research also emphasizes that the strength of the Youth Union is demonstrated in its ability to gather and guide young people through modern communication methods, linking ideals with practical actions, especially in the context of increased hostile forces distorting information on the internet. Tran Ngoc Luong and Nguyen Thi Ngoc Lan (2024) approach the issue from the perspective of digital transformation, arguing that modernizing the Youth Union's work requires building a “digital interaction environment” where young people can participate in co-creating content, instead of just being recipients of information. Furthermore, research by Van Huynh (2024) & Tuyen & Van (2025b) shows that the Youth Union's activities on social media are becoming an effective communication channel for guiding information and spreading positive values. The author points out that the Youth Union's presence on platforms such as Facebook, Zalo, and TikTok has helped make the organization's image closer to young people; however, emphasis is still needed on training in content creation skills, data management, and quick response to social issues. Sharing this view, Nguyen Thi Hang (2025) emphasizes the role of the Youth Union in educating young people about life ideals in large urban areas like Ho Chi Minh City, where young people are strongly influenced by globalization and digital consumer culture. The author proposes combining traditional education with the application of technology to create appeal and encourage young people to participate in socio-political activities more voluntarily.

Meanwhile, research by Shanta Barman and Goutam Dakua (2024) deeply analyzes the influence of social media on young people, indicating that digital platforms have the potential to

shape attitudes, emotions, and social beliefs. This research helps to better identify the risk of young people being influenced by misinformation or extremist trends if they lack value guidance from socio-political organizations. Therefore, the role of the Youth Union in providing official information, spreading positive energy, and protecting the correct perceptions of young people in cyberspace is considered a decisive factor in maintaining the Party's ideological foundation in the new context.

From the synthesis of the above works, it can be seen that international studies have provided an important theoretical foundation on the relationship between communication technology and civic consciousness, while domestic studies affirm the socio-political role of the Youth Union in educating ideals and protecting the Party's ideological foundation. However, most studies have yet to delve deeply into analyzing how the Youth Union utilizes technology to transform political messages into concrete actions for young people, and have not clarified the mechanisms of two-way interaction and feedback between the Youth Union and its target audience in the digital environment (Trung et al., 2020a & 2022b). This gap highlights the urgent need for a study combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to explore the extent of influence, methods of impact, and digital capacity of the Youth Union in shaping the ideals of Vietnamese youth today.

Overview of the research situation shows that shaping the ideals of young people in the digital space is not only a matter of political communication but also a multi-dimensional process of social education, in which the Youth Union plays a key role in connecting the younger generation with revolutionary values, while ensuring the inheritance of the Party's ideals in the digital age. This research is therefore undertaken to contribute to filling that academic gap, providing empirical evidence and suggesting solutions for youth policy in the new era.

### Research methodology

The study "Exploring the Role of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union in Guiding Youth's Ideals in the Digital Space" was conducted using a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure comprehensiveness, reliability, and a deep reflection of reality. The parallel use of both methods allows for the exploration of both objective statistical aspects and subjective perceptions and emotions of the research subjects, thereby providing a complete and balanced picture of the Youth Union's role in the current digital environment.

The quantitative research was conducted through a survey of 209 individuals, comprising four groups representing different segments of youth. Specifically, the group of active Youth Union members accounted for 42.11% (n = 88), the group of university and college students accounted for 27.27% (n = 57), the group of Youth Union officials at all levels accounted for 18.66% (n = 39), and the group of independent youth not participating in Youth Union activities accounted for 11.96% (n = 25). This grouping aims to ensure relative representation among groups with varying levels of engagement with the Youth Union organization, thereby accurately reflecting the

perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors of young people regarding the Youth Union's ideal-oriented activities in the online space. The survey questionnaire was developed based on the theoretical framework of political communication, digital citizenship education, and political socialization theory, comprising 26 observed variables divided into four main content groups: (i) the level of access to the Youth Union's digital communication channels, (ii) youth's awareness of the revolutionary values and ideals disseminated by the Youth Union, (iii) the impact of Youth Union activities on social media on individual behavior and orientation, and (iv) factors influencing the effectiveness of ideal orientation in the digital environment. A five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", was applied to collect quantitative data on the level of agreement and feelings of respondents.

The survey was conducted over three months, from March to May 2025, in five representative regions: Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Can Tho, and Nghe An. Data was collected in two ways: directly through questionnaires distributed at Youth Union branches, universities, and youth centers, and online via Google Forms to reach young people who are not regularly involved in the organization. After removing invalid responses, 209 valid questionnaires were processed using SPSS 26.0 software. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multivariate regression were used to determine the relationship between the role of the Youth Union and factors influencing the ideal orientation process of young people on digital platforms.

In parallel with the quantitative survey, the study conducted 17 semi-structured interviews to explore in-depth analysis and explain the social phenomena observed in the statistical data. The interviewees were selectively chosen and included five grassroots Youth Union secretaries and deputy secretaries, four experts in youth work and political communication, three officials from the Central Youth Union's Propaganda Department, two youth policy makers, and three exemplary young people actively involved in digital platforms. Each interview lasted 35 to 60 minutes and was conducted in person or via the Zoom online platform with the participants' consent. The content was recorded, encoded, and processed using a three-step process: topic identification, code classification, and characteristic content extraction.

Qualitative analysis was conducted using the methods of Miles and Huberman, focusing on identifying key themes related to the Youth Union's role in communicating ideals, youth reception, and the difficulties and challenges in implementing Youth Union work in cyberspace. Qualitative data is used to supplement, illustrate, and compare with quantitative results, thereby forming conclusions that are more general and reliable. All research procedures are conducted in strict compliance with scientific ethics principles. Survey and interview participants are clearly informed about the research objectives, their right to anonymity, and their right to refuse or withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences. Data is confidential and used only for scientific research purposes.

The mixed-methods approach in this study offers a significant advantage by combining the generality of quantitative data with the depth of qualitative data. This approach not only helps to clearly identify the relationship between Youth Union

activities and youth ideal perceptions, but also clarifies the motivations, experiences, and practical challenges faced by Youth Union officials and members when participating in orientation work in the digital space. Therefore, the research results have both theoretical value in expanding understanding of political education in the digital environment and practical significance for policy planning and the development of digital communication strategies for the Youth Union in the new era.

## Research Results

### 1. The Level of Influence of the Youth Union in Guiding Youth's Ideals in the Digital Space

The survey results show that the majority of participants highly appreciate the role of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union in guiding life ideals and social values through digital platforms. Table 1 details the survey results with 7 main criteria.

**Table 1:** Assessment of the level of influence of the Youth Union in guiding ideals in the digital space (n = 209)

Survey Contents	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Youth Union activities on social media help young people better understand revolutionary ideals.	2	8	25	108	66	4.09
The Youth Union inspires young people positively through digital media.	3	9	24	101	72	4.10
The Youth Union's communication campaigns contribute to strengthening faith in socialist values.	5	14	32	93	65	3.93
The Youth Union creates forums to help young people healthily express their political views.	4	15	39	99	52	3.85
The Youth Union's messages on digital platforms have a strong impact on young people.	6	13	37	95	58	3.90
The Youth Union plays a role in guiding positive life values in the online community.	2	6	28	104	69	4.11
The Youth Union's online activities contribute to shaping social moral standards for young people.	4	9	34	102	60	4.00

The survey results show that the overall average score was 4.00, reflecting a high level of consensus. The group of active youth union members (42.11%) was the most positive, with 78.41% choosing a score of 4 or 5 for the criterion "The Youth Union inspires positive change". The independent youth group (11.96%) showed more caution, with Mean scoring only 3.71 for the criterion "shaping moral standards".

The interview results showed a similar trend. PV3 stated that "when the Youth Union's communication content is designed to be relatable and relevant to social issues that young people care about, its reach increases significantly". Meanwhile, PV 12 shared: "I learned about the 'Youth Living Beautifully' and 'Youth Volunteer' movements through social media, which made me feel that the Youth Union is more relatable and practical.

From quantitative and qualitative data, it can be seen that the Youth Union's influential role is not only reflected in political propaganda, but also in its ability to inspire self-reliance, creativity, and faith in community values among young people. However, a small segment of young people still do not fully perceive the impact, mainly due to limitations in accessing information or the traditional methods of communication.

### 2. Effectiveness of the Youth Union's Digital Communication Methods and Content

This section focuses on measuring the effectiveness of communication methods, propaganda campaigns, and forms of interaction between the Youth Union and young people. Table 2 presents the survey results with 6 key criteria.

**Table 2:** Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Youth Union's digital communication methods (n = 209)

Survey findings	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
The Youth Union's fanpage and website provide useful and easily accessible information.	3	10	31	107	58	3.98
The Youth Union's social media communication content is creative and engaging for young people.	7	17	41	93	51	3.77
The Youth Union effectively utilizes short video platforms (TikTok, YouTube Shorts) to spread its message.	6	21	45	89	48	3.69
The Youth Union's online campaigns are widely disseminated among young people.	5	16	34	104	50	3.86
The Youth Union regularly responds to and interacts with young people's comments on social media platforms.	9	19	46	91	44	3.63
The Youth Union's communication content contributes to increasing the organization's image recognition.	2	8	33	103	63	4.04

The average score of 3.83 indicates that, overall, the Youth Union's communication methods are quite effective, but not truly outstanding. The criterion "content contributing to increased awareness of the Youth Union's image" has the highest mean (4.04), while "interaction with youth comments" has the lowest mean (3.63). This suggests that the Youth Union's communication remains traditional, lacking dialogue and direct feedback.

The Youth Union officials (18.66%) rated "online campaigns" highest, with 82.05% choosing levels 4 or 5, demonstrating their clear perception of internal effectiveness. Conversely, the independent youth group gave lower scores on indicators related to "creativity" and "interaction", indicating a gap in access to digital content between the Youth Union and external audiences.

In the interview, PV7 emphasized that: "The Youth Union needs to apply storytelling, using real-life stories of young

people to spread values. Just posting announcements and slogans is no longer appealing to young people". Meanwhile, PV15 said: "I follow the Youth Union's page but find the posts dry and lacking in interaction, so I don't share them often".

The results show that the Youth Union has made progress in digital communication but still needs to innovate its presentation, develop a youthful and relatable language, and encourage young people to participate in two-way dialogue instead of passively receiving information.

### 3. Awareness, Beliefs, And Behaviors of Young People Regarding Revolutionary Ideals Conveyed Through Digital Activities

The goal of this section is to measure the degree of transformation from awareness to action among young people under the influence of Youth Union activities in cyberspace. Table 3 shows the survey results with 6 criteria.

**Table 3:** Youth's perceptions and behaviors regarding revolutionary ideals in the digital space (n = 209)

Survey Content	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
I regularly follow and share the Youth Union's posts on social media.	10	23	46	91	39	3.61
I feel proud to participate in or interact with the Youth Union's online activities.	4	11	35	99	60	3.96
I believe that the Youth Union's content contributes to raising the political awareness of young people.	6	13	37	97	56	3.93
I am positively influenced by the exemplary young people introduced through social media.	3	9	29	106	62	4.03
I feel that the Youth Union's activities help me clearly define my life and career goals.	5	12	39	101	52	3.88
I believe that the Youth Union contributes to strengthening the younger generation's belief in the country's development path.	3	7	30	98	71	4.08
Survey Content	1	2	3	4	5	Mean

The average score of 3.92 reflects a relatively high level of trust among young people in the guiding role of the Youth Union. The criterion “positive influence from exemplary youth role models” had the highest mean (4.03), reflecting the strong impact of inspirational stories. Conversely, the criterion “regularly sharing Youth Union posts” had the lowest mean (3.61), indicating that interaction remains passive.

The student group (27.27%) had the highest percentage of agreement on criteria related to “pride in interacting with the Youth Union's online activities”, with 79.31% choosing level 4 or 5. Meanwhile, the independent youth group only had 52.00% choosing the same level, showing a clear difference in the level of empathy with the ideal values conveyed by the Youth Union.

The interviews revealed that emotional and symbolic factors play a crucial role. PV10 commented that “when the Youth Union tells the true stories of young people, without

embellishment or slogans, young people will feel more sincerity and trust”. PV5 also acknowledged the need to “shift from propaganda to dissemination, from commands to persuasion”.

The results demonstrate that the Youth Union not only guides ideals through words, but also through concrete action models on social media. However, encouraging young people to participate in spreading positive content remains a weakness that needs improvement to expand its influence in the digital environment.

#### 4. Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Ideal Guidance for Young People in the Digital Environment

The final section aims to identify factors that directly affect the effectiveness of the Youth Union in ideal guidance, including staff capacity, technology, policies, and coordination among stakeholders.

**Table 4:** Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Ideal Guidance in the Digital Space (n = 209)

Survey content	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Youth Union officials possess good digital communication skills.	8	18	46	89	48	3.67
Youth Union branches have sufficient resources to implement online activities.	10	23	52	84	40	3.53
Support policies from Party committees and authorities help the Youth Union promote its role in cyberspace.	3	8	35	105	58	4.00
Coordination between the Youth Union and media organizations helps improve the effectiveness of propaganda.	2	9	30	109	59	4.03
The level of youth interest in the content posted by the Youth Union affects the effectiveness of activities.	1	5	24	111	68	4.15
Innovation in content presentation contributes to enhancing the attractiveness of the message.	2	6	29	104	68	4.10
Application of new technologies (AI, livestream, short videos) helps increase the reach of the Youth Union.	3	7	33	98	68	4.06
Training digital skills for officials and members is a necessary element in orientation work.	1	5	26	97	80	4.19

The average score of 3.96 reflects a positive assessment of the impact of technology, policy, and staff capacity on the effectiveness of the Youth Union's activities. The criterion “digital skills training for officials and members” has the highest Mean (4.19), indicating an urgent and widely recognized need. Conversely, “Youth Union grassroots resources” has the lowest Mean (3.53), reflecting limitations in physical and financial resources for implementing online activities.

The Youth Union officials group (18.66%) is the group with the lowest assessment of resources, with 69.23% choosing level 3, showing practical difficulties in their work. Meanwhile, the student group highly rated the “content innovation” factor, with 81.75% choosing a rating of 4 or 5. According to PV2, “digital competence is a prerequisite for the Youth Union to survive and develop in the new environment, because young people today interact mainly through cyberspace”. PV14 added: “We need training in content production skills and social media management. Many units still lack dedicated teams”.

These data show that the interaction between digital competence and support policies is a decisive factor in the ability to guide young people towards ideals in the digital age. When officials are equipped with sufficient skills and tools, the effectiveness of the Youth Union's communication will be significantly enhanced, while also strengthening critical thinking and guiding the right values within the youth community.

#### Discussion

The research results on the role of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union in guiding the ideals of young people in the digital space clearly reflect the current situation, trends, and new challenges in the ideological and political education work of Vietnam's largest youth organization. This discussion focuses on an in-depth analysis of the main findings by comparing survey data and semi-structured interviews (PV1–PV17), and comparing them with previous research results both domestically and internationally to determine the position, role, and prospects of the Youth Union in the current digital society context.

### **The youth union as an intermediary in the process of political socialization in the digital environment**

Survey results show that the majority of young people (Mean = 4.00 in item 1) perceive the Youth Union as playing an important role in guiding values and strengthening belief in socialist ideals. This result is consistent with Clément's (2011) assessment that social organizations act as intermediaries between political institutions and individuals in forming civic consciousness. In Vietnam, the Youth Union is not only a bridge but also an environment for character development, helping young people access revolutionary values in a more flexible and accessible way.

Interviews reinforce this assessment. PV2 emphasized that "The Youth Union is currently the only space that helps young people access political information in a friendly, non-coercive way, thereby forming beliefs naturally". PV9 added: "Digital platforms like fanpages, YouTube, and TikTok are becoming effective channels for spreading Ho Chi Minh's ideology, especially when conveyed in the language of young people".

Comparing this with the research by Alodat, Al-Qora'n, and Abu Hamoud (2023) on the political participation of Jordanian youth on social media, similarities can be seen: digital platforms have become new spaces for political socialization, but they are only truly effective when led by reputable organizations with strong communication capabilities and an understanding of youth psychology. The Vietnam Youth Union is playing this role quite clearly, but still needs to overcome the limitations of demographic differentiation, as the free youth group still shows a lower level of consensus (Mean = 3.71).

### **The creativity and appeal of the youth union's communication are still uneven across platforms**

Quantitative results show that the average score of criteria related to the effectiveness of digital communication is only 3.83, lower than expected. In particular, the criterion "interacting with youth comments" has a mean of 3.63, reflecting the reality that the Youth Union still tends towards one-way communication, with little dialogue with young people. Compared to the research results of Sainz and Hanna (2023) on the Fridays for Future movement, it can be seen that the success of this movement comes from the ability to connect social networks in an open network model, where young people are not only recipients but also co-creators of messages.

This result is consistent with the research of Shanta Barman and Goutam Dakua (2024), where the authors assert that social media can only positively impact young people if the content is creative, relatable, and allows users to express their personal identity. In Vietnam, some Youth Union campaigns, such as "I Love My Homeland" or "Youth Living Beautifully", have demonstrated this element, but they have not been implemented regularly and synchronously across all levels.

This issue was also acknowledged by PV5: "We have tried to innovate communication methods, but we lack a dedicated team and technological resources. Creating short videos or modern graphic design still depends on volunteer members". This shows that technology and human resources in communication are major obstacles in enhancing the attractiveness of Youth Union activities in the digital space.

### **The transformation of awareness and ideal behavior among young people still shows a gap between "Understanding" and "Action"**

Findings from the third survey table show an average score of 3.92, reflecting young people's positive awareness of the ideal values conveyed by the Youth Union. However, the indicator

"frequently sharing Youth Union content" reached a Mean of 3.61, significantly lower than other criteria. This suggests a gap between awareness and action, or in other words, between "understanding" and "action".

According to PV10: "Today's youth do not oppose revolutionary ideals, but they choose to express them in their own way, less tied to political slogans. They are more interested in concrete actions such as environmental protection and community initiatives than in abstract concepts". This observation coincides with Bajaj's (2019) research, where the author argues that ideal education is only truly meaningful when linked to concrete social actions, helping young people become "transformative agents" in the community.

PV13 adds: "The Youth Union should organize campaigns combining online and in-person activities, for example, challenges to spread positive actions, or programs connecting digital volunteers. In that case, ideal orientation will be more empirical, helping young people see their own value in contributing to society".

Compared to the domestic study by Nguyen Thi Hang (2025), the author believes that the Youth Union in large cities like Ho Chi Minh City is more successful thanks to the application of a multi-dimensional interaction model, combining online activities with field movements. This shows that the effectiveness of ideal orientation depends not only on communication content, but also on the ability to organize synchronized action movements between the digital space and real life.

### **Digital capacity of youth union officials and supporting policy mechanisms are decisive factors**

The survey results show that the criterion "training digital skills for officials and members" achieved a mean of 4.19, the highest in the entire data set. This reflects the practical needs in the digital transformation process of the Youth Union. PV14 shared: "We are assigned to manage the branch's fanpage, but have not received proper training. Many people only know how to post activity news but do not understand how to create interaction or handle negative feedback".

This view is also shared by PV1: "The Youth Union needs to develop a set of guidelines for digital communication and develop an internal online training system. When Youth Union officials have digital capabilities, new messages can spread effectively".

Compared with the research of Tran Ngoc Luong and Nguyen Thi Ngoc Lan (2024), a consensus can be seen in the conclusion: the digital transformation process of the Youth Union is not just about using technology, but about changing operational thinking, from a centralized management mechanism to an open interactive model. The authors argue that "the development of Youth Union work in the digital age depends on the ability to synchronize between the capabilities of officials and support policies from Party committees and authorities".

The research by Allen and Light (2015) also indicates that in the digital age, youth organizations can only maintain their influence if they know how to "transform their voice into influence", meaning they know how to leverage technology to expand dialogue and connect with the community. The Vietnam Youth Union is gradually achieving this, but still needs a more comprehensive strategy to enhance professionalism and strengthen youth confidence in the organization's adaptability in the context of international integration.

## Conclusion

The study “Exploring the Role of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union in Guiding Youth's Ideals in the Digital Space” has shown that in the context of comprehensive digital transformation, the Youth Union is not only a socio-political organization of the younger generation but also an intermediary in the process of political socialization, contributing to the formation of values, ideals, and digital citizenship skills for Vietnamese youth. The results of a survey of 209 people and interviews with 17 experts, Youth Union officials, members, students, and independent youth showed a high level of consensus regarding the role of the Youth Union in shaping ideals, with an overall average score of 3.93. Young people perceive the Youth Union as a force that spreads positive values, inspires social action, and strengthens faith in the country's development path.

However, the results also revealed some limitations in the communication methods and digital capabilities of the Youth Union's staff. Creativity, interactivity, and the attractiveness of communication content are uneven across levels, making it difficult to reach independent youth or those less affiliated with the organization. Many grassroots Youth Union units lack resources and technological tools, leading to online activities being merely superficial and failing to create widespread impact. The gap between youth awareness and behavior in the online space persists; while they understand the values of ideals, they are not actively participating in sharing, interacting, or constructively contributing.

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