



## THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ON THE POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF STUDENTS AT VIETNAM MARITIME UNIVERSITY

*Vu Phu Duong, Tran Hoang Hai*

*Vietnam Maritime University*

*Email address: [duongvp.llct@vimaru.edu.vn](mailto:duongvp.llct@vimaru.edu.vn)*

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### Abstract

A social network is a large system, consisting of many interconnected parts, allowing movement and communication between parts with a control center. With the strength of high interactivity, wide coverage, and convenient use, social networking platforms have attracted a large number of users, including young people and students. Social networks have a deep and wide impact on social life, meeting the information and cultural enjoyment needs of young people and students, contributing to actively supporting students in studying and expanding exchanges, look for opportunities. Research on the influence of social networks on the political ideology of students at Vietnam maritime University shows that besides the benefits and positive impacts, social networks are also revealing many worrying downsides to the political ideology of students at Vietnam Maritime University. Thereby, we can determine the impact of social networks on the political ideology of students at Vietnam Maritime University, expressed in both positive and negative aspects.

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## ẢNH HƯỞNG CỦA MẠNG XÃ HỘI ĐẾN TƯ TƯỞNG CHÍNH TRỊ CỦA SINH VIÊN TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC HÀNG HẢI VIỆT NAM

Vũ Phú Dương, Trần Hoàng Hải

Trường Đại học Hàng hải Việt Nam

Địa chỉ Email: [duongvp.llct@vimaru.edu.vn](mailto:duongvp.llct@vimaru.edu.vn)

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### Từ khóa

Mạng xã hội, sinh viên hàng hải, ảnh hưởng mạng xã hội, tư tưởng chính trị của sinh viên

### Tóm tắt

Mạng xã hội là một hệ thống lớn, bao gồm nhiều bộ phận được kết nối với nhau, cho phép chuyển động, liên lạc giữa các bộ phận với một trung tâm điều khiển. Với thế mạnh về khả năng tương tác cao, độ bao phủ rộng, sử dụng thuận tiện, các nền tảng mạng xã hội đã thu hút được đông đảo người sử dụng trong đó có lực lượng thanh niên và sinh viên. Mạng xã hội tác động sâu, rộng đến đời sống xã hội, đáp ứng nhu cầu thông tin, hưởng thụ văn hóa của thanh niên, sinh viên, góp phần tích cực hỗ trợ cho sinh viên trong việc học tập, mở rộng giao lưu, tìm kiếm các cơ hội. Nghiên cứu về ảnh hưởng của mạng xã hội đến tư tưởng chính trị của sinh viên trường Đại học Hàng hải Việt Nam cho thấy bên cạnh những tiện ích và tác động tích cực, mạng xã hội cũng đang bộc lộ nhiều mặt trái đáng lo ngại đến tư tưởng chính trị của sinh viên trường Đại học Hàng hải Việt Nam. Qua đó chúng ta có thể xác định nội hàm tác động của mạng xã hội đến tư tưởng chính trị của sinh viên trường Đại học Hàng hải Việt Nam được thể hiện trên cả hai khía cạnh tích cực và tiêu cực.

### 1. Introduction

Today, with the explosive development of the 4.0 industrial revolution, in which the Internet in general and social networks in particular are extremely useful tools, associated with the emergence of applications, from blogs. to websites. A social network is a gathering of many members to share information, opinions, understanding, and attitudes about a certain issue. Popular social networking sites today such as: Facebook, Youtube, TikTok, Instagram, ... constantly

attract billions of participants and become an important part of netizens' living space, a spiritual environment, especially of social life. Social networks have become an indispensable part in the lives of young people and students. The impact of social networks on student age occurs in parallel in two directions: positive and negative. Students today have been accessing and using social networks for many different purposes. However, reality also shows that, in addition to the positive and useful impact of social networks, there is also a

direct negative impact on political bravery, ideological stance, ethics, lifestyle, and goals, the revolutionary ideal of young people are young people and students. That is why in this article we focus on researching and surveying the influence of social networks on the political ideology of students at Vietnam Maritime University.

## **2. Research Methods**

### ***2.1. Material research methods***

Purpose: to learn about works, articles, and publications related to the topic, including documents on the Internet, to make objective and dialectical assessments and judgments about the subject.

Procedure: Collect, gather, and survey reference documents, scientific works, publications, and articles related to the research topic. Record and synthesize scientific judgments from sources to serve as a basis for comparison, comparison, analysis, and generalization

### ***2.2. Survey method***

Purpose: Collect detailed information about students' perceptions and actions regarding the impact of social networks.

Survey subjects: full-time university students at Vietnam Maritime University. Number of surveyed students: 500 students of courses K61, K62, K63, K64.

Survey content: Level of use of various types of social networks, means of accessing social networks, places to access social networks, time of accessing social networks of students at Vietnam Maritime University, Specifically Can: clarify the positive and negative effects of social networks on the political ideology of students at Vietnam Maritime University

## **3. Research results**

### ***3.1. Some effects of social networks***

Today, under the impact of the 4.0 revolution, information means and technology are increasingly developing, social networks are becoming more and more popular in society. It can be seen that social networks bring many benefits and play a positive role not only for individuals in general and students in particular but also for society. First, social networks

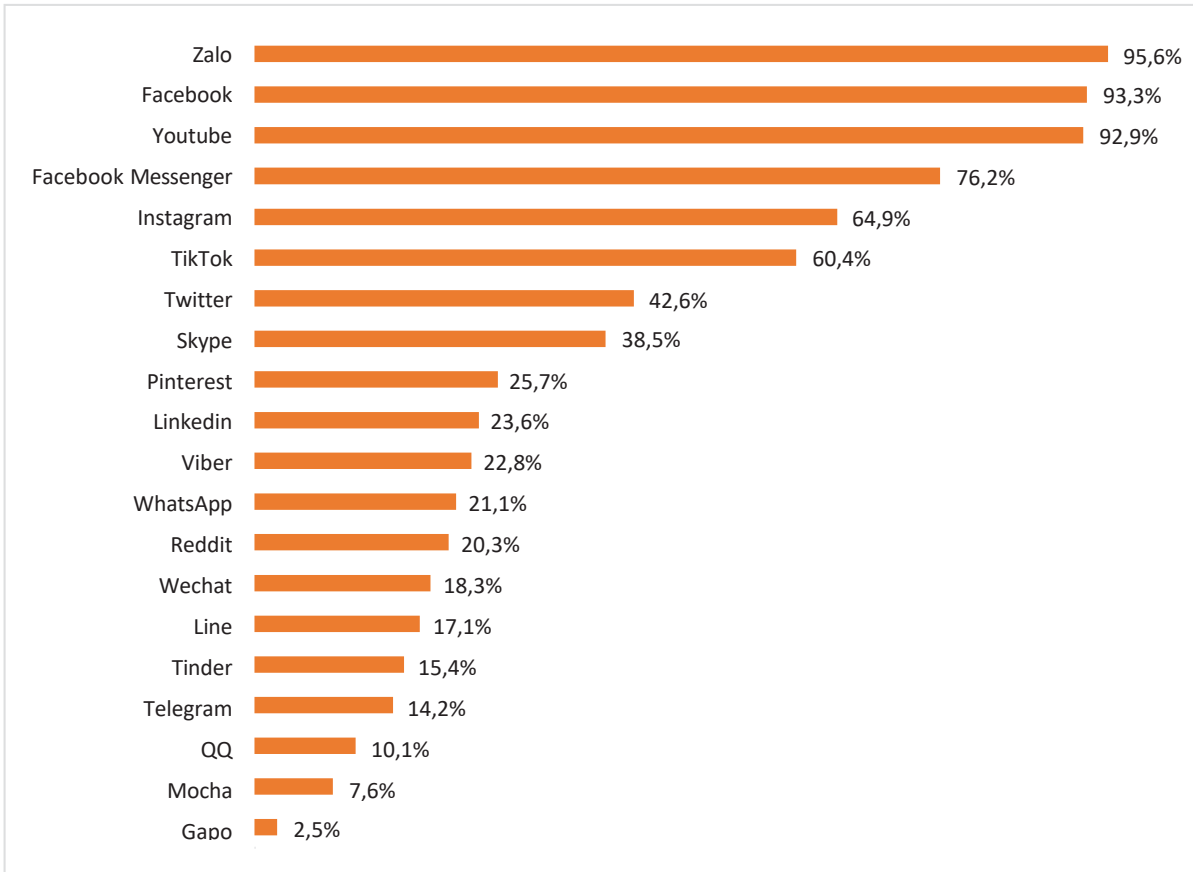
encourage the development of community culture. Second, social networks help develop people's awareness, thinking and life skills. Third, contribute to promoting Vietnam's cultural exchange process with the world. Fourth, social networks play an increasingly important role in strengthening the people's trust in the leadership of the Party, the State and the administration of the Government.

Besides positive values, social networks also have many negative impacts on individuals, the social environment and community benefits, specifically: First, social networks have been and are becoming one of the effective tools for hostile forces and cybercriminals to carry out activities that sabotage ideology, peaceful developments and other criminal acts. Hostile forces have thoroughly taken advantage of social networks such as fast information speed, wide information coverage, and large community to constantly conduct sabotage against our Party and State in cyberspace. Thousands of social networking sites were set up with the purpose of distorting and defaming Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's ideology and the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam [2]. Second, social networks increase the risk of revealing state secrets. Currently, most officials and party members use social networks, including a part of officials working in agencies and units related to state secrets. Taking advantage of the limited knowledge of some officials and party members about protecting state secrets; Security awareness is not good, many saboteurs try to steal, repost confidential documents on social networks, create forums to distort and defame the government. Third, social networks have a negative impact on cultural development. As social networks develop, the cultural invasion becomes stronger, affecting most individuals, especially young people. Typically, on social networks, propaganda trends appear, promoting Western lifestyles and values that are not really suitable such as pragmatic lifestyles, depraved culture, violence..., going against tradition. native culture. The situation of grabbing "like" headlines on social networks, posting fake news, false news, deliberately staging or creating clips that are untrue and contrary to good customs and traditions to attract attention is at an alarming rate. , affecting the good cultural values of the community. Some incidents

on social networks attract a large number of people to pay attention and follow, forming crowd psychology and public pressure, leading to complex behaviors in cultural behavior [7]. Fourth, social networks are being exploited and used by criminals as a tool and favorable environment for illegal activities. The fact that virtual

accounts do not need to authenticate information or declare exact identities helps criminal, economic, and drug offenders easily get acquainted, then defraud and appropriate money, asset, profiteering.

**3.2. The impact of social networks on the political ideology of students at Vietnam Maritime University**



**Figure 1. Level of use of social networks by students of Vietnam Maritime University, (2023 survey data)**

The survey results according to the chart above show that Zalo is currently the most popular social network among students of Vietnam Maritime University, with 95.6% of the school’s students using it. Next is Facebook with 93.3% of the school’s students using this social network. Facebook developed early on mobile networks, so the level of use of Facebook by students is very large. Facebook is a large, multilingual, highly interactive application repository. Youtube is currently the third most popular social network used by students at Vietnam Maritime University with 92.9% of them using it. The 4th most popular social networking application among Vietnam Maritime University students is Facebook Messenger with 72.6%. This is a messaging

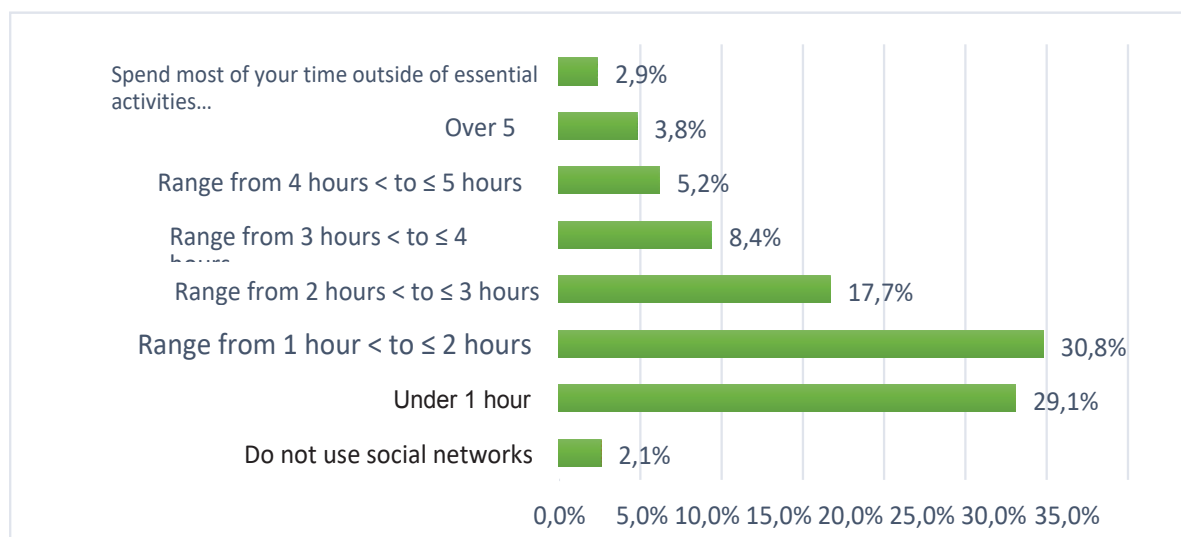
and calling application that almost every Facebook user uses. The 5th most popular social network among students is Instagram with 64.9%. Instagram integrates messaging tools, chatting with friends, relatives, people you love and have common interests through Instagram or easy video call and live stream features. TikTok is a new social network that has just appeared and developed in Vietnam but attracts quite a large number of students from Vietnam Maritime University. The percentage of maritime students who favor TikTok is 60.4% (ranked 6th). When TikTok was introduced to Vietnam, its starting point was as an entertainment platform, but now this social network has developed rapidly. If in the world, TikTok has accumulated more than 3 billion downloads since its

launch, this number is nearly 1/3 of the total number of social network users in less than 4 years; In Vietnam, TikTok has surpassed Twitter, Telegram, Reddit, Pinterest and Snapchat in terms of monthly active users [5]. For students of Vietnam Maritime University, TikTok is especially attractive because it not only stops at entertainment and information sharing, but TikTok is used by many students as a tool to communicate. Building a personal brand and doing business online, many of you have become KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders), KOCs (Key Opinion Consumers) on the TikTok platform with high-value advertising contracts.

Thus, the top 6 social networks most popular with students of Vietnam Maritime University today include Zalo, Facebook, Youtube, Facebook Messenger, Instagram, TikTok. There are some

differences between the social network usage rate of students at Vietnam Maritime University compared to the general rate of the whole country of Vietnam. Among them, the most popular Zalo application was founded by Vietnamese people, gradually affirming the position and development of “Made in Vietnam” social networks. Some other social networks such as Mocha and Gapo founded by Vietnamese founders are not yet popular with students at Vietnam Maritime University; These two applications only attract 7.6% and 2.5% of the school’s students to use, respectively.

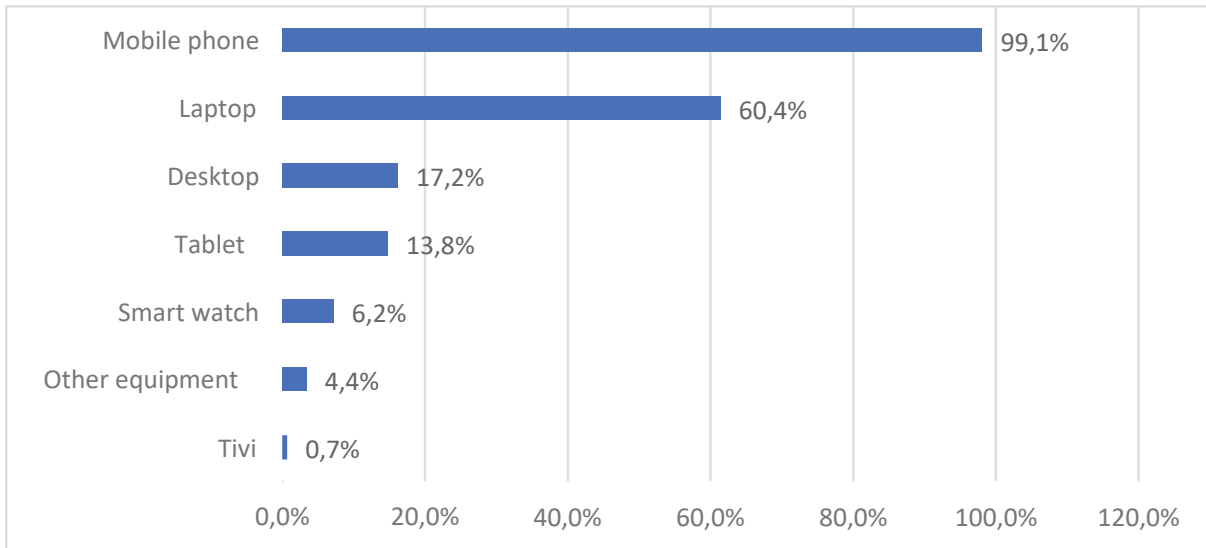
Survey on the amount of time spent using social networks by members of Vietnam Maritime University. The survey results are shown in the following chart:



**Figure 2. Time spent accessing social networks of students at Vietnam Maritime University**

According to the survey results of 500 students obtained in Figure 2, 97.9% of students at Vietnam Maritime University use social networks every day for different durations: the majority of them use social networks every day. use social networks with traffic from 1 hour to 2 hours per day (accounting for 30.8%). The percentage of people using social networks for 2 to 3 hours a day is 17.7%. Even the number of students using social networks more than

5 hours a day accounts for 3.8%, especially 2.9% of students, in addition to essential tasks, spend most of their time on social networks. In addition, we also conducted a survey on the means students use to access social networks. The results show that most students use mobile phones to use social networks (99.1%) and laptops (60.4%), a few others use desktop computers, tablets, or smart watches (accounting for less than 20%) to access social networks.



**Figure 3. Social network access means of students at Vietnam Maritime University**

Based on the general impact of social networks on people’s social lives in general and on students of Vietnam Maritime University in particular, we can determine the impact of social networks on the political ideology of maritime students expressed in both positive and negative aspects. The impact of social networks on the political ideology of maritime students is first of all a strong impact on the awareness, thinking, and political stance of maritime students, those are the initial factors that form the political ideology of maritime students. Next, social networks

influence emotional beliefs and political motivations through political images or political stories to form and strengthen political beliefs for maritime students. From the impacts on cognition, thinking, formation and emotions, beliefs, and political motivations of maritime students will lead to the formation of political behaviors of maritime students that are expressed and revealed. in fact. Below is a survey of the impact of social networks on the political ideology and actions of maritime students:

**Table 1. The impact of social networks on students’ political ideology and actions Vietnam Maritime University**

| Content  | Many impacts | Little impact | No impact | Difficult to evaluate |
|--|--------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Political ideology   |              |               |           |                       |
| Belief in socialism  | 64,2         | 30,7          | 0,0       | 5,1                   |
| Better understand the policy of a socialist-oriented market economy  | 62,4         | 31,0          | 1,2       | 5,5                   |
| Faith in the Party’s guidelines and policies   | 75,7         | 20,8          | 0,4       | 3,1                   |
| Confidence in the state’s policy and legal system  | 76,1         | 18,0          | 2,0       | 3,9                   |
| Faith in officials and party members of the Party and State  | 70,8         | 24,1          | 2,7       | 2,4                   |
| Act  |              |               |           |                       |
| Actively study and practice to become a good student   | 82,1         | 15,5          | 0,9       | 1,5                   |
| Actively study to master knowledge and professional skills   | 82,5         | 14,5          | 0,8       | 2,2                   |
| Strengthen the ethical training of workers in the period of the 4.0 scientific and technological revolution    | 80,6         | 15,9          | 1,2       | 2,4                   |
| Participate fully and responsibly in emulation movements launched by schools and socio-political organizations | 80,8         | 15,3          | 1,6       | 2,4                   |

|   |      |      |     |     |
|---|------|------|-----|-----|
| Actively participate in studying and propagating Vietnam's patriotic and revolutionary traditions                             | 75,3 | 22,0 | 1,2 | 1,6 |
| Actively participate in propaganda to fight against distorted arguments of hostile forces                                     | 65,5 | 27,2 | 2,1 | 5,2 |
| Do not participate in extreme activities such as: Demonstrations, rallies that cause public disorder                          | 76,1 | 16,9 | 4,3 | 2,7 |
| Actively participate in propagating and educating revolutionary ideals through cultural, sports, entertainment activities,... | 69,4 | 25,1 | 3,9 | 1,6 |
| Study, master and strictly comply with State policies, laws and school rules  | 87,3 | 10,8 | 0,4 | 1,6 |

Survey results of 500 students K61, K62, K63, K64 of Vietnam Maritime University show that the majority of responding students believe that social networks have had an impact on most ideological content. politics (over 60%). Among them, it is worth noting that there are a number of contents with a high rate of positive impact assessment: Faith in the Party's guidelines and policies (75.7%); Belief in socialism (64.2%); Better understand the policy of developing a socialist-oriented market economy (62.4%). Thus, it can be seen that, according to maritime students' assessments, social networks have had certain positive impacts on their belief in political ideological orientation. Besides, because there are many unclear issues in the explanations of the socialist-oriented market economy, the understanding and confidence of maritime students is not very high. Only 62.4% of maritime students self-assessed that they had a better understanding of the content of theoretical viewpoints thanks to communication and educational channels of Party agencies and schools, including social networks. Information, propaganda, and education from official social networks containing positive content also greatly impact students' attitudes and orient their actions. Survey data shows that students have tried to study, master and strictly comply with State policies, laws, and the School's rules (87.3%); Actively study to master professional knowledge and skills (82.5%); actively study and practice to become an excellent student (82.1%); Strengthen moral training and behavior of workers during the 4.0 scientific and technological revolution (80.6%); Participate fully and responsibly in emulation movements launched by schools and socio-political organizations (80.8%)... Notably, among the contents where social networks have a positive impact,

propaganda activities and fighting against distorted arguments of hostile forces have the lowest impact rate, only 65.5%. This is also understandable, because propaganda against the disinformation of hostile forces cannot be considered the main important task for students. The survey results show that there are many different methods used to fight and refute wrong and hostile views on social networks. In particular, each form has a way to express drasticness such as: blocking posts, sharing rebuttal posts so that everyone has the right awareness. The overview shows that before each information received, students show certain attitudes and reactions, up to 83.4% of students have ever used the "unfollow" function, "block" or "bad report" by Facebook. This number proves the bold expression of political opinions and the proactive spirit of preventing bad and toxic information among maritime students. This proves that maritime students themselves have also taken advantage of social networks to share correct and positive information and perceptions, or participate in debates and refute false and inaccurate allegations. Besides, the survey results also show that a number of phenomena assessed by students are at an average level such as: development of average ideology; spreading ideas that overestimate Western values; Fading revolutionary ideals is also something that needs attention in the impact of social networks on students' political ideology.

When evaluating students' awareness, attitudes and political actions in response to the impact of social networks, interview opinions from leaders, department managers and staff, lecturers of Vietnam Maritime University gave the following specific results:

**Table 2. Assessment of students' awareness, attitudes and actions**

| Evaluate  | Ratio (%) |
|---|-----------|
| Belief in socialism   |           |
| Completely believe  | 5,4       |
| Trust   | 83,1      |
| Unclear   | 10,5      |
| Understanding of Marxism-Leninism   |           |
| Clearly understand  | 59,6      |
| Not understood correctly  | 40,4      |
| Understanding of Ho Chi Minh's ideology   |           |
| Understand very well  | 15,8      |
| Clearly understand  | 56,2      |
| Not understood correctly  | 28,0      |
| Understanding of the Party's policies and guidelines  |           |
| Understand very well  | 5,5       |
| Clearly understand  | 53,9      |
| Not understood correctly  | 40,6      |
| Level of moral training and lifestyle of students   |           |
| Good  | 35,0      |
| Medium  | 65,0      |
| Student participation in protecting guidelines and policies                                 |           |
| Good  | 25,1      |
| Medium  | 71,4      |
| Not good  | 3,4       |
| Students' struggle against hostile forces' distorted propaganda activities                  |           |
| Good  | 35,0      |
| Medium  | 60,1      |
| Not good  | 4,9       |
| Attitudes towards activities involving large gatherings of people that disrupt social order |           |
| Normal  | 30,1      |
| Not supportive  | 69,9      |

The above summary data table shows that, regarding belief in socialism, although social networks have a lot of influence on students' political ideology, the majority of assessments by leaders, managers of

departments, officials, lecturers of schools and leaders of Party committees, experts and scientists show that students believe in socialism (88.5%). Many lecturers at the school believe that the majority of students have faith in socialism, believe in the future and future of the country, but there is still a part with wavering ideas. Up to 59.6% of students when asked said they had a clear understanding of Marxism-Leninism, however, there is still a proportion of students who do not understand this theory correctly or only understand the basic knowledge of this module in the training program as presented in the textbook. When asked by the school's Youth Union staff, he replied: There is basic understanding and exploration, but the penetration and depth are not yet there. Or you're not serious about the learning process so you don't really understand much. When asked about their understanding of Ho Chi Minh's ideology, 72% of students said they understood Ho Chi Minh's ideology very well. However, there are still up to 28% of opinions that current students still do not have an accurate understanding of Ho Chi Minh's ideology. When the Youth Union officials interviewed the students, they concluded that the current students had a positive attitude, always wanting to strive to learn and follow Ho Chi Minh's moral example. However, currently students' understanding is only at an average level.

Understanding of the Party's policies and guidelines. When asked and evaluated by officers of the Student Affairs Office, the majority of respondents said they had a clear understanding of the Party's policies and guidelines (59.4%). However, up to 40.6% of opinions still assess that students currently do not have an accurate understanding of the Party's policies and guidelines. Regarding the level of moral training and lifestyle of students, only 35% think it is at a good level, while up to 65% think it is at an average level. The participation of maritime students in protecting the Party's policies, the majority of opinions evaluate students' participation in protecting the Party and State's guidelines and policies at only an average of 71.4%, while they rate it at a good level of 25.1%. Regarding the struggle of maritime students against the distorted propaganda activities of hostile forces, the results show that 35% of opinions believe that students' struggle against hostile forces'



distorted propaganda activities is good, 60.1% think that it is average, meanwhile, the number of students who think it is not good only accounts for a very small percentage of 4.9%. As for the attitude of maritime students towards activities involving large gatherings of people and social disorder, 69.9% of the opinions said that students do not support and 30.1% think that students have a normal attitude towards these activities.

About the positive impacts of social networks on the political ideology of students at Vietnam Maritime University. First, social networks contribute to raising awareness, trust, political motivation, and action orientation for students. Social networks are one of the information channels that help update, spread and widely disseminate political and social news information, making an important contribution to the dissemination and propaganda of the Party's policies and guidelines, state law comes to students of Vietnam Maritime University; thereby strengthening students' political awareness and belief in the Party's leadership. The school has used social networks as a channel to publish, expand and interact with the public to serve information, propaganda, education, and thoroughly grasp the world and domestic situation, policies, the party and State's policies aim to orient and educate political ideology for students. Social networks have created conditions for school students to exchange, discuss, and express opinions about information. In particular, through the social network system, maritime students have access to a lot of positive and highly educational information and articles, contributing to raising awareness, strengthening trust and correct political attitude; Information about economic development achievements is widely spread, directly affecting students' awareness and attitudes, stimulating them to actively accumulate career knowledge, have more trust and love and become increasingly attached to the Party, the reform process, and the social regime; Arouse maritime students to see their responsibility to the country and the nation.

Second, social networks participate in the process of shaping public opinion, adjusting political attitudes and behaviors of maritime students; Refuting false arguments contributes to protecting the Party's ideological foundation, while educating students on

political ideology, encouraging and orienting students to study, practice, and establish themselves and their careers. As an effective interaction channel with the public, social networks help propaganda and media agencies receive feedback to capture and shape public opinion. This is extremely important in measuring and understanding social trends, especially for young people, student.

Thanks to the explosion of social networks, every individual can become a source of information by easily sharing and exchanging views and opinions with a large number of people. Interactive activities help create closeness between the public and media entities, including State agencies, providing quite complete data on demand characteristics, qualifications, preferences of each public group, so that media subjects have appropriate information strategies. At the same time, interactive activities also help media subjects quickly and accurately grasp public opinion to provide timely directions, especially during important political events. Most maritime students use social networks for the purpose of updating news, trend, next is the purpose of conversation. Therefore, social networks such as Zalo, Wechat, Line... that students often use are oriented towards chatting and participating in forums. The number of maritime students using social networks for learning, exchange and discussion purposes is also quite high because there are many groups and pages on social networks established for the purpose of sharing and help with learning. Typically, many English learning pages and groups are created with a large number of people interacting on Facebook. Students like this form because they can use social networks like Facebook to review for exams with a lot of review materials, share answers, and experiences. Through participating in social networks and expressing their opinions openly and freely within the framework of the law, students have both knowledge and enthusiasm to contribute, feel respected, exercise the right to criticism, participate and contribute to the country's political life. Through official, authenticated information channels, students are properly oriented in political ideology, equip themselves with the ability to criticize and refute false and hostile allegations, or

at least be able to “unfollow”, “block” or “report bad news” [1].

Besides the positive effects of social networks, the negative effects of social networks on the awareness, emotions, attitudes, motivation, beliefs, and will of students at Vietnam Maritime University. In relation to the positive impact of social networks, the trend of negative impacts is still large and complex. Because in order to survive and develop, social networks constantly renew themselves, become friendlier, smarter but at the same time “pamper” users more, some social networks prioritize search algorithms. Search for sensational, curious information, information inciting violence, sensational news, “views”, inciting the trend of virtual living, racing among young people, fabricated and defamatory information. individuals and organizations, negatively affecting social life, increasing the risk of poisoning students’ lifestyles. Intentional sabotage activities by hostile forces target students with distorted and fabricated content, increasing the risk of students being infected by “dirty” content from social networks. The subjective cause of this limitation and inadequacy is due to the “curiosity” mentality; The political will and courage of students are not adequate; not strong enough to completely defeat those sentiments. Inferring from the depth of its nature, the quality of orientation and education is not really on par, so students still “stealthily” update conflicting information, leading to self-orientation in perception and their behavior still has limitations and inadequacies.

Manifestations of negative impacts of social networks on awareness, emotions, attitudes, motivation, beliefs, and will of students at Vietnam Maritime University in political ideology education for current students now like: In addition to official, processed information, students are often attracted to exploiting and sharing negative information. Students who use their free time and have the opportunity to exploit social networks often focus on unverified information, unclear origins, false information, more mixed comments with less focus on positive exploitation and communication. Even the psychology of wanting to show off your sharpness and “fashionability” compared to your friends with information

#### 4. Conclusion

In summary, the impact of social networks on students’ political ideology is reflected in propaganda and advocacy to raise awareness of political ideology for maritime students. Maritime students are one of the groups that use social networks the most and are the most numerous. Therefore, social networks are one of the effective tools for spreading, mobilizing and propagating political ideology. Influential actors can use many different channels through many different forms of expression to create impacts on the political ideology of maritime students. The Communist Party of Vietnam, the State of Vietnam and other political and social organizations can build political images, political stories and practical political actions to create positive impacts. influence the political ideology of maritime students, forming political bravery, solid political beliefs and correct political behavior for maritime students. However, besides the positive effects, social networks also have negative effects on the political ideology of maritime students, reflected in the erosion of the political ideology of maritime students. These are false and hostile political contents that have had a very negative impact on the political beliefs and feelings of students at Vietnam Maritime University; negative impact on the awareness and political thinking of maritime students; negative impact on the political behavior of students at Vietnam Maritime University.

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