Managing internet public opinion in colleges and universities in China: Towards the humanization, ethics and responsibility in educational guidance

Gestión de la opinión pública en Internet en los colegios y universidades de China: Hacia la humanización, la ética y la responsabilidad en la orientación educativa

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Abstract: In the context of new media, the management of internet public opinion in colleges and universities becomes a special issue. This paper, based on the era of new media, analyzes common problems in managing internet public opinion in colleges and universities. The problems include the need to strengthen the ethics and morality of internet use for college and university students, the lack of humanization in educational guidance, and the absence of a robust mechanism for managing public opinion. Additionally, it summarizes the causes of these problems and proposes measures such as introducing ethics and responsibility courses for online media use, improving service awareness and management level, and improving the control and management mechanism for internet public opinion, aiming to provide insights and assistance for managing online public opinion in colleges and universities.

Keywords: New media; colleges and universities; Internet public opinion; countermeasures.

Resumen: *En el contexto de los nuevos medios, la gestión de la voz pública online en las universidades se convierte en un tipo especial de cuestión. Este artículo, basado en la era de los nuevos medios, analiza los problemas comunes en la gestión de la voz pública online en las universidades, que incluyen la necesidad de fortalecer la ética y moral del uso de internet para los estudiantes universitarios, la falta de humanización en la orientación educativa y la falta de un mecanismo sólido de gestión de la voz pública. Además, resume las causas de estos problemas y propone medidas como introducir cursos de ética y responsabilidad para el uso de medios en línea mejor la conciencia de servicio y el nivel de gestión, completar el mecanismo de control y gestión de la voz pública online, con fin de proporcionar ideas y ayuda para la gestión de la voz pública online en las universidades.*

Palabras clave: Nuevos medios; colegios y universidades; opinión pública en línea; contramedidas.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the 49th Statistical Report on China's Internet Development Status published by China Internet Network Information Center, with the popularization of network technology, the number of Internet users in our country has increased dramatically, and Internet public opinion management has become a part of social management that cannot be ignored. Li (2020) argues that with the widespread application of new media technology, Internet public opinion in colleges and universities has taken on new characteristics. And as an important part of society, colleges and universities will receive extremely high attention from society once Internet public opinion occurs. Wang (2022) points out that how to analyze the inherent laws of the new characteristics and then effectively manage Internet public opinion in colleges and universities under the background of new media is an important manifestation of the modernization and improvement of governance capabilities of colleges and universities, and it is also related to the social image of colleges and universities.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Relevant Concepts

2.1.1. New Media

In recent years, the field of new media has been a hot research topic for scholars at home and abroad, and the use of its concepts has been constantly changing. As for domestic scholars' representative views on the definition of the concept of new media, a representative on is that of Professor Xiong Chengyu, Director of the National Research Centre for Cultural Industries at Tsinghua University. Xiong (2006) concludes that new media is the product of the development of the Internet to a certain stage, which evolves and develops step by step with the development of the world, the growth logic of the network and changes in market demand. Shi (2009) proposes that new media is a form of media that emerges under a new technological support system, as opposed to traditional media, and "interactivity" is the biggest difference between new media and traditional media. By sorting out the views of various scholars, this paper believes that new media has fundamentally changed the traditional information communication model of one-way information communication, single communication platform, and independent communication system through multiple media forms, multi-platform communication, technical system and network interconnection, and two-way interactive communication.

2.1.2. Public Opinion

Judging from the current practice of public opinion in China, experts and scholars have different understandings and perceptions of what we mean by "public opinion" in the study of Internet public opinion. Some representative views are: Liu (2007) proposes that "pu-

blic opinion" is the sum of the public's emotions and opinions on public affairs related to their own interests in a specific time and space; Wang (2003) holds that "public opinion" is the political attitude held by the public towards national functional departments and government leaders regarding a certain intermediary social matter; Zhang (2004) shows that "public opinion" is the position and viewpoint held by national decision-making subjects regarding social situations. To sum up, this paper holds that public opinion refers to the emotions, opinions, attitudes, remarks and demands expressed by the public within a certain period of time regarding public events that are related to their own interests or of greater concern.

2.1.3. Public Opinion in Colleges and Universities

Zhou and Wang (2021) believes that Internet public opinion in colleges and universities is composed of a variety of elements, including the subject, carrier and object. Wu (2021) analyzes the subject, carrier and object and concludes that subject refers to the group of university teachers and students who express opinions, make demands, or are affected by Internet public opinion events on Internet platforms. The carrier refers to the channels and media through which public opinion information is communicated, and the object refers to the content of Internet public opinion in colleges and universities, that is, the core issues and focus events that trigger the generation of internet public opinion in colleges and universities. By sorting out related concepts, this paper believes that Internet public opinion in colleges and universities refers to the emotions, opinions, attitudes, remarks, and demands expressed by teachers and students in colleges and universities relying on public online media platforms within a relatively concentrated period of time on public events inside and outside the campus that are related to their own interests or of greater concern.

2.2. Relevant Domestic Research

2.2.1. Research on the Influence of Internet Public Opinion in Colleges and Universities

Regarding the research on the influence of Internet public opinion in colleges and universities, most scholars believe that the influence of public opinion has two sides, that is, positive influence and negative influence coexist. Chen (2021) explains the positive impact of Internet public opinion on social stability from the four aspects of effectively resolving the main contradictions in society, improving social people's livelihood, and enhancing social cohesion; and the negative influence of Internet public opinion on social stability in the context of new media from the three aspects of lack of government credibility, sudden outbreak of mass incidents, and the destruction of social values. It profoundly reveals the importance of doing a good job in Internet public opinion work in all aspects to the stable development of society. Li (2019) believes that positive Internet public opinion can maintain and support the stable development of society, while anomie in Internet public opinion has exactly the opposite effect. According to the research of many scholars, the current research on the influence mainly focuses on social stability, the physical and mental development of college and university students, and the ideological and political education of college and univer-

sity students. Some scholars also use public opinion cases as practical basis to conduct more in-depth analysis on the influence of Internet public opinion. From a comprehensive point of view, combining theory with practice is the focus of current and future research on the influence of Internet public opinion in the context of new media now.

2.2.2. Research on Response Strategies of Internet public opinion in Colleges and Universities

At present, many scholars have put forward their own unique insights and certain solutions to the problem of responding to Internet public opinion in colleges and universities under the background of new media. Lu and Gong (2021) believes that specific countermeasures for the research and judgment of Internet public opinion should include the construction of research and judgment positions and mechanisms. At the same time, it is necessary to innovate the working methods of Internet public opinion research and judgment in colleges and universities, and build an indicator system for the research and judgment of college and university students' public opinion, etc., Meng (2021) elaborates on the Internet public opinion guidance strategy from three aspects: strengthening team building, enriching cultural construction, and optimizing environmental construction. Feng (2021) holds that the supervision of public opinion requires the introduction of relevant systems to conduct monitoring and early warning of Internet public opinion, and ensure that measures to deal with public opinion emergencies are practical and feasible. However, with the rapid development of new media, the influence of undesirable public opinion information continues to expand. The current response measures alone are not enough to truly achieve efficient management of Internet public opinion, and further in-depth research is needed.

2.3. Relevant Foreign Research

As a carrier of Internet public opinion, the Internet first began to develop in the United States in 1969. By the end of the 1990s, it quickly reached a peak period. Therefore, related research on Internet public opinion first started in European and American countries. In the European discourse system, there is no term "public opinion". They collectively refer to public will and public opinion as "public opinion". Although the concept of public opinion has not yet been unanimously recognized by academics at home and abroad, a large number of monographs and documents written by foreign scholars have provided a theoretical basis for our further research and are worthy of our study and reference. However, from a practical perspective, these foreign studies are not suitable for the current situation of public opinion response in China. However, the relevant theoretical results of foreign countries on Internet public opinion can, to a certain extent, provide a theoretical basis for our continued in-depth research.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Methods

3.1.1. Literature Analysis Method

To search for information, reading papers, journals, published works by using libraries and the Internet. To broaden the ideas of this research, explore research gaps and form innovative opinions through studying other articles carefully, and looking for supporting materials.

3.1.2 Interview Survey Method

To understand the response strategies of colleges and universities to Internet public opinion based on the new media background through interviews, including visiting and investigating the publicity department and relevant departments of colleges and universities, collecting relevant introductions from staff, and obtaining true and reliable survey results.
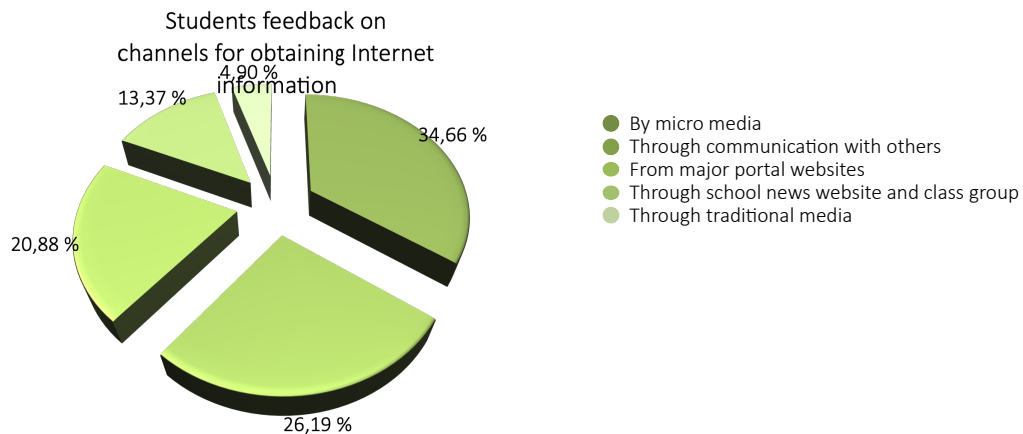
3.1.3. Questionnaire Survey Method

The questionnaire survey method is used to carry out quantitative research. Under the guidance of previous research and experts, questionnaires are distributed using classified cluster random sampling. An in-depth analysis of the collected data is conducted, and the overall picture of current status and existing problems of Internet public opinion management in colleges and universities in the new media era is presented.

3.2. Sample Situation

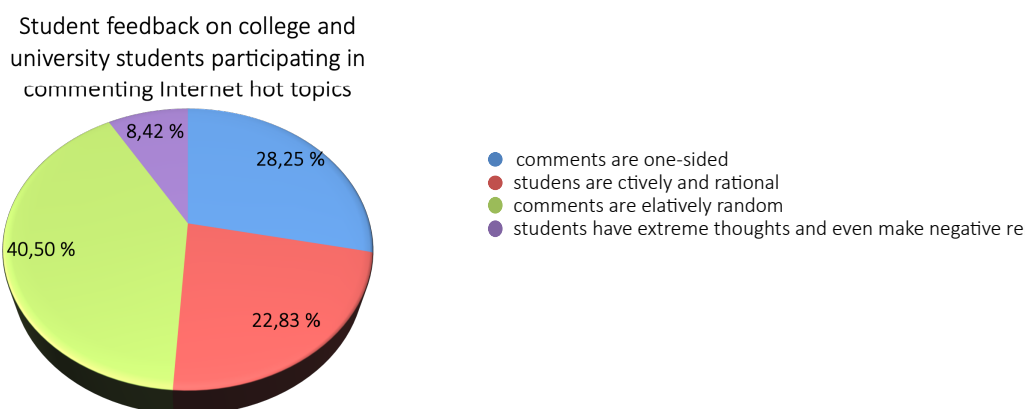### 3.2.1. New Media Usage among Students in Colleges and Universities

Through the survey, it was found that college and university students use new media for a long time on daily basis. Learning and entertainment on new media have become part of college and university students' daily life. In terms of channels for obtaining Internet information, 96.2% of college and university students said they obtain hot information through push notifications from micro-media such as Weibo and WeChat public accounts; 72.7% of college and university students get hot information when communicating with others online; 57.9% of college and university students choose to get hot information from push notifications from major portal websites; 37.1% of the students obtained information through school news feeds and class group forwarding; and 13.6% obtained information through traditional media such as television, radio and newspapers. It can be seen that college and university students obtain information through a variety of channels, but most of them obtain hot information through micro-media such as WeChat and Weibo, and some of them obtain hot information through communication between classmates and friends, i.e., forwarding and evaluating hot posts to each other. On the whole, college and university students are generally accustomed to obtaining the latest hot information on the Internet on the micro-media platforms that are highly interactive and have social functions.

Students feedback on channels for obtaining Internet information

4,90 %
13,37 %
34,66 %
20,88 %
26,19 %

- ● By micro media
- ● Through communication with others
- ● From major portal websites
- ● Through school news website and class group
- ● Through traditional media

Fig. 1. Students feedback on channels for obtaining Internet information

3.2.2. Attitudes of College and University Students Taking Part in Internet public opinions

The survey results on "Attitudes of College and University Students toward Participating in Commenting on Internet Hot Topics" showed that 33.9% of the respondents believed that when college and university students currently participate in commenting on hot topics on the Internet, their comments on hot events are too one-sided and it is difficult for them to analyze the events from a rational perspective; 27.4% of the respondents believe that current college and university students actively and rationally participate in the discussion of hot topics on the Internet; 48.6% of the respondents believe that the current comments of college and university students on hot topics on the Internet are group heckles, and their remarks are relatively random; and 10.1% of the respondents believe that current college and university students have extreme thoughts on the Internet and even make negative remarks. It can be seen that the current college and university students have rational thinking in the discussion of hot topics, but at the same time they also have one-sided and irrational side.
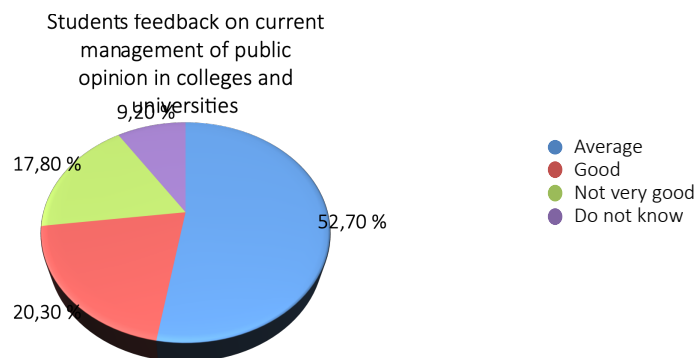
Student feedback on college and university students participating in commenting Internet hot topics

8,42 %
28,25 %
40,50 %
22,83 %

- ● comments are one-sided
- ● studens are ctively and rational
- ● comments are elatively random
- ● students have extreme thoughts and even make negative re

Fig. 2. Student feedback on college and university students participating in commenting Internet hot topics

3.2.3. Management of Internet public opinion in universities under the background of new media

According to the survey, 52.7% of college and university students believe that the current management of public opinion in colleges and universities is average. Although relevant departments have been established, the ability of each department to deal with public opinion needs to be further improved; 20.3% think that the management of Internet public opinion in colleges and universities is relatively good; 17.8% believe that the management situation is not very good, and bad public opinion information often floods the campus network; 9.2% said that they do not know much about the public opinion management situation of their college or university, or even do not know that their college or university has public opinion management department. It can be seen that the current management of Internet public opinion in colleges and universities is generally average, and it is necessary to further strengthen the management of Internet public opinion to create a clear cyberspace for college and university students.

Fig. 3. Students feedback on current management of public opinion in colleges and universities

4. RESULTS

4.1. Problems

4.1.1. The Ethics and Morality of Internet Use for College and University Students Need to be Strengthened

With the popularization of the Internet and new media technology, every college and university student has a mobile phone and can access the Internet anytime and anywhere. In addition, as young people, college and university students are eager to actively integrate into social management, hoping to increase their sense of participation and be taken seriously. They express their opinions about the people and events around them online, and are eager to communicate and interact with others. As reflected in the previous survey data, some college students go their own way when making remarks on online platforms, and some college students have no scruples at all. Due to the virtual nature of the Internet and the anonymity of Internet users, college and university students are prone to make or agree with some irrational remarks in order to win attention and gain the recognition of others.There is

a large number of college and university students on campus. If online speech is not well regulated and there is a lack of online moral awareness, it may trigger public opinion on campus and cause adverse effects.

4.1.2. The Humanization Level of Educational Guidance Needs to be Improved

At present, in the process of Internet public opinion management, colleges and universities still generally adopt the traditional ideological education method of indoctrination and preaching to educate and guide students. There are problems such as poor educational effect, low level of guidance, and insufficient mobilization of students' strength. Contemporary college students have experienced the bud and rise of the Internet, experienced the start and development of mobile Internet, and have grown up with the Internet era. They have more abundant access to information, are more tolerant of different opinions and cultures, and pay more attention to personalized growth and the realization of self-worth. For the contemporary college students standing at the top of the trend, the traditional method of indoctrinating and preaching ideological education seems old-fashioned and rigid to a certain extent. It is easy to ignore the psychological research of students, and interaction with students and two-way feedback of information have not been paid attention. The traditional expression methods and outdated communication techniques have gradually detached from today's social reality and have gradually lost their appeal to students.

4.1.3. The Internet Public Opinion Management Mechanism in Universities and Colleges Needs to be Improved

According to the survey, some students said that usually they made comments on the online platform of their colleges or universities, issues were not dealt with and feedback was not received in a timely manner. The number of management team members is insufficient, and there are few staff in the management department. They are responsible for screening and publishing content on the college and university website. The workload is heavy, the work covers a wide range of areas, and working overtime is normal. It is unrealistic to collect public opinion information by browsing websites and posting bars. The management staff is inexperienced, and the management department personnel change frequently. It is an unavoidable problem that the new staff lacks work experience. Public opinion management personnel lack professional knowledge. Most of them are journalism majors and literature majors. The job setting focus more on material writing, and they do not pay enough attention to public opinion information work. The imperfect emergency response mechanism for Internet public opinion and the rigidity of emergency response mechanism within colleges and universities create space and opportunities for the fermentation of online comments from all parties.

4.2.1. Lack of Internet Ethics and Responsibility Courses in Colleges and Universities

At present, there are few Internet public opinion ethics and responsibility courses in colleges and universities. Internet ethics and responsibility courses have not formed a system. New media has gained popularity rapidly, however, colleges and universities generally do not include Internet ethics and responsibility courses into teaching plans, and there is a lack of professional teaching materials. There are only a few chapters on Internet ethics and responsibility in ideological and political courses, and the amount of knowledge is far from suitable for teaching current students.

4.2.2. The Student-centered Concept Has Not Been Implemented

Colleges and universities habitually use discipline, rules and systems as rulers, and use requirements, discipline, rewards and punishments to carry out student management work. However, with the continuous changes and development of the educational environment, students have begun to have curiosity and doubt in the education process, and their awareness of subjectivity, rights protection, and participation have been continuously strengthened. This has resulted in conflicts between students' practical needs and the colleges' or universities' traditional management mode. In addition, some colleges and universities have deep bureaucratic and administrative shortcomings in the daily education and teaching management process, with weak service awareness and low governance capabilities. The quality and management level of the student management team need to be improved. These problems are all practical triggers of Internet public opinion.

4.2.3. The Complexity of the Internet Environment Brings Difficulties to Supervision

The Internet itself has a complex environment, the rapidity of Internet information spreading, the quality of internet users varies, and even some illegal elements are flooding the Internet. When a hot event ferments on the Internet, the speed of information spreading and the degree of distortion are immeasurable. If not guided and regulated in a timely manner, the public opinion will grow louder and louder, with unimaginable consequences, even resulting in Internet violence. As a special group, college and university students lack social experience, lack the ability to distinguish, and are eager to gain a sense of recognition. They are easily used by criminals with ulterior motives on the Internet to incite young people's emotions, causing college and university students to gather and watch Internet public opinion, and venting verbal violence, which poses a great challenge to the management of public opinion in colleges and universities.

Discussion

5.1. INTRODUCE ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITY COURSES

Under the background of new media, Internet media ethics and responsibility courses should include Internet norms of words and deeds, mainstream ideologies, vivid and rich case study, and basic Internet technology operations, etc., from both the Internet technology side and Internet moral literacy side. As scientific research units, colleges and universities should be committed to the design and development of this kind of courses, the compilation and design of professional textbooks, to form a standardized and system teaching model, which will be incorporated into student teaching plans and assessed to grant them credits. In addition, colleges and universities should also build a professional online moral education platform, combine current hot social events and hot news on campus to give students a voice channel, guide students to conduct correct online communication, investigate, handle and provide feedback on students' demands in a timely manner, pay more attention to students' life and enhance credibility of colleges and universities.

5.2. Improve Service Awareness and Management Levels

In the face of campus Internet public opinion emergencies, colleges and universities can not stop at investigating and dealing with black sheep, organizing Internet "campus guards" to put out fires. More importantly, they need to let the management keep up with the pace of development. When facing public opinion, there is no opportunistic method. Whether in reality or online, colleges and universities should work hard on management. They should understand trends, plan in advance, implement strictly, and put the joint efforts of various departments into more practical areas. In daily campus management, colleges and universities must always keep in mind the concept of "student-centered", giving full play to the main role of students, and achieving the integration of campus management and student self-management.

5.3. Improve Internet Public Opinion Management and Control Mechanisms

Improving the management and control mechanism for Internet public opinion is an important guarantee for effectively resolving Internet public opinion crises and creating a healthy and positive campus environment. This includes formulating detailed emergency plans, strengthening crisis management drills, improving post-event recovery mechanisms, and innovating management mechanisms. It is necessary to increase capital investment, introduce professional software for public opinion monitoring, and at the same time pay attention to team building, build a core network commentator mechanism, let professionals do professional work, make full use of various new media platforms, and introduce big data public opinion monitor platforms and other means to improve the Internet public opinion handling mechanism.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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