

Research on the Countermeasures of Governments to Deal with Online Public Opinion in the New Media Environment

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the public opinion atmosphere in my country has become increasingly active, and the Internet has become an important platform for the public to speak out and express opinions. The public uses the Internet to participate in the public decision-making process widely, actively express personal demands, and integrates huge public opinion influence and practical action through complex interactive modes intertwined online and offline. This phenomenon has greatly promoted the frequent occurrence of online emergencies. In short, the Internet has become an important force in promoting public opinions and actions, which in turn has affected the stability and development of society. In the context of new media, how the government understands the particularity of online public opinion and effectively responds is crucial to enhancing the government's credibility and people's satisfaction. The first part of this article briefly describes the background and significance of this topic selection, and sorts out the current research status of domestic experts and scholars on online public opinion management under the background of new media. The second part defines the concepts related to "new media" and "public opinion" and analyzes them from crisis management theory, providing a theoretical basis for this paper. The third part mainly explores the problems and reasons that the government has in responding to online public opinion under the background of new media. The fourth part puts forward suggestions on the shortcomings of the government in responding to online public opinion and explores ways to improve.

KEYWORDS

Internet public opinion; New media; Crisis management

1 Introduction

In today's new media era, its unique openness, autonomy and convenience have accelerated the speed of information dissemination unprecedentedly. Once a sensitive incident is exposed on the Internet, public opinion across the country can quickly gather, forming a strong public opinion wave. However, this rapid spread of information has also brought about the breeding of false information, gossip and negative emotional speech. This phenomenon has profoundly changed the interactive relationship between the government and the masses, and has posed new challenges and opportunities for the government to respond to the management of public opinion on the masses.

1.1 The Background and Research Significance of Topic Selection

With the rapid development of information technology and the popularization of the Internet, new media has become an important platform for people to obtain information, express opinions, and exchange ideas. In the new media environment, the speed and scope of information dissemination have been greatly improved, and online public opinion has also shown complex and changeable characteristics. Online public opinion not only affects the public's views and attitudes towards hot social events, but also directly affects the government's image and credibility.

In recent years, online public opinion incidents in my country have frequently occurred, covering a wide range of areas, from social issues to public security, from economic development to cultural conflicts, online public opinion has become a part of government work that cannot be ignored. However, in the new media environment, the government's challenges in responding to online public opinion are becoming increasingly prominent. On the one hand, the speed and influence of online public opinion far exceed that of traditional media, bringing huge pressure to the government's response; on the other hand, the complexity and uncertainty of online public opinion also increase the difficulty of the government's response.

In terms of theoretical significance, this research can enrich and develop relevant theories of online public opinion and government response, and provide theoretical support and reference for subsequent research. At the same time, it can also provide reference and inspiration for governments in other countries and regions to deal with online public opinion. In terms of practical significance, studying the government's countermeasures to respond to online public opinion in the new media environment will help the government better understand the formation mechanism and communication laws of online public opinion and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the government's response to online public opinion. At the same time, it will also help the government better understand public opinion and listen to people's voices, and enhance the government's credibility and transparency.

1.2 Current Status of Domestic Research

Through reviewing a large amount of literature, it was found that my country's research on public opinion started late. It was not until after 2007 that the academic community's research on online public opinion began to be paid attention to and formed a multi-perspective analysis. Regarding new media and online public opinion, the current views of experts and scholars in my country are summarized as follows.

Gong Chengbo, a professor at Communication University of China, believes that new media is a new type of media that is based on new technologies such as Internet technology and mobile communications to provide audiences with personalized and colorful information services. Professor Lei Yuejie, dean of the School of Journalism and Communication of Communication University of China, believes that new media refers to the general term for media equipped with the Internet, mobile phones and other new technologies, and is a concept corresponding to traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television.

Xu Xiaori of Nankai University believes that online public opinion is published by the public on the Internet, with a certain influence and tendency, and is a common opinion on certain social issues and social phenomena. @Ji Hong from Huazhong University of Science and Technology pointed out that online public opinion is the attitude of netizens towards the rulers and their political orientation. Liu Yi mentioned in his book "Introduction to the Research of Online Public Opinion" that online public opinion is the relationship between netizens and the ruling people and their political orientation, and is the attitude expressed by netizens. As a kind of expression of the public's political sentiment, it must have netizens with common interests, public issues that have attracted widespread attention, and relatively free online expression space.

2 Concept Definition and Theoretical Basis

2.1 Concept Definition

Definition of the first new media. The concept of "new media" was born in the United States and was first proposed by P. Goldmark, director of the Columbia Institute of Technology, who called "electronic video" "New Media" in a business plan. Later, Erastow, chairman of the Special Committee on Communications Policy, also adopted the term "NewMedia" in his report submitted to then-U.S. President Nixon. The term "new media" became popular and soon became a hot topic around the world (Gong Chengbo, 2021). There are indeed many interpretations of the definition of new media by domestic and foreign scholars, because new media itself is a concept that continues to evolve with the development of technology. After integrating the views of many scholars, the author believes that new media is an information dissemination and communication platform based on Internet technology, and new media is an information dissemination and communication platform based on Internet technology.

The second is the definition of online public opinion. As a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, online public opinion reflects the public's collective attention, attitude and emotional tendency toward specific events, phenomena or problems through the Internet platform. Different scholars have conducted in-depth analysis of it from different angles. Mr. Wang Laihua emphasized that online public opinion is a real-time and dynamic expression of opinions on current social events, and it reflects the people's attitudes and views on social management. This view not only may change at any time, but also directly reflects the public's perception and attitude towards social reality. Scholar Liu Yi regards online public opinion as a concentrated reflection of the public's views on real life events on the Internet. It gathers a wide range of public opinion and shows the public's common concern for social issues. This article believes that online public opinion is the sum of influential and influential remarks, opinions and opinions held by the public through the Internet platform on specific phenomena, problems or events in real society. It is a concentrated expression of public sentiment and an important part of social public opinion. It is of great significance to understand social dynamics and grasp the direction of public opinion.

2.2 Theoretical Basis

Crisis Management Theory

The first to propose the crisis management theory was Steven Fink. He proposed the crisis cycle theory in 1986. He stressed that crisis management is not just about responding to problems that have occurred, but more importantly, through prediction, analysis and preparation to resolve or mitigate the impact of the crisis before the problem breaks out. He believes that crisis has its own growth cycle, first of all, the budding stage, the potential stage of crisis, and then the formation stage, the onset stage, and the healing stage.

Nowadays, new media is developing rapidly and the emergence of online public opinion has continuously brought new crises to government governance. Therefore, government departments need to have a positive awareness of

prevention and take good response measures. In this article, the government faces online public opinion mainly including two crises: on the one hand, it is caused by popular events or emergencies, and the incident relies on the Internet to generate public opinion crisis; on the other hand, it is a public opinion crisis caused by the deviant direction of online public opinion and improper management, which leads to regional out-of-control. The emergence of the Internet has broken the boundaries of traditional information dissemination, allowing the public to obtain government information more directly and quickly, and thus more intuitively feel the government's governance capabilities. Therefore, how local governments can better respond to online public opinion is not only related to social stability, but also an important criterion for testing the government's ability to govern. Actively predict and intervene when public opinion is not formed, actively guide when it occurs, effectively cure after it dissipates, increase governance efforts, and maintain a clear and clear cyberspace. When public opinion has not yet formed, measures should be taken to intervene in advance to prevent the occurrence of potential crises. When public opinion occurs, we should actively guide public sentiment, release authoritative information in a timely manner, clarify the truth, and prevent the spread and spread of rumors. After the public opinion dissipates, experience and lessons should be summarized in a timely manner, and the response mechanism should be improved to ensure that similar problems do not occur again.

3 Analysis of the Problems and Reasons of the Government's Response to Online Public Opinion

3.1 Weak Risk Awareness

In the new media era, local governments have exposed obvious insufficient risk awareness in response to online public opinion. This is mainly reflected in the vague understanding of network risks in the region and field, as well as the imperfection of public opinion risk warning and assessment mechanisms. When public opinion incidents occur, relevant departments and personnel often fail to pay enough attention, which has become the key reason for the secondary public opinion hype. When hot events have just emerged, reasonable demands involving the parties are often not responded quickly and appropriately. In the process of public opinion response, the hasty decisions are made due to the failure to deeply understand and grasp the core points of risks, which often leads to further deterioration of the public opinion situation and triggers secondary public opinion. After the public opinion response was over, there was a lack of necessary summary and reflection, and failed to learn from past experiences and learn from one example and learn from others, so that the recurrence of similar public opinion risks could not be prevented and resolved in advance. This weak awareness of risk and imperfect response mechanisms seriously restrict local governments' ability to effectively respond to online public opinion in the new media era.

3.2 Lagging Early Warning Mechanism

In the current online public opinion environment, the rapid spread of information, the wide coverage and the great influence are unprecedented, which requires all levels and departments to have keen public opinion insight and efficient response capabilities. However, due to the limitations of technology and human resources, local governments often seem unscrupulous when discovering signs of online public opinion, and it is difficult to capture public opinion dynamics in a timely and precise manner.

Therefore, local governments often face the problem of untimely discovering public opinion in public opinion response, which leads to the inability to launch online public opinion emergency plans as soon as possible, thus missing the best opportunity to control public opinion to a smaller range. When public opinion began to ferment, due to the inaccurate analysis of public opinion risk points, and the development path and trend of public opinion were not observed in combination with the popularity of online communication and the views of netizens, the intensity of early warning and supervision also seemed insufficient.

3.3 Cooperation in Poor Coordination

The root of online public opinion is often the problems and contradictions in real life. Therefore, to completely calm public opinion, fundamental problems must be solved offline. In the process of handling public opinion incidents, it is crucial to clarify and consolidate the main responsibilities of the units involved. However, in some cases, some departments lack sufficient patience when communicating with the parties, and the conflict resolution work is not in place, resulting in the continuous fermentation of public opinion.

When public opinion incidents quickly developed into the focus of public attention, some departments failed to recognize the seriousness of the problem in a timely manner, had a vague attitude in the early stage, and even adopted a perfunctory and procrastination response method, which undoubtedly aggravated the deterioration of the situation and made the government lose the initiative in guiding public opinion.

Therefore, in order to achieve rapid and effective handling of online public opinion, multiple departments need to strengthen linkage and collaborative cooperation. Through cross-departmental information sharing, resource allocation and action cooperation, public opinion incidents can be dealt with more efficiently, conflicts and conflicts can be resolved in a timely manner, and social stability and public interests can be maintained.

3.4 Inadequate Guidance on Public Opinion

In public opinion management, it is crucial to guide public opinion in the right direction. Effective public opinion treatment should be able to turn crises into opportunities, positively guide public opinion through rational and objective comments, and reshape the relevant image. However, there is a common misunderstanding in reality that many people believe that the popularity of public opinion will naturally fade, so they adopt the "ostrich policy" to respond negatively. This attitude often leads to public opinion deviating from the truth and forming a misleading public opinion environment.

Because of the in-depth understanding of the laws of new media communication, some guiding comments often take one-sided or extreme perspectives, mainly taking offensive preaching criticism, creating a sense of oppression for netizens, causing them to feel resistant and unwilling to accept guidance. In addition, some media, platforms and self-media lack in-depth investigation and understanding when publishing their views, and publishing plausible information further misleads the public's sight and judgment, and aggravates the chaos and negative impact of public opinion.

4 Countermeasures of the Government to Use New Media to Deal with Public Opinion

4.1 Take Every Step, and Risk Prevention Needs to be Laid out in Advance

Internet public opinion governance plays an important role in the current society, and it is crucial to prevent and resolve social conflict risks and maintain the security of network ideological. Therefore, party and government organs, enterprises, institutions and even individuals need to strengthen their awareness of online public opinion risks more urgently. In particular, party members and cadres must keep up with the pace of development in the Internet era, actively adapt to new work requirements, and effectively improve their Internet literacy. We must be good at using the Internet work platform, open up channels for public opinion feedback, deeply understand the needs and concerns of the masses, and respond actively, and practice the online mass line in the new era with practical actions. In the face of the new communication characteristics of online public opinion, we must always maintain a high awareness of online public opinion risks, enhance our sensitivity and judgment of public opinion in daily work and words and deeds, and avoid triggering online public opinion due to inadequate attention, simple and crude methods, or inappropriate speeches, and damaging the credibility and image of the government.

4.2 Accurate Insight and Timely Analysis Are Crucial

In the era of new media, online public opinion is often ignited quickly, fermented quickly and is extremely popular. The key to effective disposal lies in rapid discovery, timely intervention and rapid response. In order to detect public opinion as soon as possible, strengthening public opinion monitoring is the top priority. We need to establish a database of sensitive public opinion hotspot information and strengthen the construction of technical means to improve the monitoring capabilities of online public opinion. At the same time, we need to monitor information around the clock, all fields and all platforms, and pay special attention to social media platforms such as media, Weibo, WeChat, clients, Douyin, and Toutiao, as well as interactive comment sections.

For the public opinion found, we need to conduct in-depth analysis and judgment to provide strong support for subsequent hierarchical and classified disposal. In this process, we must attach great importance to public opinion related to national major policies and guidelines, and pay special attention to the relevant public opinion of key areas and key figures. We must be vigilant against small events and small flaws that have evolved into major events that are concerned by the entire network. We need to closely follow the development trend of public opinion and judge the possible negative impact and degree of harm. According to the sensitivity and development stage of public opinion, we should adjust the target, direction and strategy of response at any time to ensure the accuracy and effectiveness of public opinion handling.

4.3 Coordinated Operations, Online and Offline Need to be Promoted Simultaneously

In the new media era, the number of nodes of public opinion explosion increases, the space for diffusion is wide, involving more departments and units, which brings greater challenges to public opinion response. In order to achieve the best results, we must build a perfect and modern multi-party collaborative working mechanism, coordinate and

balance public opinion handling and public opinion guidance, and form a strong synergy. Therefore, once public opinion is discovered, we need to respond quickly, activate the linkage mechanism for public opinion handling, set up a special response team, and formulate a detailed public opinion handling plan.

During the response process, we must ensure that public opinion can be intervened immediately after it is discovered online, and at the same time, we must coordinate offline to conduct efficient verification and investigation. Online and offline must be promoted simultaneously. We must not only do a good job in offline handling, but also promptly report progress and respond to social concerns. When public opinion involves multiple departments, it is necessary to strengthen coordination and linkage to ensure that all departments are in a consistent manner, jointly analyze and judge, and promptly connect, respond to public opinion in a safe and orderly manner, and safeguard social stability and public interests.

4.4 Actively Lead and Effectively Shape Positive Public Opinion

Given the rapid development of online public opinion and wide influence, in order to effectively deal with the complex and changeable network environment, we must actively lead public opinion and take the initiative. In hot events, we must adhere to positive guidance and take targeted explanations and guiding measures to address the vague understanding and reasonable doubts that arise in public opinion. In the process of guiding public opinion, we need to accurately set agenda, choose appropriate communication channels, follow the communication laws, make good use of online language, and pay attention to expression skills. For online public opinion with great influence and complex situations, we should accurately grasp the timing and rhythm of information release, and not only convey the correct direction, but also meet the information needs of the public.

At the same time, we must strengthen our guidance on self-media, and promptly discover and block the dissemination channels of false information and bad information in accordance with laws and regulations. Through comprehensive measures, we will strive for the understanding and support of netizens, and make the government's voice the mainstream of public opinion guidance. Opportunities and challenges coexist, and we need to reshape our image through guidance. By promptly informing the measures taken, the work that has been improved and the achievements made, actively set the focus of public opinion and quickly reverse the direction of public opinion. In this way, we can not only effectively respond to online public opinion, but also create a more positive and positive social image.

5 Conclusion

With the rapid development of Internet technology, new media is gradually changing the way information is disseminated and has a profound impact on people's daily lives. In the era of new media, public opinion has shown characteristics such as unrestrained, two-way interaction, concealment, irrationality, diversity and group nature. These characteristics undoubtedly bring many challenges to the government in responding to public opinion. Therefore, when facing public opinion, it is particularly critical that the government fully understands and grasps the characteristics of new media and formulates a set of appropriate public opinion response plans based on this.

This article first conducts a conceptual analysis of new media and online public opinion, and then combines crisis management theory to seek the government to deal with problems in online public opinion in the new media era. Finally, it improves the awareness of public opinion risk, improves and optimizes the early warning mechanism, and works in coordination with multiple departments to work together.

About the Author

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