

Research on the Shaping of Information Recognition Ability and Values of College Students in the Social Media Environment of the Post-truth Era

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ABSTRACT

In the post-truth era, the information dissemination environment has undergone profound changes; False information and emotional dissemination flood the online space, and post-truth events have become the mainstream of society. In this context, the information recognition ability and value shaping of college students pose great challenges. Therefore, this paper explores the connotation of the post truth era and its impact on the information recognition ability and values of college students. This aims to provide theoretical references for improving the information recognition ability and cultivating values of college students in the post-truth era.

KEYWORDS

post-truth era; social media environment; values

1 Introduction

In the context of the "post truth" era, the authenticity and accuracy of information have been severely tested. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines "post truth" as a situation where emotions and personal beliefs have a greater impact on shaping public opinion than objective facts. The dissemination speed and scope of false information, rumors, and emotional content go beyond factual information, affecting individuals' cognitive patterns and values. Social learning theory suggests that an individual's behavior and cognition are not only influenced by their own experiences, but also by the behavior and outcomes of others in the social environment. Therefore, this paper will delve into the shaping of information recognition ability and values among college students in the social media environment of the post-truth era, in order to provide theoretical reference for further research on this topic.

2 Basic Theory

2.1 The Connotation of the Post-Truth Era

"后真相" originates from the English word "post truth", which means that emotions and personal beliefs have a greater impact on the formation of public opinion than the importance of objective facts in public discussions. From a micro perspective, the connotation of the post-truth era is reflected in the links of information sources, processing, and feedback. In the information reception stage, the public obtains information through diverse sources such as social media, various accounts, short videos, and search platforms; Advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence

and algorithmic recommendation recommend content that meets user preferences, making it difficult for users to access comprehensive and objective information, leading to biased selection of personal information. In the information processing stage, the public relies on their intuition, experience, and emotional tendencies to make quick judgments, and is easily influenced by the emotional impact of information, leading to misunderstandings of the truth, according to the explanation of the "Shannon model". In the feedback stage, the public's response exhibits extreme and emotional characteristics, questioning objective facts and believing in information that can evoke emotional resonance. This can easily exacerbate social polarization, making it difficult for the truth to stand firm in the public opinion field. [1]

2.2 Analysis of Social Media Environment

With the advancement of technology, it is difficult to distinguish the authenticity of social media environments, which has affected social interaction and public opinion ecology. Social media information dissemination has the characteristics of multiple subjects, suddenness, and emotional appeals. Moreover, social media platforms analyze user tags to push users into an information cocoon, making the information received by individuals consistent with their own beliefs and emotions, exacerbating the blindness and paranoia of individual psychological choices, and weakening their ability to judge objective facts. Due to the fact that the main identity of the social media era is both a producer and a disseminator of information, everyone can become a promoter of public opinion, resulting in uneven information quality and negative impacts on public cognitive decision-making. In addition, the dissemination of information on social media platforms relies on social network relationships, and the dissemination of information in social circles is convenient and loosely regulated. The disseminators of false information use artificial intelligence to generate false videos and audio, further enhancing the deceptive nature and dissemination power of false information. This makes it difficult to control the spread of false information in specific social groups.

3 The Impact of the Post-Truth Era on the Information Recognition Ability and Values of College Students

3.1 The Impact of the Post-Truth Era on the Moral Concepts of College Students

With the popularization of social media, the ways and content in which college students obtain information have changed, affecting their moral judgment and ethical awareness. In the era of traditional media, information dissemination is relatively concentrated and authoritative, and the public usually relies on authoritative media to obtain factual information. However, the rise of social media has made information dissemination decentralized, and the power of mainstream media interpretation has been transferred to social media, leading college students to rely more on emotions and subjective judgment rather than rational analysis based on objective facts. The formation of moral concepts should be based on facts; The emotional information environment affects the moral judgment of college students by emotions and biases, reducing the fairness of their ethical judgments. In addition, the relativity of moral concepts refers to individuals often no longer adhering to universally applicable ethical principles when facing moral problems, but making flexible adjustments based on specific situations and personal interests. The information on social media is often fragmented, making it difficult for users to access comprehensive information from the system. This leads to a lack of overall cognition and systematic thinking among college students in moral judgment, fragmented information dissemination, and the constraint of their moral concepts on specific situations, neglecting the universality of moral principles.

3.2 The Impact of the Post-Truth Era on Political Identity of College Students

Political identity refers to an individual's understanding of facts, policies, and political beliefs, which in turn leads to identification with a specific political system, political party, or political leader. However, the information dissemination environment in the post-truth era makes this process more complex. On the one hand, the production and dissemination of information have become highly decentralized, with prejudices against stereotypes separating "mainstream" and "politics". The media function of mainstream media is in a disadvantaged position in the social media environment, and the anti authoritative information of social media has become the preferred channel for political information among college students, making them susceptible to emotions and biases, weakening their critical thinking ability towards political information. For example, certain political information incites emotions by exaggerating facts, selectively presenting or completely fabricating facts, leading college students to form incorrect or biased political views without sufficient factual basis. On the other hand, with the popularization of algorithmic recommendation systems, college students are accustomed to setting up personalized information services and obtaining their preferred information through algorithmic recommendations. Specifically, in social media, algorithmic recommendation systems push opinions that align with individual beliefs based on user behavior data, enhancing the homogenization of information received by users; The information cocoon effect results in a lack of diverse perspectives in the formation of political identity, exacerbating the solidification of its political stance.

3.3 The Impact of the Post-Truth Era on College Life Values

The social media environment in the post-truth era poses new challenges to shaping the life values of college students. On the one hand, the information dissemination mechanism of the post-truth era has led to the diversified intersection of values, with different values and lifestyles colliding with each other. Serious and orthodox dissemination content is not attractive, while relaxed and entertaining expressions are more popular. This makes it easy for college students to have cognitive confusion when facing conflicting values.

On the other hand, many contents on social media attract attention by inciting emotions, and the emotional information dissemination model does not pay attention to the authenticity of the information itself; When exposed to such information, college students are prone to relying on emotional analysis and not making rational judgments, which affects their personal development and sense of social responsibility. In addition, the social media environment is filled with fragmented and incomplete information; This information dissemination model weakens the deep understanding and critical thinking ability of college students, leading to one-sided and extreme values. For example, certain values are disseminated through short graphic and video clips, which, although easy to spread and accept, lack depth and systematicity; [3] After being exposed to such information, college students often form shallow and superficial values.

4 Optimization Path for Cultivating Values of College Students in the Post-Truth Era

4.1 To Give Play of Chief Position in School Education

In the post-truth era, the information environment is complex and ever-changing, with a proliferation of false information and emotional content. School education should focus on enhancing the critical thinking ability of college students; By offering specialized courses on critical thinking, students can be consciously guided to engage in critical thinking in the teaching of various subjects. Through case analysis, group discussions, and other methods, students can

improve their ability to discern and judge information. On this basis, teachers guide positive communication through interactive forms. Schools should provide systematic and comprehensive value education to help students form stable values. Specifically, in humanities and social science courses, students are guided to think and understand different values through the analysis of historical events, literary works, and social phenomena; In science and technology courses, teachers help students understand the social responsibility and moral norms of technological development, through discussions on scientific ethics and technological applications; It is also possible to create a good value education atmosphere through extracurricular activities, club organizations, and campus cultural construction, allowing students to internalize and practice correct values in diverse practical activities. [4]

4.2 To Strengthen Education on Values in Cyberspace

In the post-truth era, cyberspace has become a place for college students to obtain information and exchange ideas; Strengthening the education of values in cyberspace can help college students establish correct values in the flood of information. The education of values in cyberspace should focus on the scientificity and systematicity of the content. By establishing an online education platform and providing systematic value education courses, it covers multiple aspects such as social ethics, legal awareness, and ecological protection, helping college students fully understand and comprehend core values in different fields. In practice, teachers can enable college students to learn and internalize correct values through interactive means such as live streaming, online discussions, and virtual reality experiences; Teachers can also engage in online themed discussions, knowledge competitions, and case studies on social media platforms to attract college students to actively participate. Through interaction and discussion, they can deepen their understanding and identification with values. In addition, teachers can use technologies such as big data analysis and artificial intelligence to accurately identify the needs and interests of college students, promote personalized educational content, and provide personalized learning advice and guidance for college students.

4.3 To Effectively Strengthen Network Governance

Effective network governance requires strengthening the construction of laws and regulations in cyberspace and the use of information technology on online platforms. In terms of laws and regulations, the government should timely improve relevant laws and regulations in accordance with the new situation, clarify the legal responsibilities of online platforms and users, and by formulating stricter regulations on online content management, require social media platforms to strictly review the content posted by users, prevent the spread of false information and harmful content, and strengthen the crackdown on illegal activities. In terms of online platforms, as the main channel for information dissemination, online platforms shoulder important social responsibilities; It should utilize big data analysis and artificial intelligence technology to monitor and identify false information, rumors, and harmful content in real time, take timely measures to handle them, and apply blockchain technology to improve the transparency and traceability of information, strengthen the monitoring and management of information content.

On this basis, the platform should establish a sound content review and management mechanism, take proactive measures to prevent the spread of false information and harmful content, and establish a professional content review team to strictly review user posted information, timely delete content that does not comply with regulations, and strengthen cooperation with the government and social organizations to jointly promote the governance of cyberspace.

5 Conclusion

Based on the basic theories of the post-truth era and social media environment, this paper points out the impact of the post-truth era on college students from three aspects: moral concepts, political identity, and life values. The paper proposes corresponding strategies from three aspects: leveraging the main role of schools, strengthening education on values in cyberspace, and effectively governing cyberspace, to optimize the path of cultivating values among college students.

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