

Research on the Monitoring of Online Public Opinion and Ways of Crisis Response in Colleges and Universities in the New Media Environment

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Abstract

This paper starts from the research on public opinion monitoring and crisis response in colleges and universities. Based on proposing the hypothesis of a work strategy of "four integrations", this paper designs four practical platforms to provide reference for expanding online public opinion monitoring and ways of crisis response for colleges and universities in the new media environment.

Keywords

New media, public opinion monitoring, crisis response.

1. Introduction

In recent years, Internet technology has sprung up, new media platforms have constantly innovated, and online public opinion has achieved increasing social influence. Against the backdrop of new media revolution, the communication contents of online public opinion in colleges and universities embody many new features such as dispersibility, variability and irrationality, and the communication channels emerge with diversification, instantaneity and other new characteristics, which pose greater challenges for strengthening management of crisis response and guidance of forceful public opinion. Situated at forward positions of ideology, colleges and universities are faced with key and difficult issues in dealing with the opportunities and challenges of ideological and political work brought by the new media environment, effectively monitoring online public opinion, responding to crises of public opinion, forming prevention first, combining daily guidance with crisis responses and managing the working mechanism of disposal in effect.

To effectively prevent, guide and resolve crises of public opinion, colleges and universities must master principles of timeliness, totality and accuracy in the monitoring of online public opinion, follow principles of authenticity, initiative, consistency and diversity in the crisis countermeasures of public opinion. Furthermore, they must build a work system and a work practice platform to make the best use of the circumstances and resolve the crises.

Based on the practical experience of monitoring daily network public opinion and dealing with crises, this paper combines theoretical research with case analysis and tentatively proposes a work strategy of "four integrations" in order to provide a reference for colleges and universities to expand network public opinion monitoring and ways of crisis response in the new media environment.

2. Deepening a Strategy of "Four Integrations" and Establishing a Work System of Online Public Opinion Monitoring and Crisis Response for Colleges and Universities

The strategy of "four integrations" refers to the integration of traditional media and new media, the integration of mainstream public opinion field of schools and the spontaneous public opinion field of teachers and students, the integration of the official online education platform and the self-education platform and the integration of internal linkage mechanisms and external linkage mechanisms.

The first is to accelerate the integration of traditional media and new media at campuses, which can smooth the channels from content production to information dissemination. School newspapers, TV stations, radio stations, news networks and other traditional media serve as main producers of education contents and news materials in colleges and universities. However, since SNS communities, Weibo, WeChat, Tik Tok and other new network media platforms are developed rapidly, traditional media at campuses becomes more vulnerable in transmission. Furthermore, new media platforms can supply with more effective communication channels. Therefore, the integration of traditional media and new media should be promoted, focusing on major topics of mainstream values. In this way, traditional media is responsible for the production and processing of original contents, and official accounts, Weibo and other new media take charge of the real-time dissemination in large amount, which can broaden the coverage of public opinion guidance and reinforce guiding ability. Simultaneously, the official WeChat platform can be employed to collect information and clues from teachers and students, strengthen the interaction with teachers and students, further modify the direction of content production, enhance adaptability, increase vivid topics and cases and provide reference and support for content production.

The second is to facilitate the integration of the mainstream public opinion field and the spontaneous public opinion field, which can strengthen the mainstream public opinion and create a clear cyberspace. Once a public opinion emergency occurs, the mainstream public opinion field must be closely integrated with the spontaneous public opinion field of teachers and students to effectively guide public opinion of the emergency. On the one hand, it can play their respective functions to increase cohesion. The appeal of the mainstream public opinion field is far stronger than that of the spontaneous public opinion field. Therefore, it is necessary to exert its cohesion role to quickly gather emotions, attitudes and emotions of teachers and students. However, since the spontaneous public opinion field is close to teachers, students and citizens, it is necessary to play the role of the spontaneous public opinion field, which comes from teachers and students, aiming at aggregating teachers and students. Especially, Weibo and WeChat with profound influence must proceed at the same pace with the mainstream public opinion field to enhance cohesion and create a favorable atmosphere of public opinion in which the incident can be successfully resolved. On the other hand, it is necessary to encourage their respective statements to confirm each other, break through the space for rumors and sway over public opinion. When there is an emergency of public opinion, it is difficult to self-prove if it is close to the mainstream public opinion field. However, the collateral evidence of the spontaneous public opinion field can powerfully replenish the guidance of mainstream public opinion. Simultaneously, in an emergency, ordinary people are often unable to grasp the overview at the beginning of the emergency, and irrational thinking and voices are likely to become the mainstream of the spontaneous public opinion field. At this time, the mainstream public opinion field and the spontaneous public opinion field should be promoted to speak together and merge with each other, which can reflect rational speculation and the position of the masses, help teachers, students and ordinary people to view the emergency objectively, think about problems rationally, and guide public opinion to the right direction.

The third is to motivate the integration of official online education platform and self-education platform to achieve an organic connection between the accepted education and self-education. As an integral part of ideological and political education, public opinion guidance can enable positive, objective, rational and sunny public opinion to occupy the mainstream. Once it becomes the conscious awareness and behavior of teachers, students and the public, it can help teachers, students and the public to form the thinking habits of correctly perceiving and handling problems, which is also the ultimate goal of public opinion guidance. On the one hand, colleges and universities must play the role of the main channel of the official online education platform, spread positive and mainstream public opinion through this channel, and turn the authoritative voice into the main body of educating teachers, students and the public, so as to achieve the purpose of the accepted education. On the other hand, colleges and universities must rely on network platforms such as school associations, association homepages and we-media of teachers and students and echo the main channel to achieve self-education of teachers and students. When the accepted education and self-education are fully integrated, it can become the pursuit of life-giving spring breeze and the spread of silent lubricant effect.

The last is to promote the integration of the internal linkage mechanism and external linkage mechanism to create a benign environment of online public opinion for school development. It is far from enough for monitoring and crisis guidance of online public opinion to only rely on the strength of colleges and universities. Consequently, it is necessary to form a working mechanism of internal and external linkages and fully mobilize the public opinion work, student work systems and security at campuses in order to form an internal linkage mechanism. A team of ideological and political education work should be established, which should be composed of school leaders, heads of relevant departments and student work and student backbones. What's more, a three-level early warning mechanism of public opinion monitoring for teachers and students should be set up. With the help of the analysis software system for monitoring Internet public opinion, a strong monitoring system of internal public opinion can be taken shape. However, the external linkage mechanism is to fully strengthen the cooperation and communication among schools, public opinion companies, social media and other relevant units. With the virtue of establishing a smooth information channel, it can understand and promote all kinds of school-related information in a timely manner, which enables the media to correctly analyze and report various circumstances of schools and form a benign interactive relationship.

3. Constructing Four Practical Platforms and Enhancing Capability of Online Public Opinion Guidance and Crisis Response

Colleges and universities should construct four practical platforms on the basis of the strategy of "four integrations" to enhance capability of online public opinion guidance and crisis response:

One is to design a "closed loop channel that employs new media to carry out work" to realize the circular promotion of content production of traditional media and content dissemination of new media on account of the strategy of integrating traditional media and new media.

Public opinion monitoring and crisis response in colleges and universities should emphasize on the early guidance. Moreover, only excellent content can form a powerful guiding ability. Colleges and universities should design a closed loop channel of "content production—new media communication-content production" and start from content production of "central kitchen-style" by traditional media at campuses. New media serves as a communication channel as well as a feedback channel. In other words, it can disseminate content produced by traditional media, collect opinions, requirements, reading habits and communicating effects of teachers, students and the public, and transfer information to the content production of

traditional media, which makes new content production conform to the current law of network information transmission and boosts efficiency of the transmission guidance. Moreover, colleges and universities should make full use of traditional media at campuses and conduct in-depth interpretation of policy issues that teachers and students care about through topic design, in-depth exploration and topic selection of important news at schools. At the same time, by means of the design of these topics, public opinion events of teachers and students can be resolved in advance.

The second is to build a "new media alliance" and blend the official WeChat accounts of schools with the Weibo and WeChat accounts of teachers and students to build a public opinion guidance matrix based on the strategy of integrating the mainstream public opinion field of schools and the spontaneous public opinion field of teachers and students.

Public opinion matrix should be formed in order to elevate the ability of public opinion guidance, which can simultaneously speak out for a certain emergency, provide mutual support and form resonance. However, the construction of a new media alliance within schools is the foundation of forming public opinion matrix. Due to the large users of new media and its spontaneous public opinion field, colleges and universities can form a wider influence of public opinion and play the role of the public opinion matrix in emergencies. In addition, by means of formulating a school-level management system for new media, colleges and universities can incorporate the scattered new media platforms into their "new media alliance" and organize various training activities to help their members to promote competence in theme planning and content production and form a relatively intimate connection. During public opinion guidance, people can mutually forward official information to form a strong force of information dissemination, gather positive public opinion and achieve a benign effect of resonance at the same frequency.

The third is to unite the forces of associations of students and organizations of young teachers to set up a guiding team of public opinion that fuses official and civil platforms on the foundation of integrating the official online education platform with the self-education platform.

Official education platform is far from enough in the matrix guided by online public opinion. It is necessary to establish a backbone team of students to lead opinions of students. The backbone team can voice its opinion to echo the official education platform and resonate with the two voices of the government and teachers and students, thereby accumulating energy in detecting and guiding public opinion in emergencies. In addition, Youth Teachers' Association and other teachers' organizations can also be used to build a channel to discover public opinion and formulate a detection system of public opinion covering the entire school.

The last is to improve a set of "mechanism of integrating internal and external linkages" to form a favorable situation of internal and external collaboration in schools based on the integration of the internal linkage mechanism and the external linkage mechanism.

To effectively carry out public opinion guidance and crisis response, it is inadequate to only rely on the strength of schools in the new media environment. Based on the content information, public opinion matrix and opinion leaders cultivated by schools, the scope of influence is still relatively limited. If colleges and universities fail to spread information outside campuses through the linkage mechanism of internal and external cooperation, they will become vulnerable in the face of the flood of social public opinion. Consequently, colleges and universities should base themselves on the two fulcrums, namely, professional software system of detecting public opinion and the reinforced collaboration with social media, to strengthen their capability in public opinion monitoring and crisis response and seize the initiative of media guidance when a crisis occurs.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, when carrying out online public opinion monitoring and crisis response guidance in the new media environment, colleges and universities should accurately grasp the work strategy of integrating traditional media with new media, integrating the mainstream public opinion field of schools with the spontaneous public opinion field of teachers and students, integrating the official online education platform with self-education platform and integrating internal linkage mechanism with external linkage mechanism and seek out a working path that is in line with the reality of schools to lay a solid foundation for effective monitoring and prevention of crisis events and effectively guide the trend of public opinion.

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