

# On the Guidance and Regulation of Network Public Opinion Management in Colleges and Universities

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## **Abstract**

College students are an important force to spread and accept internet public opinion, which has become an important indicator to reflect social public opinion. Correctly understanding, actively guiding and regulating the internet public opinion is an effective way to promote the network governance of colleges and universities, also it may help build a harmonious campus cultural atmosphere. Therefore, faced with the severe challenges at the macro level and potential problems at the micro level, colleges and universities need to take some measures in time, positively occupy the main position of campus internet public opinion, lead the mainstream campus network culture to resolve the crisis of internet public opinion, construct a healthy and harmonious campus network sub-communication circle, enhance the management level of team construction. Consequently, the initiative of network ideological and political work in colleges and universities can be grasped in hands, which can maintain the stability of colleges and universities, and also can provide theoretical guidance and reference for the construction of safe campus and harmonious society.

**Keywords:** *college students, internet public opinion, colleges and universities*

## **1. CONNOTATION OF INTERNET PUBLIC OPINION IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

### ***1.1. The basic concept of internet public opinion***

Internet Public Opinion refers to the influential and tendentious speech and opinion held by the public on a "focus" or "hot spot" issue spread on the Internet. Internet public opinion is an indicator and barometer to reflect the ideological dynamics of college students. Its particularity, complexity and universality of content are deeply favored and concerned by college students, which are strengthened mainly through campus news network, student websites, forums, blogs, QQ, WeChat and other carriers within the scope of colleges and universities.

### ***1.2. The main characteristics of internet public opinions in colleges and universities***

In the Rise of the Network Society, Manuel Castells proposed that "The network constructs the new social form of our society, and the diffusion of network logic substantially changes the operation and results in the process of production, experience, power and culture." [2] Then, the internet public opinion is the network logic

product of the social organization structure. It has the network form which is contained in the real society but different from the real society. From the perspective of the internet public opinion in colleges and universities, its structure form has the following three characteristics: First, it is diversified and comprehensive. The virtual nature of the network meets the contemporary college students' urgent need for self-presentation and free expression, and becomes the best platform for them to freely comment. Major news and emergencies both inside and outside the campus will be published through this platform in the first time, attracting extensive attention and discussion. The second is group and magnification. As the main force of the network, the contemporary college students are more likely to reach a consensus on their values and have emotional resonance with each other, thus forming a group consensus. Coupled with the immediacy of network communication, social public opinion often produces an unpredictable chain amplification effect. The third is irrationality and uncontrollability. Nowadays, with the relatively backward development of network legislation, network education management and computer technology, social public morals often lack the moral constraints on individual netizens, which makes it difficult to control campus internet public opinions.

## **2. EXISTING CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS OF INTERNET PUBLIC OPINION IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

### ***2.1. The severe challenges***

The characteristics of young college students bring new problems to the internet public opinion monitoring. College students are full of thought and passion, but their values are not stable yet. Most college students in China are between 18 and 24 years old. They have the physique and various physiological functions of adults, but their psychology is not mature yet. Due to their unique social level and high cultural quality, they are more concerned about national current affairs and social events than the people in the society. They always have the ambition and desire to take the world as their own responsibility, and they react more directly and fiercely to emergencies. On the one hand, they are concerned about social development, enthusiastic about social participation, and pay attention to the progress and improvement of the whole social construction. On the other hand, due to the limited social practice and life experience, they tend to take on the color of fantasy when they talk, evaluate and think about social problems or campus events. They cannot accurately and comprehensively understand the problems, and are vulnerable to be used and bewitched by social undesirable elements. "The network communication expands the human communication space, and the human thinking space also expands accordingly." [3] A hot event on the internet, especially an unexpected event, coupled with an emotional opinion, may become the fuse that triggers mass incidents in colleges and universities. In recent years, college emergencies such as the "Lonely Gate" incident in Nanjing University occur frequently, constantly reminding us that we must further strengthen the internet public opinion monitoring in colleges and universities, and establish a good early-warning, analysis and treatment mechanism for public opinion.

### ***2.2. Major problems***

Firstly, the target is still unclear. Higher education is an important part of ideological and cultural construction, and colleges and universities are important places to inherit culture, spread knowledge and cultivate talents. The ultimate goal of internet public opinion management is to purify the campus public opinion environment and build a harmonious campus through orderly management of internet public opinion, so as to maintain the stability of colleges and universities and the development of the country. However, due to the unclear positioning and objectives of internet public opinion management in some colleges and universities, college administrators always try to control information rather than guide it out of the psychology of avoiding responsibility accidents. On the

contrary, it increases the difficulty of internet public opinion management and guidance, and even leads to greater incidents and consequences.

Secondly, mechanisms and systems need to be improved. Some colleges and universities lack of a perfect system in the management of internet public opinion, most of the campus network management systems in colleges and universities are scattered in other management systems. There is no detailed identification and disciplinary guidelines for many network violations, or even the distinction between legal and illegal cannot be made. As a result, many internet public opinion events become a vacuum belt for campus security management, which is quite easy to trigger internet public opinion crisis.

Thirdly, the strength of team building is insufficient. At present, most colleges and universities have established their own internet public opinion working team, but due to the lack of a perfect organizational structure and system to regulate and supervise public opinion working staff, or due to the inability to provide good learning and training opportunities, the quality of personnel is uneven, and there is still a certain gap from the high-quality public opinion working team.

## **3. COUNTERMEASURES ANALYSIS OF INTERNET PUBLIC OPINION MANAGEMENT IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

### ***3.1. Make positive voices and play the guiding role of example and demonstration***

All levels of network public opinion work teams in colleges and universities should correctly guide network public opinion, give full play to the guiding role of example and demonstration, take "help" as the starting point and purpose, and "education" as the foothold and guidance. On the one hand, do a good job in guiding young teachers' network behavior to form a benign guidance of public opinion. Young teachers are not only the discussers of opinions, but also the leaders of young students, whose opinions are easier to form the guidance of public opinion in the campus. It is one of the important means for the guidance of internet public opinion in campus to satisfy the interest demands of young teachers reasonably and do a good job in guiding young teachers' network behavior. On the other hand, cultivate "network opinion leaders" and do a good job in guiding internet public opinion. Once the internet public opinion forms, does the public opinion guidance work to appear urgently. One of the important ways to do a good job of public opinion guidance is to cultivate sharp and profound "network opinion leaders", guide the online speech and opinion expression of teachers and students, so as to generate tendentious opinions among teachers and students. [4]

### **3.2. Build a platform to construct a healthy and harmonious network environment**

The value conflict and value crisis triggered by the internet public opinion in colleges and universities results from students' opinions and suggestions not being paid attention to, resulting the spread of the negative emotions from individual events to group events, which intensified the contradiction between schools and students, and make the network not only can't become effective "mouthpiece", but also become the "amplifier" of public opinion. "The ultimate source of value conflict is the conflict of interest, which is the essence of value conflict. The conflict of value concept is the embodiment of value conflict in ideology." [5] "From the perspective of the activity process of value generation, the construction subjects of network ideological education value mainly include educators, network managers and educatees." [6] Among them, educators and educatees are users of the campus network. They use the campus network as a platform for communication to reflect their confusion to the school or express their dissatisfaction with a certain aspect. In practice, by opening the principal's mailbox, implementing the leadership reception system, setting up a network discussion platform, opening the microblog platform and other ways, the school unblocked the communication channels between the school and young students, and gives timely feedback to effectively solve the students' interest demands.

### **4. CONCLUSION**

Internet public opinion is not only one of the manifestations of social public opinion, but at the same time as an extension of the media of public opinion, it has a relatively strong influence in the current society. In a virtual, hidden, and free online society, everyone can become the protagonist of the online discourse system. However, all kinds of out-of-context and exaggerated online speeches are rampant, and these misleading and tendentious online public opinions seriously affect college students. Correct value judgment and harmonious and stable construction of universities. "The problem is the motto of the times, and the most practical voice that expresses the inner state of the times." [1] In the work of online public opinion monitoring and management, it has become more urgent to solve the guidance and regulation of the development of public opinion in colleges and universities. In colleges and universities where actors are concentrated, it is necessary to strengthen the comprehensive level of network ideological and political education in order to build a harmonious and healthy campus network environment.

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