

Text Analysis of China's Internet Governance Policies from 2000 to 2020

—Qualitative Research Based on NVivo

Shiyu liu¹, Xiaojie Gong², Xiaofeng Cong³, Jia Cong^{*}

^{1,2,3} Institute of political science and law, University of jinan, Shandong 250022, China

^{*} Lancaster University The United Kingdom, Ph.D. Email: 1426210801@qq.com

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes 157 Internet governance policy documents by using the method of policy text analysis. The research shows that the evolution of China's Internet governance policy can be divided into four stages, forming a governance mode with the general office of the State Council as the core and multiple departments responding positively, and multi-party cooperative governance has gradually become the most important governance mode in Internet governance. The core goal of Policy Governance is service and management. However, there are still some problems in the Internet governance policy, such as the overlapping of the functions of the main departments of governance and the lack of legal policy documents. This paper puts forward some suggestions and countermeasures, such as the division of the functions of the main departments of governance and the improvement of the legal system of governance.

Keywords: internet governance, policy evolution, policy subject, text analysis, NVivo

1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The popularization and development of the Internet have accompanied people's work and life, and the Internet has become an indispensable part of People's Daily communication and interaction. However, there are still various problems in the Internet. In order to ensure Internet security, Internet governance has gradually become an important topic of discussion in the world. In November 2006, the United Nations set up the United Nations Internet Governance Forum for the first time, which is dedicated to solving Internet governance issues. Its purpose is to promote multi-subject and multi-country dialogue and discussion on Internet governance policies. In November 2020, the 15th United Nations Forum on Internet Governance discussed the theme "The Internet promotes Human Resilience and Solidarity". It is an important task for the government to be able to regulate the Internet, and make good use of the Internet[1]. It can be seen that Internet governance has risen as a global theme and received high attention.

1994 was the first year that China was connected to the Internet. After nearly 30 years of development and reform, China has become an Internet power. The

continuous development of the Internet industry in China has brought economic growth and intelligent technology to the country, but at the same time, there are still a variety of social risks, and the Internet problem needs to be solved urgently. Therefore, strengthening the management of the Internet and related activities has become an important work for the Chinese government to maintain network security and implement the strategic thought of network power[2]. By sorting out China's Internet governance policies, this paper is committed to discovering the problems existing in the current situation of Internet governance, and objectively analyzing and describing them, which is of great significance for improving the Internet governance system.

2. RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA

This paper mainly adopts the method of policy text analysis to conduct in-depth geological research on policy document data. Policy text analysis is a research method that combines quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis to reveal policy themes, goals and impacts, cooperation modes of policy subjects, and the structure and evolution of policy system[3]. By using NVivo qualitative analysis software, the author

constructs four analysis units of policy evolution stage, policy subject, policy type and policy target.

The data used in this paper mainly come from "Peking University Legal Database". This research firstly searches "Internet" as the key word. Due to the large number of policy documents retrieved, screening is carried out. In order to ensure that the selected policy documents are highly relevant and representative, the following screening principles should be followed: First, normative documents; Second, the content of policy documents must be closely related to Internet governance; Third, twenty years from 2000 to 2020 are mainly selected for policy time. According to the above principles, 157 Internet governance policy documents were selected as the object of this analysis.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

3.1. Evolution of Internet governance policies

The research shows that during the period from 2000 to 2020, the evolution of China's Internet governance policy has four stages and five tipping points. The first phase is from 2000 to 2005, ushered in the first break point in 2001. By the end of 1999, the number of online users in China was about 8.9 million[4]. The Internet Information Service Management Measures issued in 2000 is a milestone of China's Internet information service governance, marking that China's Internet information service governance has a clear governance basis[5]. Based on the foundation of the basic documents on Internet governance issued by the Central government in 2000, a number of policy documents were released in 2001, such as the Interim Provisions on Internet Interconnection Services between Backbone Networks and other seven policy documents, which are closely related to information service management.

The second stage is from 2005 to 2009, when the natural budding period of the Internet gradually entered the development stage after five years of precipitation. The second turning point was 2005, during which 10 policy documents such as Opinions on Further Strengthening Internet Management were released. It can be seen that various Internet subjects were constantly strengthening Internet management and Internet governance gradually attracted the attention of relevant departments.

The third stage is from 2009 to 2015, when the Internet gradually moves from the development stage to the mature stage. The third tipping point is 2009. Premier Li Keqiang first put forward the "Internet Plus" action plan in March 2015. This plan is to create new forms of development through the deep combination of Internet platform and traditional industry. Since then, "Internet + Financial industry", "Internet + Advanced manufacturing" and "Internet + medical industry" have

gradually stepped onto the stage of integrated development of the Internet.

The fourth phase is from 2016 to 2020. Since 2016, the number of Internet governance policies released has increased rapidly and reached the highest point, with a total of more than 20 policy documents issued. Since then, the Internet industry has become more mature and moved to the stage of informatization + innovation. The year 2020 was the fifth tipping point, with 19 policy papers issued. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in China, the "Internet plus Medical Care" project has been carried out rapidly, and nearly seven policy documents, "Notice on Internet Diagnosis, Treatment and Consultation Services in Epidemic Prevention and Control", have been issued and implemented.

Generally speaking, during the period from 2000 to 2020, the number of Internet governance policies released in China reached its peak in 2017, with 23 policy documents issued. The top five years in 2017, 2020, 2016, 2019 and 2018 all released more than 10 policy documents within the past five years. It can be seen that China attaches great importance to the development of the Internet in the past five years, and has higher requirements for Internet governance, and the Internet governance system is constantly improving and making progress.

3.2. Subjects of Internet governance policies

According to research and analysis, the main body of Internet governance policy has more than 40. A total of 29 policy subjects were independently published, involving a total of 116 Internet governance policy documents. The General Office of the State Council made 18 independent policy announcements. Cyberspace Administration of China issued 16 documents; Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, published 14; State Food and Drug Administration, issued 10 documents; State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, 8. The number of policy releases by the top five subjects accounted for 57% of the total number of releases, accounting for more than half.

It can be seen that The General Office of the State Council, as the core of the Internet governance policy release subject, is also a symbol of national power and strength, representing the country and leading the overall situation in the issue of policy documents. China Food and Drug Administration (SFDA), as a department cooperating with the Internet, issued a total of 10 policy documents successively in 2001, such as Internet Drug Information Service Management Measures. This shows that the state attaches great importance to the integration of the medical industry and the Internet industry and supports the establishment of an Internet system in the medical industry to serve the people more conveniently.

In short, China's current Internet governance policy issuing body has formed an Internet governance system with The General Office of the State Council as the core and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, The Cyberspace Administration of China and the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television as the main body.

In addition to being issued by separate departments, Internet governance policies will be issued jointly by multiple departments when involving the participation of multiple fields. From 2000 to 2020, subjects of Internet governance policies jointly published 41 documents, accounting for 26 percent of the total number of documents, or nearly one third. In general, the annual number of joint publications is on the rise, and the trend is more violent in recent years.

3.3. Types of Internet governance policies

3.3.1. Governance of content published on the Internet

There are 83 content governance policies, which is the largest type of governance policy, accounting for 53% of the policies of the Internet as the object of governance. This type mainly includes the protection of personal information, the management of illegal network operation and sale, the management of TV program content, the management of Internet access sites, the management of infringement and other contents. In recent years, with the dividend effect brought by Internet access, a large number of Internet security, risk and crime problems have surfaced, and Internet content governance has become an important social problem and political proposition that the government urgently needs to face[6]. A stable, prosperous and clean cyberspace plays a very important role in the development of the whole society and the country[7]. It can be seen that the scope of China's Internet content governance is constantly expanding, and the state's Internet content governance is imperative.

3.3.2. Governance of the Internet itself

According to the NVivo software node, there are 41 governance policies for their own systems, accounting for 26% of the policies of the Internet as the governed object. This kind of policy mainly involves the technical design of Internet security, the technical design of Internet services and the management of their own systems. To realize the modernization of Internet governance, we need to improve the level of Internet governance through technological reform and innovation[8]. It can be seen that China attaches great importance to the security protection and service technology of the Internet. On the basis of improving and strengthening the technical innovation of the

Internet system, the security protection technology level of the Internet should be improved to ensure the security of the Internet, and Internet governance is increasingly modernized.

3.3.3. Joint Internet governance

There are 33 joint governance policies, accounting for 21% of the policies of the Internet as the object of governance. Joint governance policies are mainly "Internet plus" policies, mainly including "Industrial Internet + work safety", "Internet + social services", "Internet + medical and health" and so on. Joint governance has promoted the integrated development of the Internet industry and other fields. On the one hand, it has promoted the development of the Internet itself, and on the other hand, it has promoted the efficient development of the industry through Internet technology.

3.4. Policy objectives for Internet governance

The author uses NVivo software to analyze the word frequency of Internet governance policy documents, which can clearly show the goal of China's Internet governance policy. The most frequently used word was "services", which appeared 6,202 times, followed by "Internet", "information" and "management". After removing the two interfering factors of "Internet" and "information" closely related to "Internet", the two words "service" and "management" are the most prominent and are the core goals of Internet governance policy. The Internet is committed to "serving" the public, serving the people, providing more convenient services, in order to continuously penetrate into people's life, make people's quality of life continuously improve, so as to achieve economic prosperity and development. In addition, the strengthening of Internet management by all parties is also worthy of great attention. Only through governance and management of the Internet can the Internet achieve better development.

4.PROBLEMS AND COUNTERMEASURES

4.1. Problem analysis

On the one hand, Internet governance policy has the problem of overlapping functions of policy subjects. The present situation of the different functional departments is of the same problems through policy document to standardize the management, which may lead to overlapping functions between the main departments, shifting responsibilities to each other, and finally the problem of low governance efficiency.

On the other hand, China's Internet governance policy documents are fragmented. In the Internet management policy, the normative documents such as administrative regulations and departmental rules are

large in number, while legal documents are few and far between. Therefore, more attention should be paid to the legal form of China's Internet governance policy.

4.2. Countermeasures and suggestions

On the one hand, clear functional division should be carried out between main body departments. Modern society is a society in which the boundaries of different fields are blurred and embedded with each other[9]. Each subject departments responsible for its main function, according to a governance problem, each subject must first fully discussion and cooperation between departments, to differentiate specific tasks to specific department, this department between the main body in implementation, on the basis of their respective functions, also can realize efficient cooperation, the last problem to solve rapidly.

On the other hand, we will improve the legal system for Internet governance. Law is a symbol of national authority, and Internet governance policies lack unified and standardized legal coordination documents, which will make Internet governance lack the most important basis and greatly reduce the binding force and persuasion, and the governance results can be imagined. Therefore, China should improve the Internet governance system and issue more authoritative legal documents on Internet governance policies, so as to make the implementation of the governance process efficient and improve the governance efficiency.

5. CONCLUSION

Through the research and analysis of China's Internet governance policy documents from 2000 to 2020, it is found that the number of Internet governance policies issued each year is on the rise, especially in the last five years. From the perspective of the main body of policy release, the main department has taken the main position of issuing independent documents, forming an Internet governance system with The General Office of the State Council as the core and the joint governance of multiple departments. The main departments have also strengthened cooperation in issuing joint documents, and the number of documents has continuously increased. From the perspective of governance policy types, there are various types, including content governance, system governance and joint governance, and the main part is content governance. From the perspective of core policy objectives, the core values of China's Internet governance policies are "service" and "management", and Internet service functions occupy an important position.

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