

The analysis on the role of Political Communication under the Internet

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Keywords: Internet, political communication, function, development

Abstract: based on the changing relationship between government and public interaction, this paper wants to explore how the political communication of network promotes the political development in today's China. By pushing the change between government and public relations and strengthening the political communication, network political communication is playing an important role in fulfilling the general public democratic rights, enhancing the government efficiency, shaping the modern political culture, promoting political reforms aiming at the democracy and legality and other aspects. Owing to its influences on the relationship between the government and the public, the network political communication has changed the government's operation mode; moreover, its positive impacts on expanding the general public democratic rights, enhancing the government efficiency, shaping the modern political culture, promoting political reforms aiming at the democracy and legality and other aspects largely promote the political development of today's china.

Introduction

Network political communication, also known as the third generation of political communication [1, 2, 3], refers to the political communication activities focusing on the media of the internet. Network political communication arising from the appearance of the fast development of the internet is a brand new political communication form. Compared with the traditional political communication media, network political communication has more advantages, especially for the political communication between the government and the public. With the help of network political communication, the relationship between the government and people, between the public has changed from a one-way, downward communication pattern to a two-way and interactive one. The public's subjective status is increasingly prominent and its influence on the government is also growing. Therefore, through improving the relationship between the government and the public, the network political communication contributes a lot to promote the political development of today's china.

This article emphasizes the positive impact of the network political communication on the Chinese political development, highlights its pushy role in promoting the Chinese political development. By means of promoting the relationship changes between the government and the public and enhancing the political communication between them, its positive impacts on expanding the general public democratic rights, enhancing the government efficiency, shaping the modern political culture, promoting political reforms aiming at the democracy and legality and other aspects largely promote the Chinese political development.

On implementing and protecting the democratic rights of the public and the network political communication

Political democratization is the inevitable trend of the political development in the world, is also one of the important goals of the Chinese political development. While the realization of people's democratic rights is the core content of political democratization. The eighteenth CPC national congress points out: "it is necessary to perfect the democratic system, enrich forms of democracy, expand democratic channels, implement democratic elections, decision-making management and

supervision and protect people's rights to know, to participate, to express and to supervise." By strengthening the interactive relationship between the government and the public and political communication between them, the network political communication is offering a new channel to implement and protect people's democratic rights.

First of all, the network political communication promotes the realization of the people's right to know and cultivates the informed citizen at the same time. Right to know which is an important democratic right is the important precondition for people to participate in politics, in this process, the network political communication helps a lot to fulfill the right to know of the public. Through internet, people can not only know what is happening in the society but also can fully grasp government's movements. The establishment of E-government and all levels of government websites, and the issued *Regulations of Government Information Disclosure* mark that the Chinese government is stepping into a new development stage where the people's right to know has been protected. Besides, the major news websites, forums (BBS), online communities, blogs, weibo and so on have become very important channels for people to access the political information. With the rising and developing network political communication, the traditional political communication media which monopolized by the government has gradually been broken. By influencing the relationship between the government and people, the public now have more freedom and space in getting access to the government information and the people's right to know has been protected and fulfilled.

Second, network political communication has uncovered a new channel for people to express their feelings and guaranteed the realization of people's right to express. Owing to the popularization of network technology in China, the liberalization of public communication has been promoted which offering chances for the public to express. As for the traditional political communication media, the government controls the ownership of political communication media thus the public can only get access to the government information by newspapers, radio, televisions and other favorable media for the government, which limits and disables the people's right to express their willingness and demands to the government. While for the modern politics, the public interests expression is the key step in the political process. Without enough interests' expression, it is impossible to effectively integrate the interests let alone the scientific decisions. Therefore, the expression of the public interests is of great importance not only in realizing the public's interests but also in making a political decision.

Moreover, the network political communication provides a new channel for people to participate in politics and discuss political affairs, promoting the realization of the general public's right to participate. Political participation is an important content of modern politics development, and is also an important indicator of weighing political development. The expansion of political participation is not only the inherent requirement of political development in contemporary China, but also is an important way to promote political development in China. However, nowadays china is in the middle of large-scale social transformation and reforming. The weak Chinese people's participation awareness together with the imperfect relevant systems leaves the mass public in a relatively low level in political participation. The development of network political communication has changed the status of political communication between the government and the people, enhanced the people's influence on the government thus making it possible for the public to fully implement their rights in political participation.

Finally, the network political communication which promotes the political communication between the government and the public is conducive to the realization of people's supervision right. Supervising the political operation process is one of people's democratic rights and also is the objective requirement to push the Chinese political development. The network political communication has changed the relationship features of the government and the public, especially people's right to know, express, participate and so on which have been largely promoted and protected. In this situation, the government also tends to have a higher tolerance for people's behavior, the base of realizing people's supervision right.

Expand China's new political participation awareness under the background of the internet development

1. The influences of the internet media on the Chinese style participation

First of all, the communication media transformation such as the internet brings new participation space for the Chinese people. According to the opinion statistics during 2004-2013 of *Chinese Social Public Opinion and Crisis Management Report (2014)*, we can witness that the internet is pushing towards the Chinese political development by two issues occurred during that time. One is the hot discussion about the shelter and repatriation system caused by the death of Sun Zhigang, and the other is the Xi'an Baoma lottery case. In both cases, the internet media highlighting its power in public opinion supervision helps to perfect a series of systems and further to promote the protection of criminal's rights. At the same time, different public cases such as "SARS", Songhua river pollution, the south China tiger, Wengan event, the reparation of train trails after Wenzhou train crash happened and the recent hot discussing issue about the abolition of reeducation-through-labor system, all these issues triggered by the widespread internet, to some extent, have promoted the awareness of public participation and involved the public into discussion, moreover, it has led to the change of reality decisions and perfection of some related law systems and improvement of the society.(table 1)

Table 1:2004-2013, the ratio of promoting the public opinions on public policy through the internet

Year	rate	Percentage	Effective percentage	Accumulated percentage
2004	8	1.9	1.9	1.9
2005	12	2.8	2.8	4.7
2006	42	9.9	9.9	14.7
2007	15	3.5	3.5	18.2
2008	26	6.1	6.1	24.3
2009	32	7.6	7.6	31.9
2010	42	9.9	9.9	41.8
2011	44	10.4	10.4	52.2
2012	77	18.2	18.2	79.4
2013	125	29.6	29.6	100

Source: edited by Shanghai Jiaotong University public opinion research lab, crisis management research center (2014).

Second, the development of internet new media has promoted the eager to get involved in public opinions of the Chinese people. Because the internet has widespread conveyed what is happening to the public, the public could get their rights protected and demands met. Such participation practice awakens people's participation awareness and eagerness, making the cold attitude to the political change a little. The long the public get access to the internet, the more likely they are going to say their opinions about the news and political affairs they see. Likely the survey conducted in coastal cities has the similar finding "with the help of internet and its social interaction function, people tend to more participate in the political discussions on the internet.

Again, the rise of the internet new media benefits a lot in training and nurturing political participation organizers, guides and leaders. The extensive political knowledge dissemination enables the people who enthusiastically participate in political issues constantly get involved in policy making process and political participation knowledge, making them learn a lot. Take the "internet opinion leader" as an example; this unique Chinese style "internet opinion leader" is also an important force in pushing the Chinese style political participation. Judging from the above cases which involve the public participation, the "internet opinion leaders" are playing an important role in this process. (Figure 1)

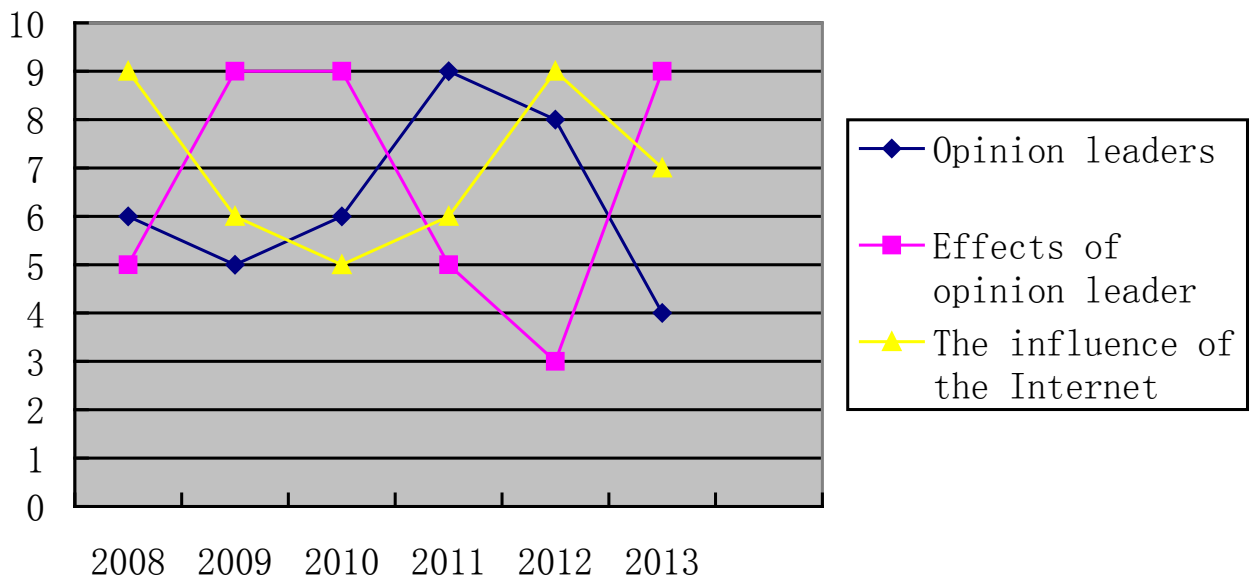


Figure 1 in recent years the role of the traditional media and "opinion leaders" in public opinion
 1.the political participation pattern in the new media age

With the popularization of internet new media just as twitter, the new media which plays an more outstanding and important part in the current political events and be widely used by the general public, politicians, political parties, governments, international organizations, charitable organizations, think tanks, scholars, celebrities, all kinds of people and organizations is becoming a topic of the public debate and analysis. This kind of media has a deepening impact on the government agenda setting. Through the analysis of its impact on political participation pattern, some extensive and regulative abstract theories can be summarized by analyzing complicated phenomenon and events.

The findings of studying the traditional media show that there are mainly two ways in connecting the social relations: one is to process and convey the practical practice coming form the society to draw the attentions of the public and furthermore to enhance the public awareness of the social phenomenon; the other one is to combine the media communication with the social public interactions in order to guide the understanding of the public towards the social phenomenon. (Figure 2). Thus in this process, the media itself plays an important part in filtering, choosing and processing the social messages and phenomenon.

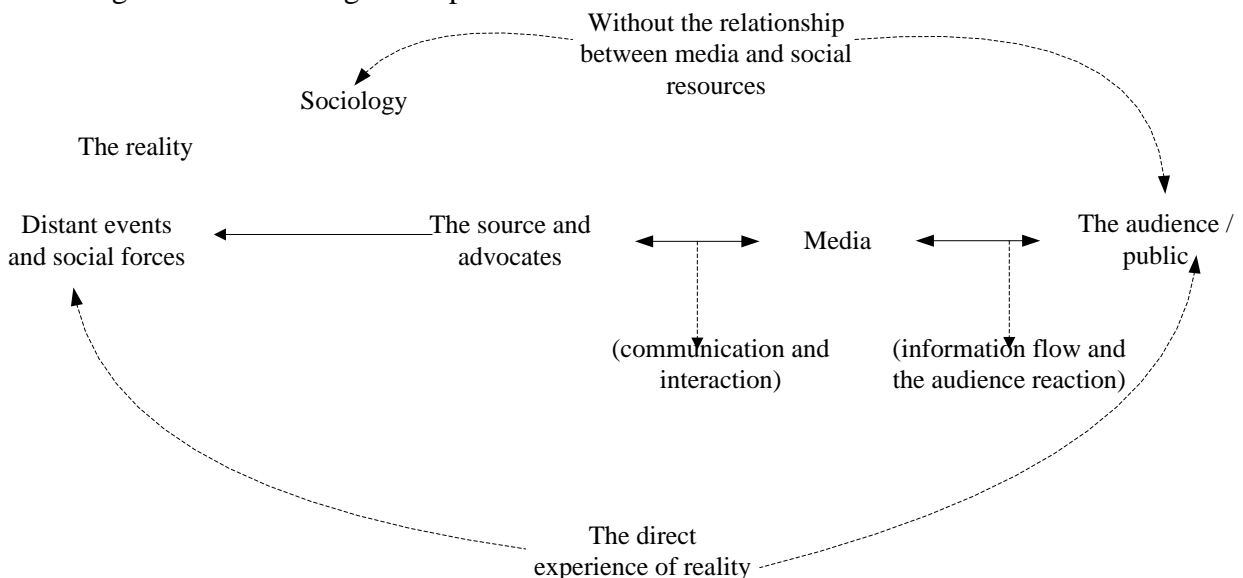


Figure 2 media and social relations

But in the Internet age, due to its unique bidirectional interaction communication characteristics, the processing and filtering of the social phenomenon by the traditional media have been avoided, making the internet reflect the real-time social phenomenon more easily. On one hand, the internet has greatly speeded up the communication speed and also changed the target audiences and the communication subjects, and on the other hand, the political participation has been divided into two parts, namely, the online political participation and the offline political participation, forming an absolutely different political participation phenomenon from the traditional political participation.

Study shows that there are thousands of calls for online political participation every month in the whole world. Although, most of the calls are out of the personal purposes, some of them are out of considering the interests of mass public or of the nation. Such kind of these calls rang from the violet appealing and nonviolent appealing to collective group march and personal written appealing. Obviously, this online political participation will affect the offline political participation, for example you can consult the on-going or under preparation political movements on the website www.protest.net. The American occupy Wall Street movement initiated by the calling of websites was finally supported by many offline mass people.

As shown in figure 3, through the fast communication abilities of the Chinese internet new media, it has integrated the traditional fragmentation political issues. Moreover, through the further analysis and widespread communication of the network opinion leaders, the political issues are expanded into the mass public people's sight. It is to expand the traditional media communication scale and influential diameter and form certain public topics and potential topics; it aims to change the public policy making agenda or form public pressures. Such as most of the corruption exposure cases of some basic level officials has gone through this process: first, the officials suspected corruption will be exposed in the network forums(or their own city, provincial network forums), and then through retransmission of the influential network users to expand the influential opinion communication diameter thus to form the network opinion advantages, and last, the paper media, television and broadcast will report about the issue, causing the attention of the government departments.

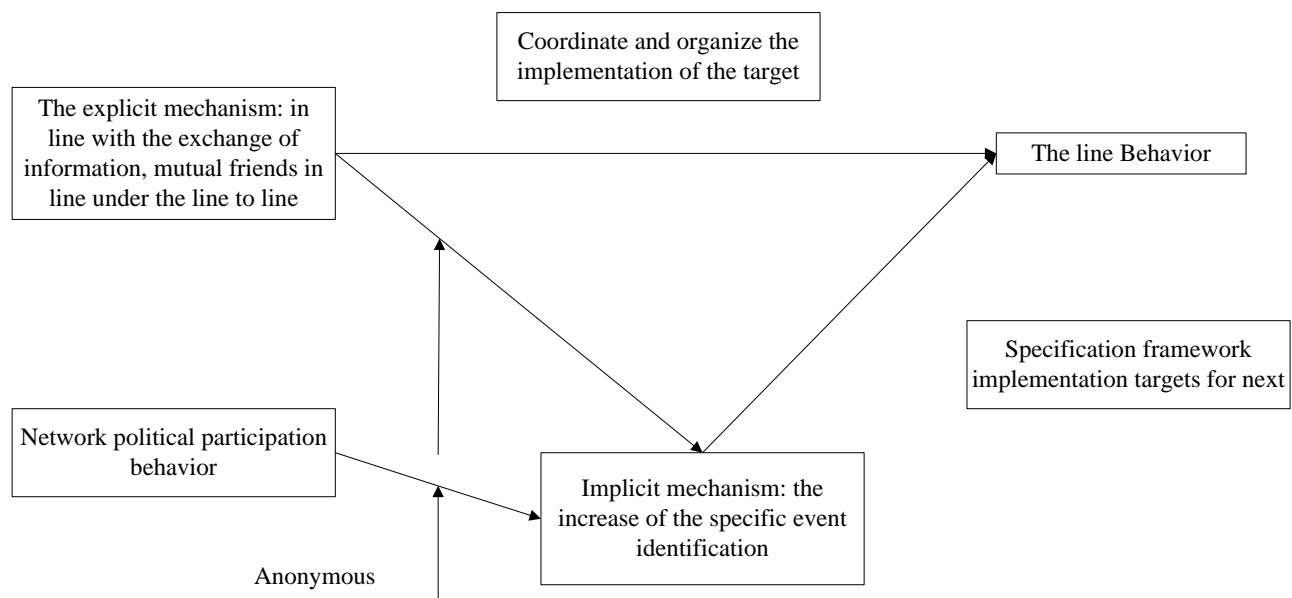


Figure 3. the online behavior affects the offline behavior: the analysis framework of the explicit and implicit mechanism

In political participation awareness, people are likely to be trapped in the self-selection bias. Because the cases filtered by the media and seen by the public people are all successful or sad cases, people tend to think most of the cases gain success through this kind of typical fighting channel. However, it is not always the case. In the Chinese practices, owing to the absent of sound law and systems, not only the mass public but also the policy makers will be influenced by different kinds of

polarization opinions.

On analyzing the political development based on the influences of the network political communication on the relationship between the public and the government

1.the network political communication and the improvement of the government efficiency

As shown in the figure 4, judging from the information supply and demand of the government and the public, the network political communication has greatly affected the government efficiency. If information of the mass public and government is impeded in the transmission process making it impossible to convey to the public or the government, the government efficiency is sure to be affected.

Secondly, through the internet, government and the public can interact with each other effectively which helps to reduce the government running costs but increase the government efficiency. The traditional way of improving the government efficiency mainly is to expand the government agencies and administration layers and other methods. For example, the government wanting to better understand its people's ideas and communicate with the people effectively set up multilayer petition letter agencies from the central to the local places. This will no doubt increase the costs of the government operation. However, the development of the internet has greatly improved the relationship between government and the public and enhanced their effective interaction. The establishment of the E-government and the opening of all level of government contribute to build a direct way to communicate with each other. The "messages to the local leaders platform" and "direct to Zhongnanhai---the message board of the central leaders and central government agencies" columns opened by the People's Network, the formation of the "open inner participation" of government, the build of opinion supervision room and the fast developing micro blogs of all levels of government agencies have all together enhanced the communication between people and government.

The supervision function of the internet can push the rationalization of government operation and the improvement of the government efficiency. To effectively supervise the government is one important way to improve government operation and increase its efficiency. The development of the internet political communication provides new methods for the public to supervise the government and fills the absent supervision systems. The internet features enable the people to have more advantages in supervising the government, especially the features of various forums, blogs, weibo, network communities. With the expansion of all those platforms, people can supervise government more easily and effectively. Therefore, network supervision has become a main feature of the development of network political communication in recent years.

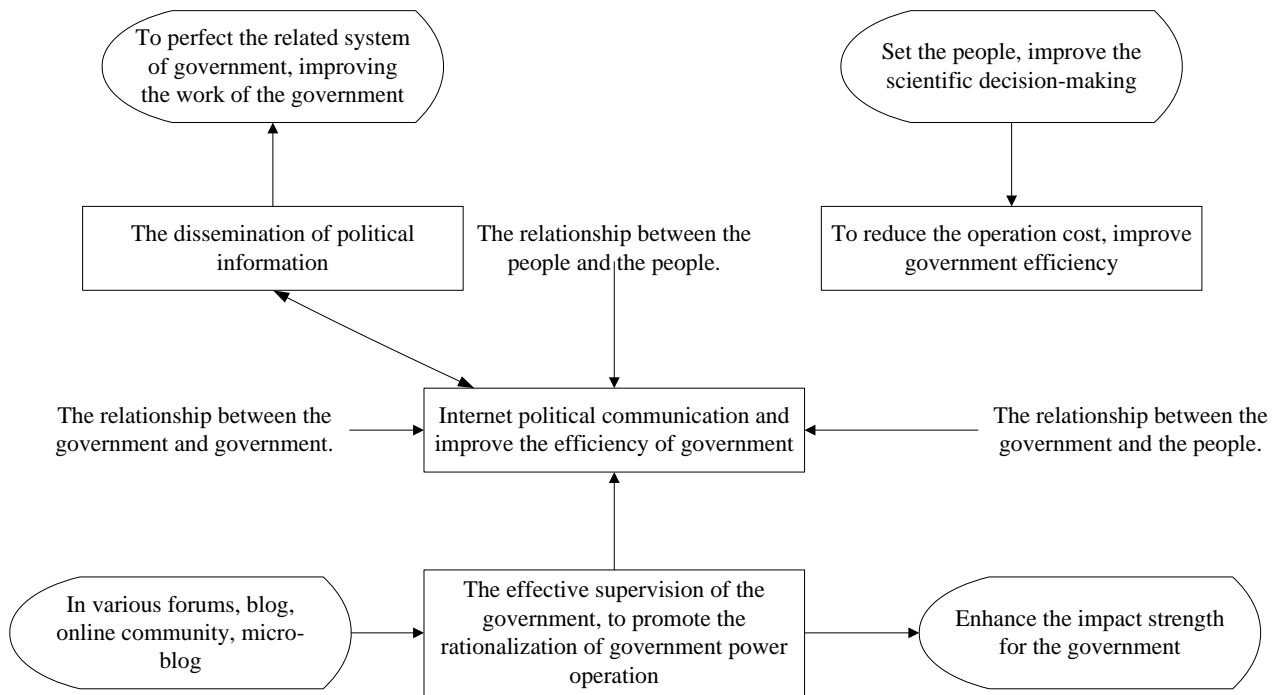


Figure 4 the influence of Internet political communication on the government efficiency improvement

2. Network political communication and the shaping of modern political culture

As shown in figure 5, first of all, the Internet acting as a political communication channel of the government and people also as an important public discourse space and the place to share public opinions definitely pushes the shaping of modern political culture. To a large extent, political culture refers to people's political life, lifestyles and values in specific social background while the existence and development of the internet profoundly affect and change people's lifestyle and values.

Secondly, in terms of political socialization, network political communication is also vital in spreading modern political cultures. Political socialization means the process in which the social members gradually gain political knowledge and ability in the political practice and form the political consciousness and position. Through pushing the relationship change between government and citizens, network political communication provides freer and larger information for the public. The large number of information on the network greatly meets the all kinds of political demands of people. No doubt receiving political information is not only an important part of the political socialization process but also a process to absorb the political culture. The network political communication is an important transmission channel for the non-mainstream political culture. Meanwhile, the wide spreading new ideas, new thoughts, new understanding of some related issues and thoughts conflicts and arguments help to change people's political cognition, political attitude and political behavior, which may guide people to form new political culture.

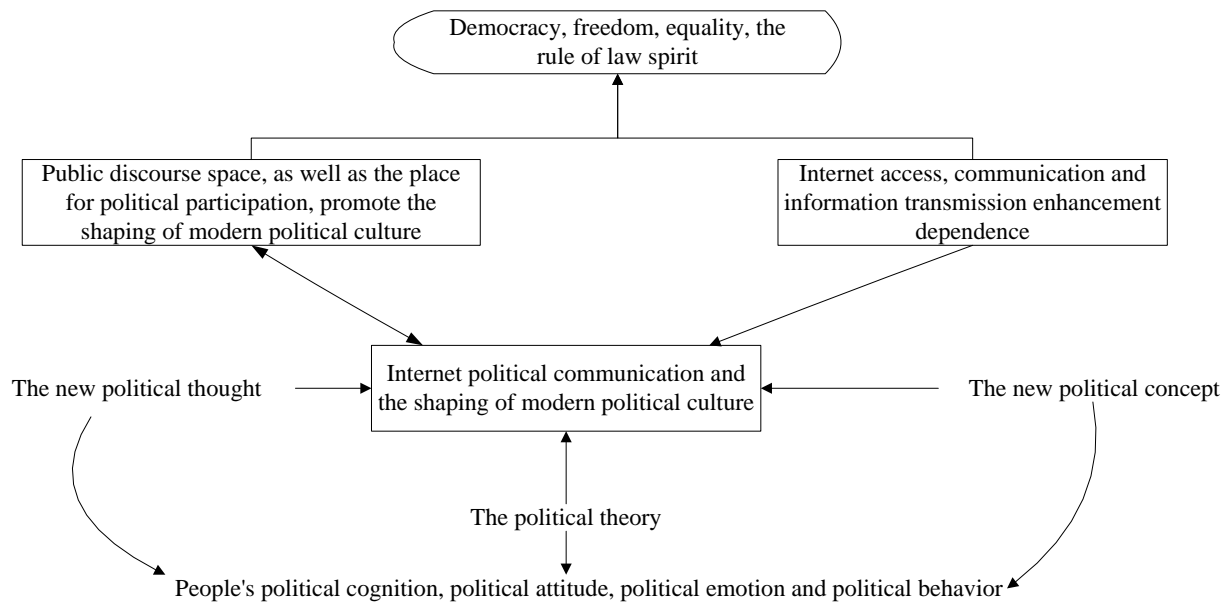


Figure 5 the influence of Internet political communication on shaping modern political culture

3. Internet political communication and the political reform

As shown in figure 6, first of all, the Internet political communication change the relationship characteristics of the government and people, which can enhance the interaction between the government and people and effectively promote the improvement of related political systems and political reforms. The Chinese Internet development itself is the reform product which at the same time promotes the reform such as the government and public communication system, the government supervision system, the government information disclosure system, the people's expression mechanism, the political participation mechanism, the government decision-making mechanism, etc.

The development of network political communication is not only the important supplement of the systems and mechanisms but also vigorously promotes the improvement and the transformation of these systems and mechanisms. Judging by the rapid development of network political communication in China, no matter the transformation and perfection of judicial systems achieved through people's turning to help of the internet or the perfection of related system gained by disclosure social contradictions and problems or the rationalization of government operation got by supervising the government all are the Chinese political transformation affected deeply by the network political communication and the results of pushing the Chinese political development nowadays.

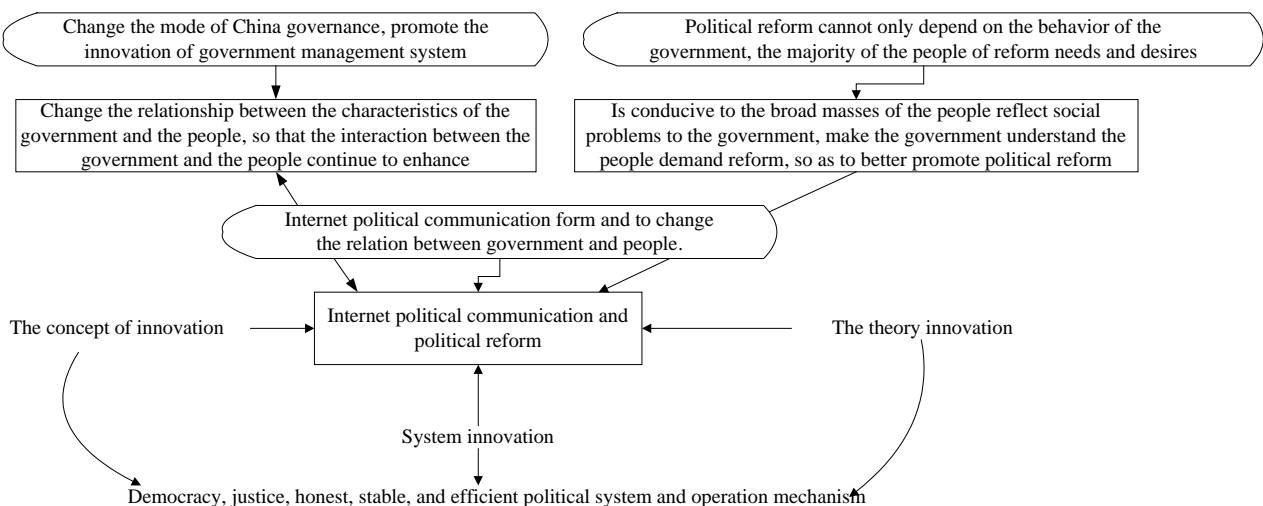


Figure 6. Internet political communication and the political reform

Second, by changing the relationship characteristics of the government and people, the political communication network is beneficial for the general public to reflect social problems to the government and enable the government to understand people's needs, which helps a lot to push the political reform. Internet political communication exactly does a wonderful job in conveying the needs and wishes of social reforms. By influencing the government and the people's cultural psychology, behavior characteristics, as well as the relationship structural features between them, the internet deepens the general public's influences on the government and profoundly changes the relationship between the government and the people. Whether the reform will succeed or fail ultimately depends on the support of the mass people, thus this changing relationship is very important for any kind of reform. While in getting the support of the mass people the public media will be used to connect the government and people.

Summary

The main features of internet political communication are rooted in the media features themselves such as the diversity, comprehensiveness, the abundance of the content and the non-monopoly, relatively strong decentralization of the main body and target audiences, the interactivity, and the broad and profound communication effects. The development of network political communication directly strikes the relationship between government and people of the traditional media. The network political communication promotes the government and people's cultural psychology, behavior characteristics, as well as their relationship structural features. The political communication between government and people gradually changes from a one-way government centered communication into a two-way and up-down communication pattern and the influences change from a one-way to a two-way and interactive influence. In this process, the subjective status of the mass people has been greatly improved and increasingly respected by the government. Thanks to the network political communication, the general people are getting involved into the politics and gaining their influences on the government, thus the mass people can also promote the changes and perfection of related policies, laws and regulations and systems. Network political communication acting as a new political communication form and a new kind of bridge and link to connect the government and the people has overcome the existing political communication shortcomings and enhanced the interactions between the government and the general public. It plays an important role in improving the relationship between the two and helps to create favorable conditions for political development in contemporary China.

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