Current Situation and Countermeasures of New Media in Crisis Management in Universities

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Abstract. In recent years, with the frequent occurrence of the crisis events, university crisis management is facing the unprecedented challenges. In this paper, we take the crisis incident of C University as the research object, and analyze the problems of using the new media in crisis management in colleges and universities. The research process is divided into before crisis, during crisis and after crisis. According to the process, we find the existing problems and shortcomings of using the new media in crisis management of colleges and universities, and then put forward the Countermeasures and suggestions.

Keywords: University crisis; crisis management; new media usage.

1. Introduction

In recent years, social crisis events have frequently erupted in domestic universities, which have not only affected the normal learning and living order of the campus, but also damaged the images and reputations of the universities. At the same time, with the development of the Internet technology and the emergence of the new media such as microblog and WeChat, many campus crisis incidents have a complex relationship with the new media, which is both a challenge and an opportunity for university crisis management. Therefore, how to effectively use the new media and improve the efficiency of the crisis management has become an increasingly important research topic.

2. Case Study

Take C University for instance. On the evening of Sep.13rd, 2016, a burglary occurred in the Unit C4 of the students' dormitory apartment in C University. More than 10 girls' dormitories were stolen, and money, mobile phones and computers were lost. The event spreaded and fermented through new media platforms such as posting bar, microblog, micro-message and QQ, and eventually leaded to the public opinion crisis.

2.1 Crisis Performance and the Use of New Media before the Crisis

Before the crisis, it mainly emphasized the reserve force, and that is, forewarning and prevention of the crisis. Incidents in Colleges and universities usually experience a slow and quiet accumulation of the public feelings before they receive a widespread attention from the society[1]. The security of C University is a long-term problem, but the university has not formulated a crisis plan, and failed to take effective measures to carry out the daily crisis awareness education, guidance and crisis prevention.

2.2 Crisis Performance and the Use of the New Media During the Crisis

The students' dormitories theft spreaded from posters to QQ, WeChat and microblog. Each new media platform played the role of the information relay. Post users do not know each other, and formed a closed point-to-point information diffusion model. WeChat and QQ are relatively well known social circles, and information can spread more quickly to seek attention. Microblog, a divergent way of face-to-face information dissemination, together with some users' emotional rendering, further aggravates the impact of the crisis.

In the early stage of the incident evolution, C University issued a certificate response through the official microblog, "As to the recent campus theft, school leaders paid high attention and carried out the on-site office immediately. They put forward a trinity of the rectification plan and that is material prevention, technical prevention and civil air defense. They asked the relevant department to take a thorough investigation of campus' potential safety danger so as to create a safe and comfortable campus." After the arrest of a burglar, C University used the new media for the second time and posted in the school post bar, "At 2 o'clock last night, the school security department caught the burglar in C2".

2.3 Crisis Performance and the Use of the New Media after the Crisis

Finally, C University issued a brief statement on the caught of all thieves through the official micro-blog. From then on, the attention of teachers, students and outside universities to the crisis gradually subsided, the enthusiasm of the attention and discussion gradually decreasing.

3. Questionnaire Survey on the Use of the New Media

A total of 200 respondents were surveyed, including 104 males (52%) and 96 females (48%). The gender ratio was basically balanced, and the impact of the gender factors could be ignored, which ensured the scientific nature of the survey data. The types and proportions of the personnel questioned in C University are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Types and proportions of the personnel

Types	Heads of each department	Administrative staff of departments	Instructor	Teachers
Number	30	88	52	30
Proportion (%)	15	44	26	15

Among them, management departments mainly involved school offices, student management departments, security departments, propaganda departments, League committees, organizational departments and colleges and departments. The staff of these departments had a greater chance to have direct contact with the scene and crisis management of the campus crisis events. Interviews with the personnel mentioned above could illustrated the application of the new media. The contents of the survey included the following aspects.

3.1 Management's Understanding of the New media

Colleges and universities are knowledge-based institutions. The level of personnel's knowledge and acceptance should be relatively higher. However, there are still 24% of managers not familiar with the new media. Personnel's understanding of the new media is shown in Fig.1.
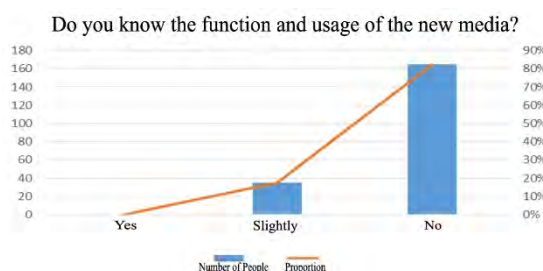

Fig.1 Personnel's understanding of the new media

3.2 The Routine Supervision on the New Media Information

In the interview, 71% of respondents believed that C University did not conduct the routine supervision on the new media information. The supervision on the new media information is shown in Fig.2.
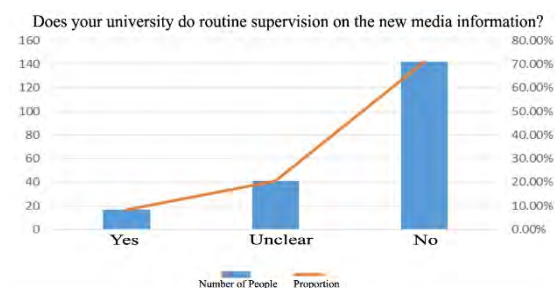
Fig.2 Supervision on the new media information

3.3 Rules and Regulations of the Information Management of the New Media

After analysis, 82.5% of respondents said the university's new media regulations were vacant. The management system of the new media of the university is shown in Fig.3.
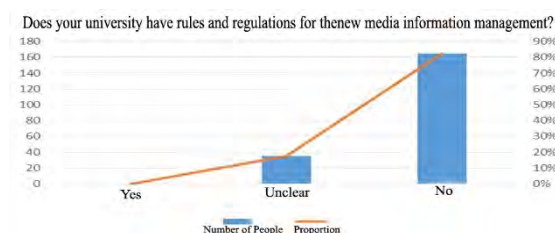

Fig.3 Management system of the new media

4. Problems Existing in the Application of the New Media

4.1 Pre-Warning Problem of the New Media before Crisis

Based on the results of the questionnaire survey, we found that the media background management was not standardized. Besides, the supervision of the new media information is not adequate. Although there is a huge amount of original information on the new official media platform of colleges and universities, the information is not classified, which makes it difficult to achieve information supervision.

4.2 Efficiency of the New Media in Crisis

In the early stage of the crisis, organizations need to respond positively to the crisis at the first time in order to control over the situation. However, through case studies, we found that universities generally lack the awareness of responding to the crisis at the first time. In addition, facing the Internet public opinion diversification in the Internet Society[2] and in the process of the crisis management, many new official media are mainly one-way communication, which means there is no interaction with the public, and no interaction with other new media.

4.3 Recovery Summary after Crisis

After the crisis, university managers should not only restore the image and reputation of the university, but also improve their ability to organize and use the new media for crisis management after summarizing the whole event. However, after the actual crisis calming down, colleges and universities lack the effective crisis management experience summary and reflection consciousness.

5. Strategies for the Use of the New Media in Crisis Management

5.1 Before Crisis: Pre-Warning Mechanism for the New Media

Firstly, the university should improve the new media management system, forming a professional team, cultivating the leading media with media literacy[3] and enhance the relevant training system and the new media using regulations, both of which ensure the standardized management of the new

media. Secondly, the new media should be used to monitor the public sentiment. This helps to understand the public opinion so as to achieve the information monitoring and public opinion guidance in interactions.

5.2 During Crisis: Innovating the Ability of Using the New Media

Firstly, follow the first time principle and start the new media plan. The university administrators should respond at the first time, take the initiative to express their position to the public and open the truth. The study and judgment of the public opinion should be timely and accurate to avoid problems and invisibility after the accident[4]. And then they should pay attention to the situation of the crisis and the trend of public opinion at the first time. Secondly, establishing a spokesman system for the new media platforms. University administrators should cultivate the press spokesman of the new media who can express opinions and have the unique thinking and opinions in the new media platform.

5.3 After Crisis: Restoring the Crisis Using the New Media

After the crisis, colleges and universities should use THE new media to rebuild their good image in time and refute the false information which is obviously untrue and harmful. At the same time, colleges and universities should also shoulder social responsibility. They can set up topics on the new media platform to guide the public to reflect rationally on crisis events and promote a more harmonious communication atmosphere in society.

Acknowledgements

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