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Research on Information Dissemination and Public Opinion Guidance of Official Media on Social Platforms

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Abstract: In recent years, with the advent of the social media era, official media have encountered unprecedented challenges and opportunities in information dissemination and public opinion guidance. This study finds that the immediacy, interactivity, fragmentation, user diversity, and algorithm-driven content distribution features of social media pose new demands on official media, increasing the complexity of information dissemination. To enhance the effectiveness of public opinion guidance, official media need to adopt diverse content forms and interactive modes, strengthen cooperation with opinion leaders, utilize data analysis to optimize content strategies, and reinforce the authoritativeness of information. The study suggests that official media should continuously innovate and adapt to changes in the social media environment, build a cross-platform content ecosystem to promote broader and deeper social influence, thereby playing a crucial role in maintaining social stability and harmony.

Keywords: information dissemination; public opinion guidance; official media; social media platforms; communication strategies

1. Introduction

The rapid dissemination of information on social media and the rapid response of public opinion have posed new challenges to the guidance of public opinion by the official media. At the same time, the authenticity and objectivity of information on social media have also been questioned, which may cause the public to rely more on online public opinion than on the event itself.

It is of great significance to study the information dissemination and Public opinion influence on social media platforms. It helps us to deeply understand how social media affects information dissemination and public opinion formation. The research can also provide practical suggestions on how to better guide public opinion and ensure the accuracy and objectivity of information dissemination, which has guiding significance for the news media, the government and social organizations. The research on public opinion guidance for social media can also provide tools and methods for network public opinion management, and help to maintain social stability and public interests [1].

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2. Literature Review

2.1. Structure and Function of Communication in Society

Public opinion guidance is a complex and multi-level concept, which refers to the dissemination of specific information, views or attitudes through the media, so as to influence, shape or change the public's opinions, attitudes or behaviors. In a paper entitled "the structure and function of communication in society", American scholar Lasswell first proposed five basic elements that constitute the communication process, forming a far-reaching "Lasswell communication model". Lasswell's communication model emphasizes the issue of "who (sender), through what channels, to whom (receiver), and what effect". At the same time, the agenda setting theory also provides theoretical support for the guidance of public opinion, which advocates that the media can significantly affect what topics the public think are important, so as to control the topics discussed by the public to a certain extent.

2.2. Characteristics and Functions of Official Media

Communication scholars believe that compared with traditional media, social media puts more emphasis on user generated content (UGC), and the public is no longer just the receiver of information, but also the creator and disseminator of content. This leads to more rapid and extensive dissemination of information, but it may also produce "echo chamber" effect and "follicle" phenomenon. Some group members may even lose their personality to defend the group [2].

Official media should innovate in content creation and communication strategies, maintain content credibility, engage in multi-platform interactions, and adapt their messaging styles to different social media platforms to improve audience engagement.

In an era of information overload, Chinese official media should enhance credibility by ensuring fairness, impartiality, and objectivity in news reporting while fulfilling their social responsibility.

3. Characteristics of Content Released by Official Media

Official media use social media for news dissemination, policy interpretation, and official statements. They also engage in live broadcasting of press conferences, real-time reporting of major events, and interactive sessions with officials to enhance engagement. Additionally, they utilize interactive posts, Q&A sessions, polls, and online discussions to gather public opinion and feedback; social media specific content, creating content specifically designed for social media, such as posts, motion pictures, expression packs, etc; co-operators and influencers marketing, cooperating with well-known figures or other media to disseminate information through their social media channels, such as inviting celebrities to record videos promoting traditional festival blessings; cross platform links: when publishing content on one platform, attach links to other platforms to promote information dissemination among multiple platforms.

Unlike the private or independent media, the official media has its unique and more "formal" characteristics in content release, editorial position and reporting style, but also contains some common drawbacks of the official media. Specifically, it includes the following:

1) Authority

The information released by the state-owned media often represents the official position of the government, with high authority and credibility, and is one of the main channels for the public to obtain government information. Even in today's information age, when there are major emergencies, people will still actively look for the state-owned media for verification. Only when they see the reports of the state-owned media on the events will the audience's doubts disappear. This is the embodiment of the authority of the state-owned media's information.

2) Speak Cautiously and Report Emergencies in Time

In some sudden crisis events, the official media of some government departments do not actively investigate and appease the people, but are used to "blocking" the source of crisis communication at the first time, trying to prevent the people from understanding the event. This approach aims to downplay major incidents while concealing them from public scrutiny. However, with social media so developed today, this set of "blocking" thinking has long been unworkable. No matter how dense the network is, the authoritative state-owned media will no longer tell the truth at the first time, which is most likely to cause distortion and misunderstanding of information in multi-layer communication. The speed and attitude of the state-owned media to deal with the crisis is the key to resolve crisis emergencies.

3) There are too Many Idioms, and the Speech is not Practical

When controversial events occur in society, some state-owned media have a lot of speech routines, lack of substantive content and depth, become superficial, avoid the important, and it is difficult for the audience to get specific and substantive information, which may also make the audience dissatisfied, thus damaging the image of the official organ. Seriously undermining the credibility of the government.

4. Strategies for the State Media to Enhance the Guidance of Public Opinion on the Social Media Platform

Strengthen interaction and rapid response. Use the interactive functions of social media (such as comments, likes, and shares) to actively interact with users, provide feedback and answers, and increase the audience's sense of participation. Real time monitoring of public opinion on social media, rapid release of authoritative news and updates, especially in the case of crisis or rumor spread, rapid intervention and clarification, to prevent the spread of misunderstanding.

Adapt to content fragmentation. Make content suitable for rapid consumption, such as posts, short videos or moving pictures with pictures and texts, to attract users' attention and improve the efficiency of information dissemination. Break down complex or long information into short, easy to understand and share content, making it more suitable for social media users' browsing habits.

Strengthen account authentication and brand building. Clarify the identity of the official media, and use the authentication mechanism of social media to enhance the public's recognition and trust in the official account. This includes maintaining a consistent brand image and publishing high-quality content.

Optimize content distribution and improve interactivity. Deeply understand the content distribution mechanism and algorithm of social media, and increase the information exposure and user participation by optimizing the content format and accurately grasping the release time. In addition, cooperate with industry opinion leaders and well-known individuals to expand the scope of information dissemination and enhance the authority and credibility of information.

Build a cross platform content ecology and sustainable public opinion education. It is not limited to a single platform, but builds a rich and complementary content ecology through articles, videos, topic interactions and other forms on multiple platforms to maximize information dissemination and impact. At the same time, we should continue to carry out public opinion education and guidance, release positive information related to national policies and social hot spots, and establish and consolidate correct values and social views.

5. Case Analysis of Public Opinion Guidance of Official Media

The practice of the people's daily in dealing with the panic of seizing salt caused by Japan's discharge of treated wastewater from the Fukushima nuclear plant into the sea has set an example for the official media.

In August, since Japan announced the discharge of nuclear contaminated water into the sea, there has been a storm of public opinion on the Internet. On the major social media platforms, information surged like a flood, including many exaggerated and even untrue news, such as "salt will soon be polluted, and it will no longer be safe in the long term in the future". This information quickly triggered widespread panic among the public, and many people began to worry about the nuclear pollution of salt and the threat to their health and safety. Under such large-scale emotional catharsis, salt rush buying has occurred in some areas. People hoard salt in panic, hoping to provide a meager guarantee for themselves and their families. The situation is getting worse.

On August 24, China Salt Group, the leading state-owned enterprise in China's salt industry, issued an official statement, stating that the sources of salt in China are divided into well mineral salt, lake salt and sea salt. Only 10% of the sea salt was affected by nuclear sewage, and the well salt and lake salt in Datou were not affected by Japan's nuclear pollution. In addition to forwarding the topic label of the statement issued by China Salt Group, the people's daily also extracts some important contents from the statement, which can enable the public to quickly obtain sufficient information about the safety of salt in China.

On the 25th, the people's daily jointly produced a short video with pictures and texts by the big V blogger who carried out scientific research on the microblog. Firstly, it asked "is it safe for China's edible salt to discharge the water polluted by Fukushima nuclear power into the sea?" to ask people's concerns and establish emotional connections. Let people improve their conviction and identity. Then the answer clarified why the leakage of nuclear sewage would not affect the supply and quality of salt in China, and also set the title topic "100 seconds to understand why not store salt" to make it clear that it only takes 100 seconds to understand the current situation of salt. Topics allow people to discuss with labels freely, increase people's participation, and understand people's attitude towards the official media's statements to refute rumors through background big data.

On the 27th, the people's daily released a beautiful satellite image of China's Chaka Salt Lake, and explained that the existing salt in the Chaka Salt Lake was enough for the whole country to consume for 70 years, and the salt in the Chaka Salt Lake was renewable, which once again stabilized the public's fear of salt shortage. So far, the rumor that there will be no salt available in the future has disappeared like a tide.

The effectiveness of media communication in this case was partly due to the People's Daily's rapid response and authoritative statements, aligning with communication effect theories. The timely statement from China Salt Group, along with the People's Daily's amplification of the message, adhered to the principle of "immediacy", reinforcing the credibility of the information source, which is the key factor affecting the acceptance and processing of information in the theory of communication effect. By cooperating with scientists and well-known bloggers, the official media has expanded the coverage and audience of information dissemination, reflecting the concept of multi-media interaction in media ecology. This cross media cooperation and resource sharing is conducive to the dissemination and acceptance of information in different audience groups.

The bi-directional symmetry model emphasizes the realization of mutual understanding and balance between the organization and the public in public relations practice. It makes a short video of "100 seconds to understand why not store salt" and enables topic tags, which enhances interaction and emotion management. It is the clever use of the bi-directional symmetry model that makes people feel their voice is heard and improves the effect of bi-directional interaction.

Content distribution on social media platforms is usually algorithm driven, and interactive behaviors such as likes, comments, sharing and viewing time affect the visibility of content. People's daily takes advantage of this feature to enhance the efficiency of information dissemination and audience participation through interactive content and algorithm friendly publishing strategies.

The people's daily continued to publish relevant contents in the next few days, showing its continuous concern and will to solve this incident. The satellite images of Chaka Salt Lake and its salt reserves were released, which reassured the public with image and specific data, emphasized the adequacy of salt resources, and showed the sustainability of natural resources. It is to appease the public by continuously releasing relevant information and using specific data, which is actually applying the agenda setting theory. The theory holds that the media influence the public's attention to different topics through the focus of their reports. In this case, the people's Daily has effectively managed the public's attention agenda by guiding the public's attention to the adequacy and safety of salt resources through continuous attention and information updates.

6. Conclusion

This study shows that in today's digital and social society, the public opinion guidance work of the state-owned media should not only meet more challenges, but also have the opportunity to use new technologies and platforms to achieve a broader and deeper impact. Therefore, the state-owned media need to constantly adapt to the changes of social media environment and innovate public opinion guidance strategies and methods.

Firstly, the official media need to strengthen the authority of their information and release information timely and accurately, which is the premise of winning public trust and establishing the right to speak. Second, the official media should innovate in content and use attractive multimedia elements, such as images, video and audio, to tell news stories. For example, use animation or charts to explain complex policies or data, or use video interviews to show the real story of the characters. Develop interactive content, such as online question and answer, public voting, comment function and virtual reality experience, so that the public can directly participate in the news story and increase their immersion and participation. Third, the official media should actively embrace technology, use data analysis and user research to optimize content and communication strategies, and achieve effective interaction with users. Fourth, through cooperation with experts and opinion leaders in various fields, the official media can broaden the sources of information, improve the professionalism and credibility of information, and better guide public opinion. Fifth, the official media need to build a cross platform content ecology, maximize the dissemination and impact of information, continue to carry out public opinion education and guidance, and promote social stability and harmonious development.

Facing the challenges of the social media era, the state-owned media must keep pace with the times and innovate constantly, so as to play a greater role in the guidance of public opinion and contribute to the construction of a more open, transparent and dynamic social information environment.

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