

Risks and Governance of Youth Cultural Value Dissemination under the Public Opinion Amplification Mechanism of Social Media

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Abstract: The segmented and viral nature of public opinion fermentation in the self-media ecosystem has made it one of the main carriers for spreading young people's cultural values and has changed the current situation of youth cultural communication. However, under the influence of traffic-driven dynamics, algorithmic constraints and various complex online cultural trends, the spread of youth cultural values has faced problems such as cognitive bias, value polarization and excessive entertainmentisation, which have severely affected the formation of young people's correct worldviews, life perspectives and values. Based on the development path of self-media public opinion, this paper will study how it is spread, identify major problems in the transmission of youth culture values, and put forward targeted governance plans to build a positive online cultural environment for young people; thus, it will offer practical suggestions for guiding mainstream values in the new era.

1. Introduction

Self-media facilitates rapid dissemination of public opinion, exhibits strong emotional influence, and generates significant viral effects. While it provides a convenient platform for young people to promote positive cultural values and uphold core socialist principles, it also risks exposing them to fragmented, emotionally charged information that may distort their ideological perspectives and lead to erroneous value judgments. Therefore, investigating the mechanisms underlying self-media-driven public opinion dynamics, assessing crises in the transmission of youth cultural values, and developing appropriate countermeasures are crucial tasks for strengthening ideological and moral education among adolescents and safeguarding a healthy cyberspace.

2. The Value of Youth Cultural Value Dissemination in the Self-Media Public Opinion Amplification Mechanism

2.1 Expanding the Boundaries of Youth Cultural Communication and Building Diverse Values

Self-media is an all-encompassing, viral public opinion dissemination system that is based on the Internet and decentralized; it is not the one-way, rigid and closed-loop communication model of

traditional media and has broken through the constraints of time, space and channels for young people's cultural exchange. Under this mechanism, the spread of information is no longer restricted to the old settings of campuses and homes; young people can obtain, understand and share all kinds of cultural content and values at any time and place via various platforms such as short videos, social media and official self-media accounts. In addition, due to its low-threshold and open nature, self-media empowers young people to be more active in participating in cultural discussion, public opinion construction and the spread of mainstream culture by generating and distributing their own content. Through a two-way interactive mode, it is possible to spread youth culture more widely and influence young people by introducing various social ideas, excellent traditional culture and mainstream values. It can address the defects of traditional value education and provide all-round platforms for young people to learn about and feel positive values. Many small self-media accounts have formed specific areas of focus in their works, such as traditional Chinese culture, revolutionary history and grassroots life, etc., by presenting them in the form of relatable daily life stories rather than moral lectures. Young creators have begun to use many types of new cultural forms, such as visual editing, narrative dramatisation and live-streaming, to add a sense of patriotism and a spirit of craftsmanship to their daily lives and spread core values subtly. Cross-platform collaboration expands the scope of communication and allows young people from all over the country to meet and talk with each other online. However, with the spread of various information, it is difficult to distinguish good from bad; thus, platforms and society can use self-media platforms to set up special columns for positive topics and co-creation activities to guide young people to form their own values by creating independently and engaging in critical thinking, thereby continuously building a youth-oriented cultural communication ecosystem that is inclusive yet positively oriented. [1]

2.2 Promote the Vitality of Youth Cultural Innovation and Enrich the Communication Model for Mainstream Values

Young people are the main subjects of the spread of online public opinion and drive cultural change. Lightweightness, youthfulness and appeal of social media-based public opinion communication are in line with the cognitive patterns and expression habits of young people today; thus, it can activate their own initiative in cultural creation and the expression of values. In a positive public opinion environment, young people no longer passively accept mainstream values but actively incorporate their own aesthetic sense, life experience and contemporary views to creatively interpret core socialist values, excellent traditional Chinese culture and revolutionary heritage through secondary creation, collaborative topic development, short video production, etc. The spread and popularisation of these youth-friendly, relatable cultural products have overcome the previous problems of mainstream culture, namely its perceived formality, rigidity and tedium; they have made abstract values more concrete and understandable for young people. This has added more ways for the main values in the new era to communicate, and they can now touch, engage with and spread among young people more authentically.

2.3 Promoting the Development of Youth Values and Strengthening

Their Ideological Foundation in the New Era. Self-media public opinion dissemination has the features of immediacy, interactivity and empathy; it can quickly identify social hot spots, current trends and the aspirations of young people, and thus acts as an essential way to guide the thoughts and cultivate the values of young people. The positive development of self-media discourse is in fact the spread and integration of uplifting cultural ideas, societal optimism, and the spirit of the times. High-quality online content with positive messages can indirectly affect the thoughts and

values of young people, encouraging them to be more actively involved in social development, appreciate contemporary culture, develop patriotism, etc. Furthermore, through participation in the public discourse, young people can improve their sense of social responsibility and a sense of civic duty; they will also learn to think critically, have a broader perspective on things, and be more aware of collective interests. Continuous exposure to positive cultural discourse can expand young people's spiritual world, cultivate a good world view, a life philosophy, and values, strengthen their ideological foundation for growth, ideal commitment, and responsibility towards society in the new era.

3. Real Risks in the Dissemination of Youth Cultural Values Amid the Escalation of Public Opinion on Social Media

3.1 Information Cocoons Solidify Cognitive Patterns, Leading to Biases in Value Perception

Homogeneity of content and the operation of self-media algorithms may form an information cocoon and echo chamber that disturb the information-consumption ecosystem of young people. Platforms provide all sorts of content according to people's individual interests and thus narrow the scope of youth's thinking to a certain cultural circle; at the same time, they actively avoid mainstream discourse and other ideas, leading to a constrained worldview. With the change in public opinion, scattered, emotional and one-sided information has replaced all-round education on core values and traditional culture. Young people are having difficulty grasping the overall significance and value of cultural events in society; they have a limited sense of traditional culture, leading to some cognitive biases and even a certain opposition to mainstream culture, resulting in deviations in value judgment. [2]

3.2 Social Stratification Polarization, Combined with Public Opinion Trends, Leads to Deviant Value Orientations

Younger subcultures are more cohesive and exclusive, and they have formed their own language and values. As the viral spread of public opinion progresses, there is an increasing homogeneity in the sentiment of these communities, and they often exhibit groupthink and polarisation. With the development of social media traffic, harmful ideas such as utilitarianism and historical nihilism have spread and been transmitted through community talk at a high speed. Most young people lack critical thinking skills; in the pursuit of identity within their subculture, they do not make independent judgments and are easily influenced by popular opinion, thus forming incorrect values and exhibiting inappropriate online behaviour that leads to a loss of personal values.

3.3 The Intertwining of Pan-Entertainment and Fabricated Public Opinion Undermines the Core Values of Mainstream Culture

The operating logic that prioritises traffic for self-media has fostered the spread of entertainment culture, and due to the low content review threshold of the platform, false public opinion has also spread widely, damaging the core values of mainstream culture. In the pursuit of attention, many self-media accounts have vulgarised and trivialised adaptations of red culture and traditional culture, thus diminishing the solemnity and respectability of mainstream culture. Marketing accounts have set up fake public opinion accounts and spread negative energy to exploit the lack of social experience and weak judgment among young people, thereby inciting irrational public frenzy. Prolonged immersion in the online world has gradually diminished young people's sense of national identity and social responsibility, resulting in the formation of an abnormal values system that is

more focused on pleasure and utility, thereby weakening the guiding power of mainstream discourse. [3]

4. Governance Approaches for the Dissemination of Youth Cultural Values in the Social Media Public Opinion Landscape

4.1 Optimize Algorithmic Recommendation Models to Break down Cognitive Barriers of Information Cocoons

Change the spread rules at the technical source to lower the bar for cognitive access.[4] There should be only one traffic algorithm for the platform, and instead of building a multi-level and all-encompassing recommendation system that creates an echo chamber, one should be built. They should increase the distribution of content related to mainstream values, traditional culture and positive social messages to extend the reach of information for young people. At the same time, moral regulations should be introduced to curb the excessive homogeneity of content distribution by algorithms and prevent intentional construction of information silos. They use big data to build a public opinion monitoring system that can quickly correct cognitive errors in young people, help them form an objective view of the world based on science and accuracy, address value differences through technology, etc.

4.2 Standardize the Public Opinion Ecosystem within Social Circles and Curb Group Polarization and Value Deviance

To standardise and regulate the spread of subcultures, and to cultivate a good environment for young people's subcultures, three measures should be taken. First, the platform needs to strengthen content supervision of subcultures to address problems such as ideological conflict, extreme statements and the spread of harmful ideas; therefore, it is necessary to curb the spread of utilitarianism and nihilism among young people and eliminate the exclusive bias of these communities. Second, a bridge should be built between mainstream culture and youth subcultures to guide the values of culture in a positive direction through constructive guidance and reduce polarization among subcultures. Third, universities and society should work together to conduct value-based critical thinking education, cultivating the ability for independent thinking in young people so that they can escape the herd mentality, form rational group identity and values, and avoid risks caused by inappropriate online behaviour.

4.3 Addressing False Public Opinions related to Excessive Entertainment and Reestablishing the Guiding Role of Mainstream Values

We need to strengthen the regulation of the online content ecosystem and promote mainstream values. The government and the platform should work together to further strengthen the content review system, increase efforts to address phenomena such as the vulgarisation of mainstream culture, mocking and deconstructive interpretation, fake public opinion manipulation, etc., and thus eliminate these unhealthy trends that place entertainment and traffic above all else. In light of the aesthetic needs and communication habits of young people, we should develop new ways to spread mainstream culture and create youth-friendly, high-quality positive content that is attractive to them and can counteract vulgarity and false information online. At the same time, we should continue to promote ideological and moral education for young people, enhance their sense of national identity and social responsibility, correct the distorted value orientation of utilitarianism and excessive entertainment focus, and restore the leading role of mainstream culture in the online sphere for

young people. [5]

5. Conclusion

The development of cultural values among young people in the new era needs to be in line with the spread mode of self-media and the changes in public opinion. It is necessary to combine problems and goals, use new technologies to break down communication barriers, offer various ways of guiding values through new content, strengthen the foundation by improving literacy, and work together to clean up the communication environment and reduce the risk of spreading negative youth culture. This will guide young people to form good moral values and promote the healthy development of youth online culture for the better, thereby fostering the healthy growth and all-around development of young people in the new era.

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