

Research on the Influence of Post-truth Online Communication on College Students' Values and the Corresponding Countermeasures

Lin Jiang

Southwest Petroleum University, Nanchong 637000, Sichuan, China

Abstract: As a special online phenomenon in the we-media era, post-truth online communication not only exerts an impact on social public opinion and its orientation, but also poses challenges to the thinking cognition and value orientation of post-00s college students, who are native digital users. It is urgent and socially valuable to correctly analyze the current situation of college students' values in the context of post-truth and adopt effective countermeasures. This paper proposes to form an educational community from the aspects of cyber security cognition and identification education, team building, and supervision and review mechanisms to strengthen the correct guidance of college students' values.

Keywords: Post-truth, Online Communication, College Students, Values.

1. Introduction

As a special phenomenon in the internet age, post-truth online communication, through its extensive and rapid dissemination in the online field, profoundly affects the orientation of online and offline public opinion and the healthy development of society, and exerts a great impact and challenge on college students' cognition of national conditions, society, ideology and values. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out in the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China that we should "develop a socialist ideology with strong cohesion and guiding power"^[1], shape a new pattern of mainstream public opinion, and promote the formation of a sound online ecosystem. Therefore, it is an urgent social issue to be studied and solved to face up to and attach importance to the influence of post-truth online communication on college students' values and the corresponding guidance.

2. The Connotation and Origin of Post-truth

Post-truth describes a situation where objective facts have less influence on the formation of public opinion, while appeals to emotions and personal beliefs exert a greater impact^[2]. The term originates from the West, and Oxford Dictionaries selected "post-truth" as the Word of the Year 2016, defining it as "a situation in which appeals to emotion and personal belief have more influence on public opinion than statements of objective fact". The characteristics of post-truth online communication are different from those of "online rumors". The focus of post-truth does not lie in whether the released information is based on facts; on the contrary, its core lies in the disseminator's preference for the "truth", or the disseminator's grasp of readers' interest preferences and traffic, and then regards such preferences as the "truth". The fundamental problem of post-truth online communication is not the communication process itself, but the mindset and motivation before the start of communication.

3. The Influence of Post-truth Online Communication on College Students' Values

In the era of the rapid development of digital and intelligent technologies, the speed and access of online information dissemination are undergoing subversive changes. The circle-based, fragmented and impromptu ways of information acquisition are constantly changing people's ways of information expression. As native digital users, post-00s college students are more closely connected with the internet than ever before, and post-truth online communication exerts a subtle influence on their values. However, college students' values are still in the shaping stage and their relevant cognition is becoming increasingly mature, making them highly vulnerable to the negative impacts of post-truth online communication, which leads to many problems in the education work of university management and services.

3.1. Distorted Information Leads to the Distortion of College Students' Value Judgment

Post-truth is based on the truth, but disseminators inject too much subjective mindset into the information. Some disseminators release information out of emotional venting, some fabricate content for eye-catching traffic, and a few even do so to disrupt social order. The truth of post-truth events may emerge only after several reversals. Due to the anonymity of the internet, post-truth online communication may seem to be based on solid real events on the surface, but in-depth analysis will reveal inconsistencies with common cognition and challenges to public morality. These phenomena directly affect college students' value judgment, cause the split of the correct value system of some college students, and may even lead them astray after repeated erosion by post-truth online communication.

3.2. Circle Communication Solidifies the Formation of College Students' Value Cognition

Online communication pushes fixed content to specific groups through big data algorithms. If college students pay close attention to a social hot topic, online media tend to push a series of related content. Some disseminators distort history, mix cognitions of non-mainstream ideology, make subjective assumptions to confuse the public, and undermine rational judgment. College students often have short-term enthusiasm for events and like to follow the trend to share and forward information. In the post-truth era, their ability to control information is gradually declining, making them easy targets of information manipulation. On the other hand, under cultural diversity, there are various subcultural circles among college students. Such circles develop in a relatively hidden way with low social awareness, and even university authorities and counselors barely understand them. As a result, information within the circles continues to spread among students, creating an "echo chamber" effect^[3], which makes students constantly consolidate their inherent cognition and to-be-purified values, and makes it difficult for society, university institutions and student workers to carry out effective ideological guidance.

3.3. Irrational Resonance Leads to the Alienation of College Students' Values

Post-truth online communication is characterized by strong subjectivity and priority to emotional preferences^[4]. Facts and truths are constantly processed and presented, and the so-called "reasoning" is constantly revised by disseminators. In the public opinion environment of post-truth event dissemination, some college students express their subjective feelings driven by emotions to varying degrees. With the gathering of a large number of irrational emotions, free discussions within the framework permitted by law gradually evolve into confrontations between different positions and circle cultures, and even gender confrontations. In such a situation, college students are vulnerable to cultural incitement by hostile forces, which leads to the decline of their rational thinking ability, the weakening of their recognition of socialist core values, and the questioning of national ideology, which is not conducive to universities cultivating talents for the country and the Party.

4. Countermeasures to Mitigate the Negative Influence of Post-truth Online Communication on College Students' Values

The irrational, circle-based and emotional dissemination of post-truth online communication disrupts college students' ways and media of viewing the times correctly, leading to negative tendencies such as confusion, disorder and nihilism in their values. Therefore, society, universities, official media, student workers and students should form a community to help college students establish correct values through educational guidance.

4.1. Strengthen Cyber Security Cognition and Identification Education

Faced with the endless emergence of post-truth online communication events, we must clearly recognize that some

college students have a weak basic cognitive ability. First of all, universities should strengthen the awareness of the extreme importance of online ideology, adhere to the leadership of online ideological work, and attach importance to the role of online education in the construction of college students' values. We should uphold the dominant position of Marxist theory and socialism with Chinese characteristics in ideological education, strengthen the construction of cyber security courses with distinctive school characteristics, and raise college students' awareness and ability of cyber security cognition and identification through galas, exhibition boards, competitions and other forms. Secondly, official institutions and authoritative media should strengthen the public opinion guidance and clarification of events. After noticing post-truth online communication, official institutions and authoritative media at all levels should integrate the objectivity of things and correct values into their content release, strengthen the fact-oriented and value-oriented orientation of event content in the process of online communication, pay attention to political positioning and social benefits, guide the direction of public opinion, and improve college students' ability to distinguish and handle events. Finally, in the processing and management of online public opinion, functional departments must strictly implement the requirements for online public opinion monitoring and processing, maintain a high-pressure posture, and closely link with local universities. Within the framework of laws and regulations, student-centered, technology should be used to classify and distinguish between college students' normal expression of opinions and intentional creation of group confrontation and unhealthy remarks, so as to prevent the escalation of public opinion risks and the occurrence of group incidents in universities.

4.2. Build a Team of Online Publicity and Ideological and Political Workers

The circle-based online communication ecosystem has caused obvious professional knowledge deficiencies in the daily work of online publicity and ideological and political workers, which requires universities to take this into account in team building and institutional function setting. First, cultivate the professional capabilities of online publicity and information management personnel. Universities should increase investment in cultivating the political accomplishment, professional competence and identification ability of online publicity and information management personnel to promote the healthy development of the campus online atmosphere. Workers should take the initiative to enter student groups, dormitories and classrooms, keep abreast of the online hot topics, internet buzzwords and their attention among college students in real time, better predict the development trend of online hot topics, and focus on discussing the development trend of post-truth events in online communication. They should closely monitor interactive platforms involving universities and students, detect, intervene and eliminate negative remarks in Moments, Douyin, QQ groups and other platforms at an early stage, and combine manual and technical prevention to delete unhealthy comments and behaviors that may arouse public opinion. In accordance with the annual plan, special knowledge training should be provided for online publicity personnel and ideological and political work teams^[5], such as the legal basis and provisions for handling inappropriate remarks, the classification and characteristics of subcultural c

ircles, and the integration of post-truth events into the construction of ideological and political courses. An on-campus educational community should be formed to enable university workers to deeply understand the dynamic logic of the "emergence-development-growth-disappearance" of current online events, and be good at using post-truth events to carry out targeted ideological guidance and value construction in daily work.

4.3. Improve the Supervision and Review Mechanism for Online Content Creation

Online communication has gradually evolved from the early social form of QQ to the emerging form of the short-video mobile internet era, and has increasingly become an important carrier for people to communicate and share, developing from verbal creation to video creation. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the supervision and review mechanism for online content creation, resolutely curb the chaos of post-truth online communication such as malicious editing, confusing ideology and spreading false policies, and effectively regulate the behavior of internet users. Relevant departments should further improve the planning of online space cleaning and construction. For example, implement the real-name system and IP positioning system for internet users on major internet platforms, increase the investigation and punishment of random fabrication and conflicts caused by emotional creation, raise the cost of breaking the law, and law enforcement agencies should timely disclose typical online illegal cases to warn the public with cases, effectively restrain the online behavior of internet users, enhance their social sense of responsibility, and thus create a civilized, healthy and positive online environment. Promote the standardized management of the review mechanism for online communication information by internet platforms to ensure that online communication information is reasonable and legal. Implement the principle of "who runs the platform, who is responsible" and the procedure of "hierarchical review and pre-review before release", effectively standardize the review mechanism for the release of online information, establish a banned vocabulary database and a video content element matching database, improve the manual review mechanism, refine review requirements, perfect the account ban and real-

name person ban system, and scientifically control the content of online communication information.

5. Conclusion

Post-truth online communication is an inevitable product of the development of the times and also a development path for the growth of we-media. From rational expression to irrational resonance, post-truth poses a great challenge to the establishment and development of values for college students who have limited social experience. Society and universities should work together to build an educational cooperation community and create a clear and beautiful online environment for the shaping of college students' values in the new era.

Acknowledgments

Fund Project: This paper is the research achievement of the "Special Research Project on the Innovation of Counselors' Ideological and Political Education Work of Southwest Petroleum University (2025RWY011)".

References

- [1] Xi Jinping. Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for the Comprehensive Construction of a Modern Socialist Country-Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (October 16, 2022)[M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2022:43.
- [2] Li W Q, Song X. Research on the Guidance Strategies of College Students' Values in the Post-truth Era[J]. Data of Culture and Education, 2025(05):91-93+101.
- [3] Chen J, Niu F. The Influence of Post-truth Phenomenon on College Students' Values and Its Countermeasures[J]. Journal of Inner Mongolia Radio & TV University, 2024(01):48-53.
- [4] Zhang B. Research on the Influence of Post-truth Online Communication on College Students' Values and the Corresponding Educational Guidance[D]. Changchun University of Science and Technology, 2023.
- [5] Ding Liangke, Qian Zhouwei. Research on the Governance Path of Ideological Security in University Networks in the "Post-Truth" Era[J]. Journal of Wuxi Vocational Institute of Commerce, 2025, 25(03): 94-99.