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Discussion on Strategies of Crisis Management in University Under the Background of Social Media

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Abstract: Social media plays an increasingly important role in the dissemination and response of crisis events in university. On the one hand, social media has brought positive influence to crisis management in university. On the other hand, under the environment of social media, the crisis management in the university is facing a new predicament. Take into account this, the paper begins with clarifying the connotation of crisis management in university, and discusses strategies from four aspects. Specifically, these strategies are as follows: cultivating the crisis management consciousness of university administrator, improving media literacy of university administrator, perfecting the monitoring mechanism of network public opinion and establishing the instant processing mechanism of Microblog platform. Through these strategies, it is expected to improve the ability of the university to implement crisis management under the background of social media, so as to promote the harmonious, stable and healthy development of the university.

Keywords: Social Media, Crisis Management in University, Strategy

1. Introduction

As one of the principal social institutions, university undertakes the important task of personnel training, scientific research, social service and cultural inheritance and innovation. In the period of rapid social transformation, the external environment of the university becomes more and more complex, which makes the university face various severe tests in the process of reform and development. Reflected in the university itself; the crisis events show a growing trend. All the time, when a university faces a crisis event, the society, the public and the media has paid great attention to it. In recent years, more and more researchers have studied the university crisis management. For example, based on the characteristics of the era of self-media, ChangYang discusses: "how to promote the crisis management ability of universities in the era of self-media and promote the reform of crisis management [1]." On the basis of analyzing the connotation of crisis in universities, Xiao Yanqun points out the present situation of crisis management in universities, and explores the methods and ideas of dealing with crisis management in universities [2]. Nowadays, with the rise and rapid development of social media, the social media mainly by Microblog has accelerated and expanded the speed and scope of information dissemination, so that many crisis events in university have been exposed quickly and aroused public discussion in a short time. This paper is aimed at how to deal with the crisis under the background of social media, which is helpful to the cultivation of the sense of crisis management and the improvement of the level of crisis management in universities. It has certain reference value and realistic significance to maintain the image of our country's universities.

2. The Connotation of Crisis Management in University

The correct definition of the university crisis is an important premise to interpret the crisis management in the university. The university crisis belongs to one of the public crises. Once the university crisis occurs, it will directly affect the normal teaching order of the school and even damage the reputation of the school. Generally speaking, university crisis refers to an emergency that is in the latent period and has not yet broken

out or has now threatened the normal teaching order. These crisis events are closely related to the interests of teachers, students and employees of the university. According to the nature of crisis events, it can be divided into natural disasters, public health and internal management, etc. Different from public crisis, university crisis has the characteristics of sudden, emergency, harmfulness and uncontrollability. When a crisis occurs in a university, as a direct subject of interest, the teachers and students of the university usually pay more attention to the development of the event, and all kinds of information in the process of handling the crisis will be transmitted quickly between the teachers and students. If crisis events are not properly handled, it's easy to cause dissatisfaction between teachers and students, and even deepen the crisis. Therefore, the crisis management in university is very necessary and meaningful.

At the present stage, the research on crisis management in a university in China is still in the exploratory stage, and there is a lack of in-depth research and discussion of various crisis events in the university. There are three views on the connotation of crisis management in university. Ji Baocheng thinks: "crisis management in a university can be described as an organized, planned, and continuous dynamic management process [3]." In the face of potential or current crisis, in different stages of crisis development, universities actively take a series of control actions in order to effectively prevent, deal with and solve the crisis. Li Xiaoli defines university crisis management as: when the university administrator encounter potential crisis or realistic threat, the university leaders manage the crisis in a scientific and reasonable way by setting up a crisis management organization, submitting a scientific crisis management plan, adopting methods such as crisis early warning and identification, comprehensive crisis management, and post-crisis reconstruction, in order to prevent the crisis, deal with the crisis and resolve the crisis effectively [4]." Wang Xiangjun thinks: "university crisis management should be established on the basis of daily teaching and scientific research logistics management, and at the same time in the organizational form, institutions, resource allocation and management means to reflect the special nature and requirements of the management system [5]." To sum up, the constituent elements of crisis management in university mainly include the main body of management, the content of management and the purpose of management. Furthermore, The main body of the crisis management in university is the university and education authorities; The main content of the crisis management in university is to establish a special department of crisis management in university, and to formulate a crisis management plan, which can deal with the crisis events in a timely and effective manner according to the management plan. The purpose of crisis management in a university is to warn of the potential crisis and to effectively control the crisis that is taking place. At the same time, summing up the relevant experience in time after dealing with the crisis, so as to better deal with the crisis in the future, and reduce the damage caused by universities themselves.

3. The Influence of Social Media on Crisis Management in University

3.1. The Concept of Social Media

At present, social media is increasingly moving from virtual to real. It becomes an indispensable part of the life, study and work, and brings great convenience to us. As a new type of online media, social media was first proposed by Chris Shipley and described as a series of online tools and applications that support information exchange, participation and collaboration [6]. Social media, represented by Microblog, provides new channels and ways for people to obtain, publish and share information. It has the characteristics of high participation, public sharing, instant, interactive and so on. There is no doubt that these characteristics meet the current willingness of people to publish and comment on social events through the internet, and to promote the wider application of social media in various fields.

3.2. The Influence of Social Media on Crisis Management in University

In view of the participation of social media, university crisis management has also been changed. The impact of social media on the crisis management in universities is mainly reflected in the following three aspects:

First of all, understand the direction of information and public opinion. Under the background of social media, university administrators can use social media to monitor the environment of universities dynamically, and make full preparation for the occurrence of crisis events. When the crisis occurs, and before the crisis, through the convenient internet, universities can timely understand the various published in Microblog and other platforms in the crisis information, and react quickly. In addition, through the function of commenting and other functions, university administrators can understand the public opinion for the event and the public opinion trend. This will impel universities to initiate crisis early warning measures and crisis management measures, which can enhance the efficiency of dealing with crisis events.

Secondly, strengthen the timeliness of information communication between universities and the outside world. The emergence of social media has promoted the transformation of traditional crisis management mode. Different from the traditional media, such as TV and newspaper, social media can update the latest developments of events anytime and anywhere. It can meet the information needs of the public, and answer their doubts in real-time. For example, in the official Microblog, university administrators can take the form of words, pictures and videos to disclose the truth of the crisis. Undoubtedly, social media acts as a bridge between universities and the public and also ensures the public's right to learn.

Finally, it can realize the communication between universities and teachers and students. Teachers and students in universities play an important role. The development of

universities is a direct result of the interests of teachers and students. Therefore, when dealing with the crisis of universities and constructing a harmonious campus culture, universities should have taken the initiative to pay attention to the demands of teachers and students, and provide a convenient channel for dialogue. For example, universities should make use of short message, Microblog, WeChat campus information platform, Q group, email etc., to establish a convenient information connection channel [7]. On the one hand, university administrators can listen to the opinions and suggestions of teachers and students in time. On the other hand, teachers and students can also understand the determination and ability of the universities to cope with problems. In view of this, the emergence of social media has realized the real-time dialogue and communication between the university and the teachers and students, and realized the "good governance" of the university based on the network negotiation mechanism.

4. The Predicament of Crisis Management in University Under the Background of Social Media

Social media provides a new channel for the university to implement crisis management. In fact, universities have not established a corresponding contingency plan for the crisis caused by the information transmitted through social media. Therefore, the university crisis management is facing many new problems.

4.1. Crisis Awareness of Social Media Management in University Is Weak

The consciousness of crisis management is the key to correctly understand the crisis and tackle it in time. The wide application of social media brings new opportunities and challenges to the crisis management in the university. Therefore, according to the new situation, university administrators should change the traditional concept in time and form social media management crisis consciousness. However, as far as the current situation is concerned, universities have formulated a series of regulations on crisis management only for some conventional crisis events, such as security incidents, public health incidents, etc. However, universities lack the awareness of prevention and active response to the crisis caused by the spread of social media information, which are completely out of the state of passive management. In addition, when the information spread on the internet affects the reputation of the school, university administrators tend to control the information by coercive means. Naturally, it's not conducive to the prevention and management of crisis events.

4.2. The Lack of Crisis Management Mechanism in University

The lack of crisis management mechanism in university is mainly reflected in the following two aspects. For one thing, most universities do not set up a professional, specialized permanent body. When the crisis occurs, universities administrators temporarily arrange staffs in certain departments to deal with, or ask departments to work together. In fact, these administrators didn't accept specialized training in crisis management, and they don't have basic theoretical knowledge and practical skills. In addition, departments usually consider their own interest, which makes it difficult to form a long-term, systematic cooperation mechanism. For another thing, in spite of some universities have established crisis management mechanism, they have not updated and perfected the existing mechanism according to the characteristics of social media. Specifically speaking, at the level of university management, there is not a complete crisis management early warning program to deal with the crisis caused by the spread of social media information. As is well-known, different crisis events should take different approaches to deal. Under the new environment, it is unfavorable to deal with the crisis event and may even lead to the secondary crisis.

4.3. University Administrators Are Lack of Media Literacy

In university, teachers and students are the fastest recipients of knowledge and skills. University teachers have professional level and profound cultural knowledge, while students in youth have the characteristics of active thinking and spreading personality. In the era of social media, the way of work and study and ideas of teachers and students in universities has been greatly affected. Social media has become a new platform for teachers and students to express their feelings and opinions. University teachers and students are the main force in using social media. However, they didn't accept the relevant knowledge of social media specially. What's worse, they are lack of the ability to distinguish the authenticity and falsity of information. Therefore, the university employees are lack of media literacy. When the crisis event occurs, university teachers and students, especially some students, often publish and disseminate information at will, driven entirely by perceptual cognition, without proving the truth of the matter. Some people disregard the network's moral standards and ethical norms, blindly forward and comment, resulting in the crisis become worse.

4.4. Poor Communication Between University and Social Media

Poor communication between university and social media is a common problem in crisis management in China. When a crisis occurs, in order not to affect the reputation of the university, few universities publish the information on their official websites for the first time, and even inform teachers and students not to spread information at will. However, this method has aroused the curiosity of students, triggered their dissatisfaction, causing some students to spread some gossip on personal Microblog. After the crisis, colleges and universities are not skilled at using social

media to rebuild its image. At this stage, universities should take the initiative to reveal the cause and process of the crisis, and make a comprehensive analysis of it. At the same time, it should also be used as an experience to summarize the measures to be taken in the face of similar crises in the future [8].

5. Strategies of Crisis Management in a University Under the Background of Social Media

With the popularity of social media, the use of social media to prevent the wanton spread of false information and rumors. University administrators should first consider correctly guiding network public opinion. Nowadays, most university administrators have realized the important role of social media in the crisis. However, due to the lack of experience and traditional ideas, it is difficult to take the correct strategy to deal with the crisis. In the context of the increasing prosperity of social media, universities should keep pace with the times, renew their concepts, and take the initiative to grasp the laws of development and change of crisis events. At the same time, university administrators should combine with the characteristics of social media represented by Microblog to formulate corresponding strategies, which make social media become the "spokesman" of universities.

5.1. Cultivating Crisis Management Consciousness of University Administrator

Having a strong sense of crisis management can make university administrators to be in a highly alert state at all times, and they can be keenly aware of potential crises and take relevant measures to prevent and monitor crises [9]. University administrators should focus on crisis management education and establish a clear sense of crisis management. It is advocated to set up lectures on crisis management knowledge and skills in the whole school, and constantly update the contents of the lectures according to the changes in the external situation. For example, in the era of social media, university administrators should guide teachers and students to recognize the correct information from the mass of information. At the same time, some classic crisis cases can be edited into a pamphlet and distributed to the university staff, so as to cultivate the crisis management consciousness of the university employee imperceptibly.

5.2. Improving Media Literacy of University Administrator

Media literacy refers to the ability of people to confront all kinds of information in the media, including the ability of selection, understanding, questioning, assessment, creation and production, and also speculative responsiveness [10]. In the modern society, when a university faces a crisis event, university administrators are easily misled by false information and blindly follow. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out media literacy education. The aim of media literacy

education is to make university administrator learn to think, identify, judge and choose media content. By learning, they can improve their capacity to identify information and use social media in the right way. Specifically speaking, universities can offer media literacy education courses and invite outside experts or teachers from the school of journalism and media to give lectures. In the teaching process, teachers should pay attention to adopt flexible and diverse teaching methods, such as participatory teaching. By allowing students themselves to participate in the production and dissemination of media information, they can realize the gap between the "media reality" created by social media and the "objective reality" in the real world. It can develop their ability to use the media express their demands.

5.3. Perfecting the Monitoring Mechanism of Network Public Opinion

Because of the system mechanism and other reasons, most universities have not yet established a complete the monitoring mechanism of network public opinion [11]. At present, although some universities have established the network public opinion monitoring organization, in fact, it is difficult to realize the real-time monitoring, analysis and dealing with the network public opinion. Therefore, universities should further improve the monitoring mechanism of network public opinion and purify the soft environment of network public opinion. On the one hand, university administrators should collect and analyze the words and information that may lead to crisis. And follow up on abnormal speech published by students on social media such as Microblog. At the same time, teachers should understand and care about the psychological state of students, help them out of their predicament and avoid the occurrence of crisis events. On the other hand, monitoring organizations should actively collect and sort out the focus of teachers and students' concern in recently, eliminate the impact of bad public opinion, and strive to form a positive and upward mainstream of public opinion on the internet.

5.4. Establishing the Instant Processing Mechanism of Microblog Platform

Microblog is increasingly favored by teachers and students in the university because of its characteristics of convenient publication, rapid dissemination, and the ability to realize real-time communication of information sharing. Nowadays, more and more universities have established their official Microblog. With the help of this platform, universities have realized the exchange and communication with teachers and students and all walks of life. When the crisis occurs, universities can quickly obtain relevant information through Microblog. After mastering the information of the incident in detail, universities should release the causes and progress of the crisis through the official Microblog as soon as possible, so as to eliminate the rumors in time. Taking the case of Sichuan University of Science and Engineering as an example, when the university association case happens, the school

published the incident on the official Microblog in time, which provided truthful information for the general public concerned about the incident. Therefore, universities should make full use of Microblog as a carrier of exchange, constantly realize the interaction between school and the outside world, teachers and students, and make school management more transparent and democratic.

6. Conclusion

In order to effectively deal with the plight of crisis management in university under the new situation, university administrators should make full use of the characteristics of social media, and establish appropriate coping strategies, that is, cultivating the crisis management consciousness of university administrator, improving the media literacy of university administrator, perfecting the monitoring mechanism of network public opinion and establishing the instant processing mechanism of Microblog platform. The adoption of these strategies will greatly improve the ability of universities to deal with crisis obviously.

Fund Project

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