

Research on Crisis Reporting in Chinese Colleges and Universities based on Agenda-Setting and Framing Theory——Taking the Sexual Harassment Incidents in Colleges and Universities in the Past 10 Years as Examples

Yusen Liu, Siyuan Pei
Shaanxi Normal University, Xi'an 710062, China.

Abstract: In recent years, sexual harassment incidents in domestic colleges and universities have emerged one after another, triggering a wave of public opinion. College students, the main group of sexual harassment in colleges and universities, are in their youth. The impact of sexual harassment on them not only includes the damage to their physical and mental health, but also includes the damage to their future planning and social behavior. At present, many scholars have conducted profound research on sexual harassment incidents in colleges and universities, but the main research fields focus on psychology and law. Sexual harassment in colleges and universities is a crisis event in colleges and universities. The report of crisis is an important part of the media report and comment on the sudden event. At the same time, crisis report is also one of the main means of public relations communication and management. At present, Chinese media reports on the crisis of sexual harassment in colleges and universities are mainly divided into two main bodies: mass media and university media, which show different characteristics. Especially in the current new media environment, media reports are more rapid, diverse and chaotic. In the context of new media, it is more important for media reports to take the right strategies to deal with emergencies in colleges and universities, guide public opinion, construct the media field, and improve the news information release mechanism. Based on the agenda-setting theory and frame theory, this paper will analyze the characteristics and explore the strategies of the reports on the sexual harassment crisis in colleges and universities in China from the field of journalism and communication in recent years.

Keywords: Agenda Setting; Frame Theory; Crisis Reporting; Sexual Harassment; Mass Media

1. Introduction

This article will focus on the characteristics, causes and development strategies of the mass media and the official media of universities in the face of college crisis events with sexual assault as an example, as the dominant player in crisis events, often play a role in public opinion mitigation, and minimize the negative effects brought by crisis events, but it will still have a certain negative impact on college brand building, victims' secondary psychological trauma, and media credibility, based on these foundations. The development strategy of future university crisis reporting can be explored through framework theory and agenda setting.

2. Body of paper

2.1. Characteristics of Mass media

2.1.1 The role of public opinion in the spread of crisis

Public opinion mitigation refers to an effective means of resolving social emotional conflicts and preventing the outbreak

of bad social emotions. In the process of social development, the vast majority of people will be dissatisfied with their own living conditions, the emotional expression of social media users is more abundant, and the similar position tendencies have a strong "aggregation" effect, resulting in the "post-truth" characterized by "emotion over facts" becoming the dominant factor in the direction of public opinion.

First of all, the mainstream media often have information advantages as a leader, especially in the face of major events related to national interests, such as in the fight against the epidemic, China's mainstream media often have the right to report first, or even the exclusive right to report; Secondly, the mainstream media has great influence. The two innate advantages of the mainstream media also determine that it must shoulder greater responsibility, especially in the face of major crisis events, the aphasia of the mainstream media will make the public fall into a panic full of insecurity, so the correct approach of the mainstream media should be to timely inform the information, actively clarify the truth, alleviate panic, so as to play the role of "public opinion relief".

2.1.2 The propagation path is from "point" to "surface"

"Point" is specialized in this kind of communication activities of the mass media, and "face" is a scattered, uncertain majority (mass), the number of audiences is usually from tens of thousands to tens of millions, but after entering the Internet age, the concept of mass communication has been challenged to a certain extent, network communication is a communication platform based on personal communication, the use of virtual interfaces for interpersonal communication and unorganized organizational communication, etc., nevertheless, mass communication still occupies an important position at present.

Information dissemination, especially the dissemination of news and information, is the basic function of mass communication, and other functions are extended and played on this basis. Because the public in addition to their own personal experience of the event in addition to the understanding of the masses has long been dependent on the mainstream media in mass communication to provide, before the development of the Internet, has been the use of newspapers, television, periodicals, radio and other means of communication, now the mass communication of this "point" to "face" mode of communication is still a common demand of society, is also one of the main characteristics of mass communication.

2.2 Characteristics of university crisis public relations

2.2.1 Validity principle

In the face of crisis events, it is necessary to give the most authoritative response in an effective time and information space, ensure that the information is transparent and convincing, and express the values and positions of the university itself. The development path of crisis events is divided into four parts: "outbreak period - continuation period - stability period - fading period", if the official media of the university chooses aphasia during the outbreak period, it will lead to the emotional excesses of the student group, unlike the general network crisis event, often the theme of the network crisis event in the university is more sensitive, such as the crisis event caused by sexual harassment and serious psychological trauma of the student, if the official media of the university selectively aphasia or directly ignore it at this time, it will lead to accelerated emotional transmission of students. Therefore, the number of discussions about crisis events in colleges and universities tends to grow exponentially.

2.2.2 In the process of crisis event repair, the phenomenon of aphasia in the official media of colleges and universities occurs frequently

In the process of crisis communication, the audience is most concerned about the content, publisher and how the crisis message is delivered. During the period, there will be many factors affecting the audience's cognition and judgment of the crisis, such as mass media reports, government authority and guidance, social or group support, etc. , so when public opinion breaks out, the university official media will often issue statements in order to control public opinion, so as to avoid the development of public opinion in an uncontrollable direction, temporarily stabilize public sentiment, the official statement will use words such as "highly valued", "strictly implemented" and "adhere to zero tolerance" to show their position and values, as far as possible to alleviate the negative emotions of the public. Reduce the negative impact, but in the follow-up repair process of the crisis event, the official media of the university often choose to lose their speech, and the public often cannot know the final solution to the

crisis event, and finally the matter can only be solved.

2.3 Causes

2.3.1 The causes of the characteristics of mass communication reports

Whenever the sexual harassment incident in colleges and universities breaks out, the mass media always plays a role in the crisis communication to release public opinion and guide the public opinion of the netizen group. Firstly, this is mainly determined by the nature of mass media. The mass media is essentially a tool of political opinion and a bridge between political will and citizens. Mass media arises from the need for information dissemination and communication, on the one hand, to help the political will to convey information to citizens, and on the other hand, to consider the emotional value of citizens. Sexual harassment is a serious social event, especially among college teachers, which is a respectable group. It has a very strong fear contagion for social groups, among which women are the main audience. When an individual crisis event breaks out, fear will quickly spread to the group. Each person worries about whether this will happen to them, which leads to empathy and empathy, further forming a group crisis. Once the group crisis is formed, the network report will lose its original control, and the public opinion will become complex and diverse, and even extreme behaviors may occur.

2.3.2 The reasons for the characteristics of official media reports in colleges

With the rapid development of the Internet today, the communication characteristics of traditional media have been impacted by new media and self-media. First, the traditional crisis communication path has been deconstructed by the public opinion field of the Internet, and self-media accounts with individuals as platforms can also be published on the Internet. One's own words can be spread, which leads to an exponential increase in the negative effects when a crisis event occurs, especially in the case of crisis events in colleges and universities such as sexual assault, campus violence, etc. Because student groups account for the vast majority of new media and self-media users, and their emotions are generally more extreme and richer, they are easily influenced by various remarks on the Internet, and people are often affected by different factors when evaluating crisis events. Therefore, there is often a big deviation between people subjective crisis cognition and the objective risk of things. Secondly, the multi-node communication network makes the communication path more fragmented. The public can obtain information sources through different channels, and they can also become an information source and publish your own opinions on social platforms, which makes it easy for the public to receive subjective and extreme thoughts, and they are also easily influenced by such thoughts, which leads to chaos and disorder in the public network order. This requires that the official media in colleges and universities need to be timely when dealing with crisis events, because the official media, as a leading role, should play a leading role in the guidance of public opinion, and show their positions and values before the public receives a large number of extreme thoughts to stabilize the public opinion. Emotions, if the state media chooses a vague response or a delayed statement at this time, it is more likely to arouse public dissatisfaction, further increasing the difficulty of crisis resolution.

2.4 The double influence behind the reports of sexual harassment crisis in colleges and universities

2.4.1 Influence on universities:

At present, most media reports appear in the form of new media. Openness, timeliness, interaction and sharing have become the main characteristics of media reports. The diversified communication channels and the information that is difficult to control and monopolize make the crisis continue to be amplified, and the brand construction of colleges and universities is facing difficulties. On December 19, 2017, netizens broke the news that Zhou, vice dean of a college of Nanchang University, had sexually assaulted female students for seven months, causing the university's Weibo comment section and post bar forum to collapse. For several months, whenever there was news about Nanchang University, some netizens would mention keywords such as "sexual assault" and "harassment" in the comment section, which had a huge impact on the college enrollment planning and school culture construction.

However, from another point of view, it is precisely because of the openness and rapidity of media reports that university

public relations can better establish crisis monitoring mechanisms. The so-called "university radar": when a crisis occurs, universities quickly pay attention to and analyze media reports, deploy emergency departments in advance, improve the efficiency of crisis management, and reduce the degree of reputation loss.

2.4.2 The impact on the media itself

In the era of new media, media report has a kind of uncontrollable. Once the crisis occurs, the fragmented information will be like a tide of uncontrollable divergence, and the opinions of the Internet users become more divided. Media reports have become the breeding ground and spread of rumors. The spread of rumors makes the media lose credibility, and the development of the media industry will be more difficult.

2.5 Explore the development strategies of future university crisis reports based on frame theory and agenda setting

2.5.1 Framework strategy

From the perspective of frame theory, the current Chinese media reports on the crisis of sexual harassment in colleges and universities mainly present two frame Settings. The first is the individual framework: Most reports believe that sexual harassment in colleges and universities belongs to the individual abnormal behavior of the perpetrator, which is a problem of personal style and quality. The best way to solve the problem is to punish or sanction these individuals either legally or socially. Very few media outlets raise the issue of sexual harassment to the group level. The second is the stability maintenance framework, which is a framework with Chinese characteristics. Student Hu Ying pointed out that the stability maintenance framework interprets existing policies and laws or new policies and laws, and analyzes its significance for preventing sexual harassment. It is an introduction to the current status of women's rights protection or a call to stop expanding the influence of a single sexual harassment incident (2018). The main purpose of such a framework is to serve politics and justice, emphasizing judicial rigor and political stability. Therefore, the framework setting of media reports should be changed strategically: from the individual to the social framework, from the maintenance of stability to the framework of controversy.

2.5.2 Neutral and objective stance strategy

First of all, the dispute framework mentioned above does not conflict with neutrality and objectivity as stated here. The above controversy mainly refers to the fact that the controversial topic triggers social thinking. However, the neutrality and objectivity mentioned here refer to the reflection of the news report's stance, which is mainly reflected in the content of the text and the psychology of the editor, and has nothing to do with the topic. The primary characteristics of news report are authenticity and objectivity, and objectivity is the basic position of the report. Sexual harassment in colleges and universities is a kind of social behavior of bad nature, so it is more important to adhere to the neutrality and objectivity in the stance of reporting.

To be honest, the victims of sexual harassment in colleges and universities are vulnerable on all levels, and it is quite right and normal for the public to have sympathy. Media reporters are no exception. Their own experiences and judgments will directly or indirectly affect the objectivity and justice of news. However, in the controversial reports, the media should be wary of the parties' excessive demands on the news media and keep a proper distance from them.

3. Conclusion

In the face of the university crisis event, the university official media, as the leader, will express their values and positions during the outbreak of public opinion to reduce the public's insecurity, but in the process of repairing the crisis event, because the public opinion heat decreases and the public sentiment tends to stabilize, the official media loses its voice and loses its voice from time to time. The characteristics of the media in the article will lead to a certain impact on the brand building of the university, the secondary harm to the mental health of the victims, and the credibility of the media. If you want to reduce the negative impact, from the perspective of framework theory, from the individual to the social framework, from the stability maintenance framework to the dispute framework is one of the ways out of the sexual harassment crisis reporting in Chinese universities, from the position strategy analysis, in the handling of crisis events with a neutral position to report can establish

their own prestige and influence while maintaining social order and good customs.

References

- [1] Robinson S, (2019). Crisis of shared public discourses: Journalism and how it all begins and ends with trust. *Journalism*, 20 (1), 56–59.
- [2] Lindlof TR, (2008). Constructivism. In: Donsbach, W. (Ed.), *The international encyclopedia of communication*, Vol. 3. Blackwell, Malden, pp. 944–950.
- [3] Carpenter S, (2008). How online citizen journalism publications and online newspapers utilize the objectivity standard and rely on external sources. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 85 (3), 531–548.
- [4] Leudar I, Nekvapil J, (1998). On the emergence of political identity in the Czech mass media: The case of the Democratic Party of Sudetenland. *Czech Sociological Review*. 6 (1), 43–58.
- [5] Song JJ, (2019). In the face of "sexual harassment", the Internet era needs more media credibility. *Radio & TV Journal*, Vol. 8. (007), pp. 19.
- [6] Fan YP, (2018). How to Maintain Journalism Professionalism of Traditional Media in the context of New Media -- Take Shanghai media's report on the forced suspension of "Lonely Cafe" as an example. *Journalism Communication*, Vol. 9., pp. 113- 115.
- [7] Hu Y. and Chang J, (2018). A Comparative study on the news presentation of sexual harassment issues in China and the United States. *Journalism Evolution*, Vol, 4. , pp. 74-86.
- [8] He YH, (2021). Discourse framework and public opinion guidance of crisis public relations in Colleges and universities in the context of omnimedia. *Regional governance*, Vol. 47, pp. 101- 104.
- [9] Tan Y, (2004). The release of public opinion by mainstream media in crisis propagation. *Journal of Nanjing University of Science and Technology (Social Science Edition)*. Vol. 17(2), pp. 33-35.
- [10] Chen AY, Zhu HR, and Ni XY, (2020). Pre-warning information dissemination models of different media under emergencies. *Physics in China B*, Vol. 29(9), pp. 383-393.
- [11] Rotherham AJ, (2008). The Translators: The Media and School Choice Research. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 89, no. 5, pp. 376–79.