

Research on the Impact of Online Dissemination of Traditional “Lei Feng Spirit” on Contemporary College Students

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Abstract—The “Lei Feng Spirit” is a vivid embodiment of the core socialist values. Short videos and social media platforms have become key arenas for reshaping the value identity of college students. However, fragmented communication and algorithmic mechanisms, while improving reach, have also posed challenges such as superficial cognition, misalignment between content supply and demand, and obstacles in the transformation from knowledge to action. Focusing on college students, this study employs a questionnaire survey to deeply analyze the influencing mechanisms of online communication on the cognition and behavior regarding the “Lei Feng Spirit” from multiple dimensions, including communication channels, content forms, the public opinion environment, and practical willingness. The study reveals a characteristic of “high awareness but low internalization.” Accordingly, the article proposes countermeasures such as building an all-media matrix, innovating life-oriented discourse, purifying the public opinion ecosystem, and perfecting incentive mechanisms. These measures aim to break “information cocoons,” promote the transformation of the “Lei Feng Spirit” from “finger-tip traffic” into practical actions, and provide a reference for the innovation of ideological and political education in colleges and universities.

Keywords—Online Communication; Lei Feng Spirit; College Students; Values

I.

INTRODUCTION

Lei Feng (1940-1962) was a soldier of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. Born into a destitute family in Hunan, he was nurtured by the Party and the people to become a role model, eventually sacrificing his life in the line of duty at the young age of 22. As the creator of this spirit, Lei Feng practiced the tenet of serving the people wholeheartedly throughout his brief but brilliant life [1]. The core connotations of the “Lei Feng Spirit” include selfless dedication to serving the people wholeheartedly, the professionalism of “loving and devoting oneself to one's job,” the enterprising spirit of striving for progress, and the style of hard work and plain living. Its essence lies in the realm of absolute selflessness, characterized by loyalty to the Party and the people and prioritizing public interests

over private ones [2]. The “Lei Feng Spirit” represents the summary and sublimation of Lei Feng's noble character by later generations [3].

The core of the “Lei Feng Spirit” is the spirit of dedication [4]. This is because the essence of the “Lei Feng Spirit” lies in “serving the people wholeheartedly,” and its soul lies in “dedicating one's limited life to the limitless service of the people.” This represents a lofty realm in which one disregards personal fame and gain, asks for no return, and willingly sacrifices oneself for the interests of the collective and others [5]. As Lei Feng stated, to “be selfless and exclusively for others,” this altruism transcends the utilitarian logic of material exchange. It constitutes the cornerstone of the entire spiritual system and is its most infectious and vital core [6].

However, in today's highly developed information age, the complexity of the online communication environment poses severe challenges to the identification and internalization of the “Lei Feng Spirit” among contemporary college students [7]. On one hand, the individualism and consumerism prevailing in cyberspace collide intensely with college students who are in a critical period of value formation. Some students have been eroded by “refined egoism,” questioning or even marginalizing the core of selfless dedication as outdated or “untimely” [8]. On the other hand, the fragmentation and pan-entertainment tendencies of internet information often symbolize and superficialize the “Lei Feng Spirit”, making it difficult for college students to deeply understand its moral substance and contemporary value. This can even lead to cognitive deviations under the impact of diversified values. The communication barriers and crisis of trust in this network context not only weaken the guiding role of the “Lei Feng Spirit” in the thinking of college students but also raise new issues for ideological and political education in colleges and universities [10]. Therefore, in the internet age rife with individualism, how to utilize online media to reshape the positive influence of the “Lei Feng Spirit” on contemporary college students, making it an effective force to resist negative values and guide the healthy growth of students, is an issue that urgently requires in-depth exploration.

II.

METHODS

This study adopts the questionnaire survey method. Relying on the Sojump platform, the Questionnaire Survey on the Impact of the “Lei Feng Spirit” Online

RESEARCH

Communication on Contemporary College Students was compiled and distributed. The survey participants cover enrolled college students from various universities across the country. The questionnaire design is tightly centered on two core themes: "online communication" and "value influence." It consists of 20 questions covering the following dimensions: college students' preferences for online channels to acquire information related to the "Lei Feng Spirit"; the impact of the presentation forms of online content (such as short videos, graphics, and text) on communication effectiveness; the shaping role of the online public opinion environment on students' sense of identification; and the driving effect of online communication on college students' willingness to practice the "Lei Feng Spirit" in daily life. The aim is to comprehensively evaluate the combined impact of online communication on the cognition, emotion, and practical behavior of college students.

A total of 5,287 valid questionnaires were collected in this survey, representing a large sample size with strong statistical representativeness. In terms of gender composition, males account for 42.6% and females for 57.4%, which aligns with the general gender ratio characteristics in current colleges and universities. Regarding grade distribution, the proportions of students from freshman to senior year are 25.2%, 28.9%, 15.9%, and 30% respectively. This relatively uniform sample structure covers stages from freshman enrollment to graduation internships, enabling the reflection of cognitive differences toward the "Lei Feng Spirit" among students at different growth stages. In terms of disciplinary background, the sample involves Liberal Arts (22.19%), Science and Engineering (30.87%), Business (18.97%), Arts and Physical Education (8.04%), and Medicine (19.93%). This diversified disciplinary composition effectively avoids biases arising from a single disciplinary perspective, ensuring the applicability and breadth of the research conclusions across different professional groups.

III. SURVEY RESULTS AND IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS

Through the statistical analysis and cross-analysis of 5,287 valid questionnaires, it was found that although the "Lei Feng Spirit" possesses a very high level of topicality in cyberspace, its transformation into impact on college students is still constrained by multiple factors, including communication mechanisms, environmental atmosphere, and individual psychology. Based on the data, "blocking" effects exist primarily in the following four dimensions:

A. Channel Dependency and Cognition Superficiality: The Information Cocoon Effect under Algorithmic Recommendation

The survey reveals that regarding preferences for online channels to acquire information related to the "Lei Feng Spirit", short video platforms (82.4%) and social media (76.8%) have become the absolute top choices for college students, far surpassing traditional web portals and official university websites. This high

concentration of channels has led to the "fast-foodization" of cognition.

While 95.2% of respondents gave an affirmative answer to the question of "knowing the core connotation of the "Lei Feng Spirit", only 38.5% of students were able to accurately distinguish the deepened relationship between the "Lei Feng Spirit" in the New Era and the traditional concept of "doing good deeds." Cross analysis of data shows that students who heavily rely on short video platforms to obtain information tend to have more symbolic impressions in their cognition (such as "doing good deeds without leaving a name"), and their accuracy in understanding deep connotations such as "striving for progress" and "hard work" is significantly lower than that of students who have read extensively through text and images. This indicates that although the network algorithm recommendation mechanism has improved the reach of information, it has also constructed an "information cocoon", resulting in college students' understanding of Lei Feng's spirit remaining at a superficial symbolic level and lacking systematic deep internalization.

B. Content Homogenization and Rupture of Emotional Resonance: The Supply-Demand Mismatch in Online Communication

In the dimension of the attractiveness of online communication content, the data presents a distinct supply-demand contradiction. Regarding the "types of online content about the "Lei Feng Spirit" that attract you to click and watch," 73.26% of students chose "real stories with plot twists," and 68.42% chose "micro-videos related to the real-life of college students."

However, in the evaluation of existing online content about the "Lei Feng Spirit", more than half (54.3%) of the students believe that current content suffers from being "too preachy and rigid in form," with only 21.6% believing that existing content can "trigger strong emotional resonance." Further data mining reveals that when the content form is purely slogan promotion or grand narrative, the student completion rate is less than 30%; whereas when the content showcases the selfless behaviors of classmates around them through Vlogs, the interaction and like rate is 4.5 times that of the former. This indicates that current online communication content places too much emphasis on grand narratives within an official context, lacking a micro-connection with the individual life experiences of college students. This has caused a misalignment between the supply side of communication content and the emotional demand side of the audience, making it difficult to trigger deep psychological resonance.

C. Public Opinion Environment and Value Dissolution: The Impact of Pluralistic Network Values

The online public opinion environment exerts a significant interfering effect on the value judgments of college students. Survey data shows that 68.9% of the surveyed students have encountered ridicule, questioning, or even spoofing of the "Lei Feng Spirit" in online comment sections.

When facing the "view online that questions the "Lei Feng Spirit" as 'foolish behavior'," although 76.4% of students expressed firm opposition, 15.8% chose "understand it but won't do it myself," and 7.8% expressed "agreement, considering it unrealistic in today's society." This data reflects that the trends of "refined egoism" and "utilitarianism" emerging in cyberspace are eroding the appeal of the "Lei Feng Spirit". Particularly when individual negative social news appears online, some college students are easily influenced by the "herd mentality," elevating individual phenomena to universal denial. Consequently, under pressure from online groups, they are ashamed to express their identification with the "Lei Feng Spirit" publicly, forming a "spiral of silence" where they "privately identify but silently watch."

D. Utilitarian Tendency and Disjunction between Knowledge and Action: The Contrast between Virtual Heat and Real Action

The survey reveals the complexity of the impact of online communication on the practical willingness of college students. Data shows that after watching positive energy videos related to the "Lei Feng Spirit", 82.3% of students report being able to feel moved or inspired psychologically. However, in the willingness survey on "whether to actively forward or participate in related activities online or in reality," this proportion drops to 45.6%.

In-depth analysis finds that the main factors hindering practice are not a lack of willingness, but realistic concerns and a utilitarian mindset. In the multiple-choice question on "reasons for not participating in practice activities," "fear of being mocked as putting on a show/seeking attention" (42.3%) and "lack of substantial rewards/credits" (38.7%) rank in the top two. This corroborates the widespread phenomenon of "credit brushing" in current college volunteer service activities—although online communication has created a strong atmosphere, some college students alienate the practice of the "Lei Feng Spirit" into a tool for obtaining "second classroom credits." This "emotion at the fingertips" has not fully transformed into "action underfoot." The "virtual agency" formed by online communication often loses its effect in the face of a trade-off with real interests, resulting in a significant disjunction between high awareness and low practice rates.

IV. MEASURES

COUNTER

In response to the problems revealed by the survey regarding college students' cognitive biases in online communication, the supply-demand mismatch of content, the complex public opinion environment, and the blocked transformation of knowledge into action, this paper proposes the following countermeasures and suggestions to further enhance the effectiveness of the online communication of the "Lei Feng Spirit":

A. Breaking the Algorithmic Cocoon and Building a Comprehensive Media Communication Matrix for Precise Reach

Addressing the problem of "cognitive superficiality" caused by college students' excessive reliance on short videos, active efforts should be made to break the "information cocoons" formed by algorithmic recommendations. On one hand, it is necessary to integrate campus media resources to construct a multi-dimensional communication matrix anchored by WeChat Official Accounts, campus Bilibili accounts, and official Douyin (TikTok) accounts. Big data technology should be utilized to analyze the interest preferences of college students across different majors and grades, implementing "demographic segmentation" for precise delivery. By integrating the "Lei Feng Spirit" with ideological and political education and professional ethics education, the reach and acceptance of content can be improved. On the other hand, the construction of a content ecosystem combining "short and long forms" should be promoted. Short videos can be used for rapid attraction and "breaking circle" dissemination, complemented by deep textual content or documentaries to guide college students from fragmented reading toward systematic thinking, preventing cognition from lingering on superficial symbols.

B. Transforming the Discourse System and Creating High-Quality Content that is Life-Oriented and Youthful

To address the lack of emotional resonance caused by the "preachy tone and rigid form" of current online communication content, a supply-side reform of the "Lei Feng Spirit" content must be advanced. First, a "youth-oriented" transformation of discourse expression must be promoted, abandoning the top-down preaching approach in favor of forms beloved by college students, such as Vlogs, micro-films, and webcomics (strip comics). This approach converts the grand principles of the "Lei Feng Spirit" into "small stories" about those around them. Second, the "life-oriented" connection of content must be strengthened. This involves finding convergence points between the "Lei Feng Spirit" and college students' studies, daily life, social practices, and job hunting. It also involves excavating the good deeds of ordinary people nearby to trigger emotional resonance with "grounded" real cases. Simultaneously, cultural elements such as ACG (two-dimensional) culture and the national trend should be introduced moderately. Through the translation of subculture, the appeal and affinity of the "Lei Feng Spirit" in cyberspace can be enhanced.

C. Purifying the Cyber Ecosystem and Strengthening the Value Guidance Power of Positive Public Opinion

Facing negative remarks and utilitarian trends in cyberspace that dissolve the "Lei Feng Spirit", it is essential to build a clean and sunny online public opinion environment. Universities and relevant departments should establish and improve mechanisms for online public opinion monitoring and analysis. It is crucial to promptly detect, clarify, and

refute erroneous statements online that spoof or question the "Lei Feng Spirit", seizing the commanding heights of public opinion and preventing the "spiral of silence" effect from marginalizing mainstream values. At the same time, it is necessary to cultivate and support a group of "campus opinion leaders" (KOLs) who have firm political stances and understand online language. By leveraging their influence within online communities, their positive comments and reposts can guide college students to establish correct value judgments and strengthen their faith in the "Lei Feng Spirit" amidst the conflict of diverse values.

D. Improving Incentive Mechanisms to Promote the Transformation from "Emotion at the Fingertips" to "Action on the Ground"

Addressing the issues of "high awareness, low practice rate" and utilitarian tendencies among college students requires the construction of a practical incentive system that links online and offline activities. First, the volunteer evaluation mechanism should be reformed. The shift from "pure credit incentives" to a comprehensive incentive system combining "spirit + skills" should be implemented. This involves recording and showcasing the growth and harvest of students during the process of practicing the "Lei Feng Spirit", thereby enhancing their sense of gain and self-efficacy. Second, the closed-loop management of "speaking up online and acting offline" must be strengthened. College students should be encouraged not just to be "likers" of positive energy, but to become "disseminators" and "practitioners." By launching activities such as "Finding the Lei Feng Around Us" and "Micro-Public Welfare Relays" through online platforms, the barrier to participation can be lowered. This allows students to complete the leap from online onlooking to offline participation in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, realizing the internalization of the "Lei Feng Spirit" in the heart and its externalization in action.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on an in-depth analysis of the background of the internet era, this paper explores the impact of the online communication of the "Lei Feng Spirit" on the cognition, emotion, and behavior of contemporary college students through questionnaire surveys and data analysis. The study finds that although new media platforms such as short videos have greatly expanded the reach of the "Lei Feng Spirit", maintaining a high level of awareness among college students, the communication effectiveness still faces practical obstacles characterized by "suspended cognition, emotional disconnection, public opinion interference, and the separation of knowledge and action." The fragmented nature of the online environment and algorithmic recommendation mechanisms, while improving information reach, have also led to a superficial understanding of the connotation of the "Lei Feng Spirit" among college students. The homogenization and preachy nature of content make it difficult to trigger deep resonance. Furthermore, the conflict of diverse values and the trend of utilitarianism in cyberspace have, to a certain extent, eroded the

appeal of the "Lei Feng Spirit", resulting in a phenomenon where "emotion at the fingertips" is more prevalent than "action on the ground."

Based on the aforementioned issues, this paper proposes targeted countermeasures such as breaking algorithmic cocoons, building an all-media matrix, innovating the discourse system, strengthening public opinion guidance, and improving incentive mechanisms. The research indicates that to achieve the effective inheritance and contemporary revitalization of the "Lei Feng Spirit" among college students, one cannot rely solely on simple information push. Instead, it is essential to shift from "one-way indoctrination" to "interactive empathy," from "focusing on traffic" to "emphasizing quality," and from "formal propaganda" to "value guidance." In the future, universities and relevant institutions should continue to deepen the philosophy of online education, precisely align with the online behavioral habits and psychological needs of college students, and earnestly transform online traffic into spiritual energy. This will guide contemporary college students to realize their "small self" while achieving the "greater self," making the "Lei Feng Spirit" a true spiritual driving force nurturing the growth of youth in the new era.

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