Crisis Management of Group Events in Chinese Universities Under the Background of Internet: A Literature Review

LIU Liang[a],*; JIANG Maoting[b]

[a]Lecturer, School of Economics and Management, Southwest University of Science and Technology, Mianyang, China.
[a]Undergraduate, School of Economics and Management, Southwest University of Science and Technology, Mianyang, China.
*Corresponding author.

Abstract

With the general increase in the degree of education coverage of national, the number of colleges has risen sharply and the scale expands apparently which leads to the frequent occurrence of mass incidents in colleges and universities, resulting in the loss and harm of public property, personal security and other aspects in varying degrees. Therefore, in recent years, the crisis management of college group events has become a hot spot for many scholars. Under the condition of combining the background of the actual times and the social environment, many scholars put forward the multi-angle crisis management mechanism and theoretical method. However, with the rapid development of the Internet in recent years, great changes have taken place in both the group events of universities and the means of information dissemination. Therefore, it is very important to find a complete flow mechanism for college group events under the network background that adapts to the background of the times and can be applied to the actual situation of our country. Reviewing and summarizing the methods and countermeasures proposed by many scholars, this paper puts forward the views and suggestions on the management mechanism under the Internet background.

Key words: Internet; College group events; Crisis management

INTRODUCTION

At present, the community is in the context of informationization. Internet information's characteristics of the rapid gathering and retreat will play a significant impact which can not be ignored in the crisis. The negative side of the influence is the rapid spread of the network, and the wide audience and other characteristics will lead to the variability and unexpected college group events. It also increases the uncontrollability of the general Group Crisis Management in colleges and distracts the focus of the university on crisis control. On the other hand, with the same circumstances, if the university can correctly use the Internet to guide the consensus, to take more consistent measures with the student groups emergency. This will be beneficial to improve the efficiency of the implementation of crisis management in colleges and universities, the crisis management will be solved more properly. Therefore, under the background of the Internet, to summarize, analyze and study the connotation, characteristics, crisis management mechanism and the early research problems of the college group event crisis management has important practical significance and historical stage significance on maintaining campus stability and focusing on youth growth.

1. THE INTERNET BACKGROUND

1.1 Characteristics of the Internet Background

With the advent of the information age, the Internet plays an increasingly important role in our daily life. Traditional

media have been hit hard, such as television, radio and newspapers that have been gradually replaced. The way we receive and disseminate information has evolved into the form which the Internet acts as its main carrier.

The Internet has the characteristics of fast spreading, fragmentation, wide coverage, and anonymity. From different perspectives, these characteristics have positive and negative effects on the social aspects like social environment and social policy, as well as the microscopic aspects like individual and social psychology. At the same time, as the main constituent groups of Internet users, their various performances on the network are a more realistic ideological embodiment of many college students. Thence, under the background of this era, it is very significant to study the crisis management of college students in colleges and universities.

1.2 Characteristics of College Students

Contemporary college students are in the large data Internet background that includes complex information and fast updating new things.

In this background, college students generally have active thinking and strong sense of social responsibility. For the network communication event of concern and participation are higher, they are with strong rights activism and enthusiasm. But their ideas are often more one-sided and shallow, so they are easy to impulse, easy to follow the crowd, easy to produce blind herd mentality, and easy lack the ability to judge information authenticity.

1.3 The Relationship Between Internet and College Students

With the development of the Internet, our life can not be separated from the network nowadays gradually. At the end of 2015, the number of Internet users in China has reached 688 million people, while the Internet penetration rate adds for 50.3%, and the mobile Internet users reached 650 million. The number of Internet users rose rapidly, of which students accounted for the majority, then we can find the Internet and students are closely linked.

2. COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE BACKGROUND OF INTERNET

2.1 The Concept of Group Events in Colleges and Universities

According to the relevant literature, different scholars, definition of the concept of college group events are different. At present, the mainstream view is that: College group events are some destructive, sudden and consistent behaviors of the group that caused some social, natural and man-made factors, and in own interests oriented or value-orientation. This behavior will undermine the normal operation of the university order, resulting in

property damage, and even harm the personal safety that causes panic.

2.2 The Characteristics of Group Events in Colleges and Universities Under the Background of Internet

(a) Subjectivity: The main constituent groups are college students.

(b) Emergent: College student group events are generally unpredictable.

(c) Consistency: Although the individual background of life is different, most of the students can quickly abandon different views and integrate against the outside world in order to protect their own interests.

(d) Extreme: Because of the wide and anonymous characteristics of network users, most of the college students often make excessive speech on the Internet platform and tend to take extreme behavior in life.

(e) Conformity: many college students are influenced by the individualization and group polarization of the group, which causes a herd behavior by evaluating their concerns. Due to the large number of network students, and large effect, it is more likely to generate network conformity behavior.

(f) Rapidity: As the event involves the interests of most students, when the group event occurs, most students will rely on the rapid spread of network communication.

Scholar Meng (2012) thinks that Network speech is relatively free, and its anonymity, timeliness, transmission are strong, but the authenticity, controllability are poor. Any one of the hot events of the society and the school that have been added a kind of emotional views may trigger the group events. Therefore, our research on the college group events can not be separated from the Internet background.

2.3 Analysis of the Causes of Group Events in Colleges and Universities Under the Internet Background

University is a place that gathers new forces of the country, a source of innovation power of the times, and a place where we should pay continent attention. Nowadays, the college group events in the context of the Internet is also very frequent, causing a host of impacts on the stability of the campus and the community.

This has aroused our critical thinking, while we step towards the rapidly developing economic and technological information age, why the college group events will occur frequently?

(a) In the Internet background, people's life can not be separated from the basic network, and we even can not live without digital decicelike phones and computers. College students as the main body of the network users, are no exception, who usually uses the network to directly receive a variety of information from home and abroad. And in the calision of East and West culture, college students tend to produce more innovative ideas.

(b) On the other hand, someone who has ulterior motives publishes some illegal content on the Internet, which may mislead other students, to guide them to the extreme direction of the issue. This has a very negative impact on student values and opinions. In general, these are one of the causes of some college events. For instance, Ye (2004) thinks that the clash of eastern and western cultures, the pattern of social pluralism in the transition period, the lack of educational resources and the insufficiency in the work are the deep-seated causes of college emergencies.

(c) Due to the self-protection of students with psychological mentality, as well as the relative freedom of speech, the enhancement of college students self-awareness, they tend to pursuit the protection of self-right, and express their own remarks in the network. However, because of the anonymity of the internet, some students will also deliver some irresponsible remarks. Such as Pang (2011) puts forward that the awareness of personal rights of contemporary college students is increasing significantly than the past. When students believe that the school is violating their own interests and the issue can not be resolved, they will lay much pressure on the school to protect their own interests. If the event is not solved properly or timely, it might contribute to group events.

3. RESEARCH ON THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNET

3.1 Concept of Campus Group Events Crisis Management

Regarding the concept of crisis, Dutch scholar Rosenthal et al. (1989) believe that the crisis refers to a social system basic value and the behavior criterion framework that can produce a serious threat, so at the time of pressure and uncertainty of the situation we must make key decisions. And at the social level and then branch, thus we introduce the concept of campus group events. Chinese scholar Li (2010) believes that the crisis in the university campus, or in the community is closely related with the members of the university. Also in the case of unforeseen circumstances suddenly broke out, it well seriously interfere with the normal education and management order. Specifically, it can disrupt the educational and teaching facilities, causing unease and injury to the members of the university, and damaging the reputation of the school image. In most circumstances, it is difficult for the existing manpower and resources of the university to solve the problem with insufficient resource immediately and effectively. Due to the unpredictability of college events and the wide participation of students, many colleges and universities

have established relevant crisis management mechanism. For the definition of campus crisis management, domestic and foreign scholars have many advanced concepts.

The author summarized the results as follows:

"Prevention is the best way to solve the crisis," said M. Regester (Heath, 2001). Chinese scholar Wang (2010) presents that the crisis has the characteristics of uncertainty, complexity, threat, time urgency and information asymmetry. But in some ways, the crisis can be prevented and controlled. As long as schools have a variety of preventive programs and measures for future crises, they can reduce the probability of crisis and raise the level of crisis management. As for the university crisis management, the president of Renmin University of China, Ji (2003) proposes that crisis management in colleges and universities is a well-organized, planned and sustainable management process. Colleges and universities should take some different control actions against potential or current crises to effectively prevent and eliminate the severe influences of crisis at different stages of its development.

From the social psychology point of view, group events are mainly caused by deindividualization and group polarization. Deindividualization means that individuals can lose self-awareness because of the annoymity and concealment of the group characteristic. Because the group can make the individual identity fuzzy, so that the individual can easily bear the hat of the group to do something that he does not dare to do alone. At the same time, if the larger the size of the group, the greater the effect of anonymity, and also the more likely it is to make unusual behavior. Colleges and universities are the gathering place of mass students, and the scale of the number is quite large. Moreover, the arrival of the Internet has increased the degree of this anonymity, so colleges and universities have the possibility of occurring group events.

At the same time, some group activities can weaken the self-consciousness, so that the individual is easy to be brain-washed. (For example, many processions or church organizers stir people to shout, sing, wave arms, dance and do other activities.) In the network environment, students can be significantly affected by the continuous forwarding of posts and comments and activities of other student groups, and join the trend of exerting anger through other medias or behaviors.

Making students more responsive and sensitive to the situation, so that the only part of their discontent will directly transform into anger. Then they will respond to the opinion leader's organization of group event, whom is more easily manipulated by others. Group polarization is a phenomenon that group enhances the opinions and concepts of the individuals. In Sunstein's view, group polarization refers to the situation that the final position taken by a members of a group is corresponded

to the general tendency of members, sometimes even more extreme." (Biol, 2010) A typical example is "risk transfer", which means that group decision-making is often more risky. Due to Internet spreading method, the speed of transmission of the provocative remarks and comments will grow exponentially, allowing the size of the population to expand instantaneously. At the same time, being incited by a mass of words, once that the appeal channel is not smooth enough or there are phenomena of shirking responsibility in various functional departments of colleges and universities cause the problem can not be effectively resolved, students are more likely to take some extreme adventure to attract attention and resort some harmful actions.

3.2 The Contemporary Campus Crisis Management Mechanism

Campus group events have become a hot topic for scholars to explore. So in the context of the Internet, this heated spot of the college group event crisis management will gradually arouse the attention and attention of the government and education department. Therefore, the combination of the characteristics of internet and crisis management to the establishment of a more advanced crisis management mechanism has a strong practical significance. After the summary, the comtemporary Chinese crisis management conditions are as fallows:

Wang and Zhang (2006) indentify that we should set up a separate university crisis management agencies. A relatively perfect crisis management system should include the corresponding organizational crisis mechanism, crisis early warning mechanism, crisis communication mechanism, crisis training mechanism, crisis control mechanism and crisis recovery evaluation mechanism. The author believes that the decision-making mechanism should try to take a flat organizational structure. This will enable information to be delivered faster, thus improving the efficiency of crisis management. The crisis warning system has a high demand for the ability to monitor and collect information for analysis and processing. It should set up a special monitoring team, using cutting-edge data analysis system to timely monitor information. Colleges and universities can collect the opinions from the network which reflects the dynamic and psychological state of the students. Teachers and members of crisis management agencies should also be integrated into the social circle of college students, overcoming the communication obstacles including age structure and identities, to have close and sincere interaction with students. This will ensure that feedback channels keep open, to strangle the problem for the first time it occurred, and to prevent its further evolution into large-scale malignant group events.

Yan and Xu (2008) hold the view that we should establish the mechanism of feed - forward Control in Crisis Management in Colleges and Universities. This mechanism is consists of two aspects that include early warning and pre-control. The purpose of the evaluation mechanism is to monitor the index system through computer to identify the probability of possible crisis, to provide the theoretical basis and practical support for the pre-warning and pre-control. Based on the information, the assessment mechanism can simulate possible crises in future, while the plan mechanism can further infer the type of crisis and the extent to which the victim may be involved. Similarly, the early warning mechanism is based on monitoring indicators to reflect the possible abnormal state of the object. Then, we can analyze the feedback in a timely manner, ready to take measures. Ordinarily, different color lights represent different degrees of warning signals. In this case, the pre-control mechanism then takes a mandatory measure according to different warning levels.

In addition, the crisis management of college group events requires a complete procedure and mechanism to effectively prevent and control. Given the concept and characteristics of college events and the life cycle of crisis, crisis management is divided into three stages including pre-crisis prevention, crisis control and post-crisis feedback. Mao (2005) also thinks that the school crisis management should be divided into three stages, which specifically refer to the prevention and preparation phase, the response stage, the crisis recovery, and the school evaluation stage.

Wang and Zhang (2006) add the crisis life cycle in it, which is also divided into four parts, it contains early warning system, control system, daily crisis management plan, crisis response training system, and form a comprehensive university crisis management system model with communication system.

In this unique era background of internet and facing the challenges and opportunities of information technology, the conventional crisis management can not fully adapt to the crisis management of college group events so that colleges and universities should innovate the crisis mechanism responsively. Scholar Gao (2011) poses that the field of network under the community, colleges and universities should deal with the following events in these following points. These are about constructing the network public opinion judgment module based on data engine technology, establishing online and offline combination of early warning response template, and building a communication mechanism with practical experience and cases. The methods way can promptly report the progress of crisis disposal, timely guide the direction of public opinion.

Under the conditions of the Internet, the external environment of the university is changing and the communication channel is uncontrollable. Scholar Li (2017) believes that colleges and universities should build a new media crisis mechanism, and strengthen crisis management and organizational construction. We

also should establish a sound crisis response mechanism, and set up the early warning mechanism, public opinion dynamic monitoring mechanism, communication mechanism, emergency management mechanism and rehabilitation mechanism, transfering them into the normalized management.

To summarize some scholars' views involving the campus crisis management and regarding the Internet context of the campus crisis management mechanism at this stage, we hold that the campus crisis management generally includes five processes the prevention mechanism, decision-making mechanism (including crisis management evaluation criteria), the implementation mechanism, control mechanism, feedback mechanism. Finally, we construct a new model of the cycle of dynamic mechanisms.

The establishment of crisis management mechanism in colleges and universities is not a simple temporary process. Mechanism is corresponded with the occurrence of the cycle of continuous and feedback, which can not be isolated. In fact, according to unlike objects and situations, college crisis usually comes from different incentives and has disparate characteristics. Whereas, the whole procedure is closely related to "pre-crisis, crisis, after the crisis" these three stages, as well as this cycle dynamic mechanism what is prevention mechanism, decision-making mechanism, the implementation mechanism, control mechanism and feedback mechanism. Therefore, the experience that college deals with the events can be used to solve the group events in the future. By accumulating the experience, the efficiency of solving new events will be improved significantly. This shows the importance of the dynamic mechanism of crisis management in college.

4. EXISTING PROBLEMS

By summarizing and analyzing, we can see that there is a few research of China's academic community about the structure of the Internet crisis management mechanism in recent years. In 2017, we use the fuzzy word "Internet campus crisis management" to search the relative paper by taking advantage of searching engine, the result is that there is only 13 scientific research. Because our academic circles start studying lately in this field, we only have a few in-depth researches that involves the impact of the crisis management in the information age. So, there are some existing deficiencies.

4.1 The Practice Is Quite Weak

In most of these studies, it remains some views of the content and predisposing factors of crisis management of group events. But few literatures discuss the crisis management and prevention mechanism, and even fewer views tend to explore practical cases and do tendency analysis. The lack of practical cases leads to the study always floats on the surface and it can not be applied to the realistic management. Therefore, we should focus more on the development of practical cases and specific measures in follow-up research.

4.2 The Model Is Not Persuasive

In general, the establishment of research models still remains in the theoretical stage. It involves less feasibility analysis, data analysis and process construction. Whereas, there are great differences in the specific circumstances of each university, such as size, educational orientation, geographical location, etc. In this case, we must choose the appropriate model to make improvements according to specific situations.

4.3 The Causes and Incentives of the Group Are Not Comprehensive

Most of the reasons remain in discussing social background and individual psychology, so we usually ignore another subject - University. It is not only one of the important incentives, but also have an important influence on the construction of the crisis management mechanism, the establishment of the student rights channel, and the correct guidance of the development of the group events. For the occurrences of events is multi-faceted, people tend to ignore the factors in the field of social psychology.

4.4 The Construction of the Crisis Mechanism Is Not Perfect

The subject of college group events is mostly student. As students tend to have a strong sense of rights and self-protection, so colleges and universities should pay attention to how to participate in the formulation of mechanisms and correctly guide students. The cycle of group events generally includes latency, brewing period, and the outbreak period. The patience channel can greatly reduce the probability of group events occurrence so we should successfully dredge in the brewing period.

4.5 The Characteristics of Background of the Times Are Not Strong and Obvious

In the context of the Internet, students tend to use some social software, virtual communities and other network channels to express the demands. Using the web, students can get a wide range of messages and express their opinions and emotions. As a result of the polarization of the group, they are also very easy to be controlled by public opinion, and then add to the condemnation of the team. In this condition, schools should establish a network media crisis communication mechanism to timely dock students' demands, to solve students' doubts, and to complete the feedback process. Crisis management team members and ordinary teachers should join some hot communities in the social circles of the students, penetrating in student's daily life, to timely understand student dynamics and ideological

changes. Thus, students' thoughts can be timely shown and guided, so that we can greatly reduce the chance of campus events.

CONCLUSION

Internet of the university crisis management is a "double-edged sword", for it not only can correctly guide the ideological thinking and take preventive measures, but also can aggravate the crisis caused by group events. Colleges and universities should be objective and dialectical to combine the Internet and crisis management mechanism, to grasp the sensitive relationship between the group events and the new characteristics of the network emerging with the times. In the continuing study of researchers, researcher should develop new theories and models. If we have a certain prediction of the occurrence and use practical cases to build the model, we will be able to adopt a more systematic crisis management mechanism to prevent and avoid college group events.

REFERENCES

Sunstein, C. R. (2010). *Going to extremes: How like minds unite and divide* (B. B. Guo, Trans., p.2). Beijing: Xinhua Press.

Gao, F. T. (2011). Emergency management of the emergent mass incidents in universities under the network vision. *China Emergency Management of Higher Education,* (Z1), 31-33.

Heath, R. (2001). *Crisis management* (pp.30-31). Beijing: CITIC Publishing House.

Ji, B. C. (2003). The crisis management of colleges and universities from the prevention and control of SARS. *Research on Higher Education in China,* (8).

Li, K. Y. (2010). The crisis of our country causes. *J. China Higher Education,* (6).

Li, N. (2017). Research on university crisis management mechanism in the new media environment. *China Adult Education,* (05), 46-48.

Mao, J. Y. (2005). *School crisis management research* (Master thesis). East China Normal University.

Meng, L. (2012). Media coping strategies in crisis events. *Journal of South-Central University for Nationalities (Humanities and Social Sciences Edition), 32*(04), 97-99.

Peng, R. (2011). Research on the causes and process of college mass incidents in the context of network participation. *Heilongjiang Higher Education Research,* (10), 59-62.

Rosenthal, U., Charles, M. T., & Hart, P. T. (Eds.). (1989). *Coping with crises: The management of disasters, riots and terrorism.* Springfield: Charles C. Thomas.

Wang, C. L. (2010). Crisis coping mechanism of American university campus and its enlightenment. *China Higher Education Research,* (09), 37-39. doi:10.16298/j.cnki.1004-3667.2010.09.013

Wang, Y., & Zhang, T. (2006). Research on the crisis management mechanism of Chinese universities. *Educational Science,* (02), 40-43.

Ya, Y. J., & Xu, G. Z. (2008). Feedforward control of crisis management in colleges and universities. *Future and Development, 29*(12), 38-42.

Ye, J. F. (2004). Establish and improve the coping mechanism of emergencies in colleges and universities. *Marx Doctrine and Reality,* (1), 78-81.