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The Influence Mechanism of Social Media Users' Group Emotion on The Evolution of Public Opinion: An Analysis of The Moderating Effect of Social Presence

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1. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Social networking platforms have become one of the leading media for people to express their feelings express their views, and transmit information [1]. More and more users tend to seek emotional support on social media, resulting in public opinion becoming more and more difficult to control. Social public opinion is the sum of users' views, attitudes, and emotions on the same topic [2]. Users' different views, opinions, and emotions on the topic are essential factors that promote the evolution of public opinion. Many users' user-generated content and information dissemination behaviors on specific topics drive the public social sentiment. In addition, users' group emotion plays a vital role in the evolution of public opinion. Online social media accelerates the spread of users' emotions and the evolution of public opinion [3]. The role of users' group emotions in promoting the evolution of public opinion has gradually attracted the attention of scholars. At present, research on the relationship between users' group emotion and public opinion evolution primarily focus on the perspective of specific public opinion events and discuss the development trend of users' group emotion change, user-generated content behavior, and information dissemination behavior in the evolution of public opinion [4]. However, how social media users' group emotion promotes the generation and evolution of public social sentiment remains clarified. Whether users' group emotion intensity and extreme emotion will promote or inhibit the evolution of public opinion is still unclear. In addition, in online virtual communities, the stimulating effect of group emotion on user behavior under different social presence environments is quite different [5]. Therefore, the influence of social presence on the relationship between group emotion and public opinion evolution remains confirmed.

Therefore, we will investigate the influence mechanism of users' group emotion on the evolution of public opinion. We focus on the following questions: (1) How the users' group emotion affects the evolution of public opinion; (2) what role does social presence play between users' group emotion and public opinion.

2. THEORY AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Based on Affective Events Theory (AET) and Social Presence Theory (SPT), we construct the research model of the influencing mechanism of social media users' group emotions on the evolution of public opinion. The model shown in Figure 1.

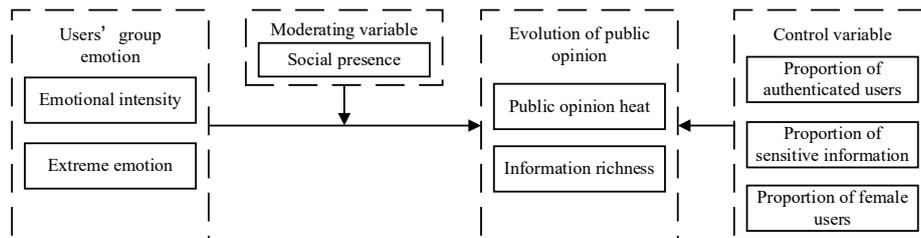


Figure 1. Research model

The micro hotspot research institute provides the data used in cooperation. We use the emotion dictionary to calculate

the specific emotion value of the text, including positive emotion value and negative emotion value. The number of fans, microblogs, forwards, comments, and likes will be taken as the quantitative analysis indicators of social presence to calculate the level of users' social presence [6, 7].

3. RESULTS AND MAJOR FINDINGS

We gained some valuable findings: (1) group users' emotional intensity and extreme emotion have a significant positive impact on the evolution of public opinion. (2) social presence positively moderates role in the relationship between affective intensity and public opinion evolution. (3) social presence negatively regulates the relationship between extreme emotion and public opinion evolution.

4. CONTRIBUTIONS

We confirm the action-influencing mechanism of users' group emotions on the evolution of public opinion and the moderating role of social presence. Our research provides a new perspective and theoretical reference for further research on the evolution of public opinion. From this perspective of Practice, the public opinion management department can identify extreme users according to the polarity and intensity of emotion and dynamically adjust the public opinion governance scheme, guiding users with negative emotional tendencies. Furthermore, the results provide decision support for social media to formulate differentiated service strategies and public opinion information management and control strategies. Social media can increase the push of neutral emotional information and reduce the frequency of extreme adverse events for emotional users.

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