

# Construction of Discourse System of Mainstream Value Dissemination in Network Culture Circle - Taking Zhihu as an Example

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**Abstract:** With the advent of the all-media era, the network platform represented by Zhihu has spawned a large number of various types of network culture groups. This kind of network community built based on empathy, preferences and virtual symbols has instability, lack of identity authentication and information verification channels, lack of interaction with social information systems, and become a stronghold for the breeding and dissemination of subcultures and non-mainstream values. Taking Zhihu as a typical example, it is a new topic for the current youth leadership to study how to integrate into the network cultural circle group to communicate and interact with contemporary youth, consolidate the discourse system of mainstream value communication in the network cultural circle group, and enhance the leading force of mainstream values in the network cultural circle group. By studying the network culture circle group constructed by Zhihu as the field, this paper concludes that the network culture circle group relies on interest bias, communication needs and information sharing, and its discourse power is both grassroots and polarized, and the question-answering norm and content text mode are conducive to discourse absorption and diffusion. The rise and development of Zhihu reflects the changes in young people's concerns and value confusion. The polarization of discourse power and the emergence of grassroots opinion leaders should strengthen the pertinence of the dissemination of mainstream value of inspiration, and the surging of youth subculture should enhance the affinity of mainstream value dissemination.

**Key words:** Network Culture Circle Group;

## Zhihu; Mainstream Value Dissemination; Discourse System

Netizens who gather under the influence of empathy or identity, through Zhihu, Douban, Weibo, Tieba, various forums, Bilibili, iQiyi, Youku and other interactive video websites as social platform connection media, have given birth to a new model of youth network life - network culture circle group. The aggregation of members presents a chain structure, and the interaction and communication among internal members presents a network structure. The diffusion of group discourse in the network circle is a leapfrog communication, and its influence increases exponentially, easily forming a multi-level effect, becoming the main channel for the "Generation Z" youth to obtain and export information. However, the invisibility of the network increases its structural instability, making it lack of information authentication and interaction channels. The lack of interaction with the social information system has become a stronghold for the breeding and dissemination of subcultures and non-mainstream values. However, the invisibility of the network increases its structural instability, making it lack of information authentication and interaction channels. The lack of interaction with the social information system has become a stronghold for the breeding and dissemination of subcultures and non-mainstream values, and even the main battlefield in the ideological field. Among many network media platforms, Tianya, Douban and Zhihu tend to disseminate information, share views and answer knowledge, especially Zhihu, which exchanges and dialogues based on users' questions and answers, focuses on the sharing and dissemination of knowledge and information. Zhihu is an online platform for Internet users to exchange and interact in the form of questions

and answers. Founded in 2011, Zhihu is the largest knowledge-sharing community in China, and its initial user composition shows an elite character. In March 2013, Zhihu officially opened its registration to the public. According to the data of Zhihu official and Minke research, from the official age and education background: The users of Zhihu are mainly the backbone of society. Teenagers under the age of 24 and young people between 25 and 35 account for 22% and 61% respectively, the proportion of people with high education accounts for 80.1%, the proportion of people with a master's degree or above is higher than the overall level, and nearly 20% of users have overseas study experience. Zhihu users mainly come from coastal economically developed areas, concentrated in first-tier cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, and have higher average education, which is much higher than other communities such as Weibo and Douban. In other words, Zhihu is the young netizens with high education and high professional background, who carry out multi-angle and deep-level opinions on multiple issues. This kind of concentrated collision of views not only spreads information and generates influential discourse, but even realizes cross-circle dissemination outside the network circle group, and subtly spreads various values in a way that becomes a hot spot and attracts attention. Taking Zhihu as an example, the research on how to integrate into the network culture group to communicate and interact with contemporary youth, close the discourse system of ideological and political education in the network culture group, enhance the leading power of mainstream values in the network culture group, and firmly grasp the discourse power of the network culture group is a new topic of ideological and political education research in colleges and universities.

## **1. The Discourse System of Network Culture Circle Group**

### **1.1 Interest Bias, Communication Needs and Information Sharing are the Premise of Youth Cohesion**

Community network groups are characterized by the formation of community-type network platform fields, such as Zhihu, Douban, Tianya Forum, etc. Zhihu is a trivia type of software

where users can ask any question and get answers from other users. Zhihu meets the requirements of the network circle group to share information. After users enter the platform, they can either search in the hot list or click on the search directly, and search related topics according to their interests and hobbies. After entering the topic, spectators or exchanges are carried out, and then discourse transmission behavior occurs. As a content platform, Zhihu's discourse communication system presents a pyramid-type communication structure, that is, opinion leaders -- core members -- general members, and the discourse core is in the hands of a small number of people with strong professionalism or special status, who are good at answering questions and are the big V in the community. The content of the topic concerned by the youth is presented, which realizes the attraction of the topic setting. Strong homogeneity attracts some young netizens with similar characteristics to gather in Zhihu. This aggregation path based on chain structure and identification path based on circle structure make Zhihu become a huge discourse field.

### **1.2 The Right to Speak Shows Grassroots and Power Polarization**

In the network circle group represented by Zhihu, the right to speak is not as threshold as the generation of discourse environment. The formation of the right to speak depends more on the special identity of a subject or long-term reputation accumulation, valuable views and ideas supported and responded by the group. These discourse subjects become opinion leaders, and their activity and influence enable them to have the power to screen and process the information disseminated, and even further implant their own views and opinions, spread and recognize within the circle, and consolidate the right to speak. This kind of superposition of discourse power is more likely to lead to power polarization and group polarization. The right of speech in Zhihu comes from the degree of involvement in a certain field, and the reserve of knowledge determines the status of circle group. Although the network circle group is engaged in intense thinking collision and discussion at all times, the dominant power of a certain issue is often in the hands of opinion leaders. They use their rich knowledge reserve and elaborate group language processing to

convey and strengthen the value recognition in the core meaning of a certain topic. The core members further strengthen the heat and attention of the content, and promote the topic to become the recommended list on the home page of Zhihu, successfully realizing the "circle" output of this topic. Even though this communication mechanism is still on the Zhihu platform, different cultures still achieve effective out-of-circle communication.

### **1.3 Question-and-Answer Norms and Content Text Patterns are Conducive to Discourse Absorption and Diffusion**

Seeking knowledge is the most urgent demand of young people in the network living space. The setting of question-and-answer discourse is precisely in line with the mentality of young people, and it is easier to be accepted by young people than the discourse mode of one-way indoctrination and transmission. The field of discourse transmission reflects the young netizens' love and pursuit of network culture, popular culture and network buzzwords. The discourse text of the network circle group shows the characteristics of individuality and humor, which is loved and resonated by the young people. Seemingly teasing, in fact, is a reconciliation with life. Deconstruction of language has even become an important feature of the discourse texts of Generation Z youth. This kind of discourse style showing the inner value proposition makes the communication content spread rapidly, and the effect is doubled. Zhihu is a question-and-answer knowledge dissemination network community, and question-and-answer dialogue is its basic discourse paradigm. Question and answer is the most common discourse paradigm in Zhihu. The questions raised by users determine the content orientation of Zhihu to a certain extent, and the answers to the corresponding questions are the concentrated display of a certain value. It can be said that this kind of question and answer text paradigm is the most accurate way of information transmission and value presentation. The content generation and screening mechanism of Zhihu is equivalent to its discourse construction mechanism. Asking a good question in the right way, following the principles of conciseness, co-editing, and optimizing truth, can deliver accurate and effective information and get useful answers. The principle of Zhihu's answer is true and

detailed, and does not allow personal attacks, slander and malicious harassment. Zhihu has set up a mechanism that allows all users to vote on the quality and value of the answers. This way, netizens will also participate in the discourse dissemination, which will promote some information that attracts attention, has strong resonance and is of high quality to stand out, and form a very effective information dissemination and strengthening mechanism. However, powerful discourse communication platforms also lead to excessive concentration of discourse power, disharmonious voices in topic content and dialogue mechanism, and inevitable competition for discourse power, even extending to the real world interests. Questions and answers focus on results, often ignoring important issues such as value orientation. Big V with excellent text and humorous language stand out on Zhihu platform. Their sharp and philosophical language has won great recognition among young netizens, and the innovation of discourse content has further expanded their influence.

## **2. Zhihu's Enlightenment to the Construction of the Discourse System of Ideological and Political Education in the Network Culture Circle**

### **2.1 Respond to Youth Concerns, Take the Initiative to Set Issues**

The network platform is not only the gathering place of youth, but also the barometer of youth. The big data of the network platform shows that the problems of employment, marriage and dating are the themes of The Times that contemporary young people pay attention to. The hot spots in Zhihu not only have the characteristics of The Times, but also present the mentality of contemporary youth. Take the initiative to respond to issues in the network culture circle, and strengthen the guiding effect of values through the release and transmission of information and the agitation and collision of views. Zhihu is the vane of contemporary young people's concern, such as "stable work in the third and fourth tier cities, or to the first and second tier cities to start a business", "whether we rent or buy a house", "can not establish close contact with others" and so on, these issues show the confusion and concern of contemporary Chinese youth. Educators should take the initiative to enter the network cultural

circle formed in Zhihu, move ideological and political education from the classroom to the network, constantly explore the use of the Internet, actively respond to youth problems, take the initiative to set thought-leading issues, trigger empathy among young people, give discourse construction and dissemination to young people, trigger young Internet users to participate in discussions, and make the dissemination of mainstream values "alive".

## **2.2 Preset Opinion Leaders, Innovative Ways of Discourse**

The network culture circle group gathers a large number of young people, who pay attention to themselves and expect identification, pay special attention to personal expression in the circle group, and gain recognition within the group by mastering the right to speak. They often take the lead in speaking and strengthening their voices to obtain the right to speak, and the spread of false information and blind obedience to extreme network language also offset the effectiveness of mainstream value transmission. In the network culture circle group, take the initiative to break the traditional ideological and political education cognition, actively immerse in the active network platform of young people, break through the cognitive psychology of young people, create a friendly and humorous image, cultivate conscious, thoughtful and good at discourse young people, play the role of peers, and actively spread positive energy. In addition, it is necessary to respect the youth to construct their own subjectivity and innovate from the content and form of discourse. The setting of discourse texts captures the psychological needs of young people, responds to the diversity of values, and spreads them in ways that are easy to be accepted by young people, such as ease, humor, self-deconstruction and self-deprecation. The content pays attention to the ideological and knowledge connotation, and pays attention to the use of network language. The form of communication is not limited to question and answer form, short video, live question and answer can be used to convey the positive social energy of young people's attention.

## **2.3 Strengthen the Attention of the Circle and Improve the Ability of Public Opinion**

The Internet is a double-edged sword. The

complex communication environment of the Internet leads to various voices and ideas being accepted by young people. Because of its special aggregation path and specific behavior field, the network culture circle itself has strong external barrier. Grassroots action on network platforms has enhanced the participation of ordinary people in social governance, but it has also become an environment for the abuse of online discourse power and the birth of online violence. We will strengthen information supervision, strengthen the ability to respond to emergencies, and strengthen the level of channelling popular public opinion. Opinion leaders in the circle should be able to carry out positive public opinion guidance, take the lead in analyzing advantages and disadvantages, and authoritative institutions should timely release the truth and grasp the initiative of public opinion. Preset opinion leaders should play a role, take the initiative, voice rationally, and play the role of "stabilizer" within the circle. Improve the ability of young people to screen online public opinion information and respond to public opinion, and strive to build the majority of young Internet users into a positive mainstream voice and scientific and rational guidance of the "information source". Online platforms shall hold accountable organizations or individuals that publish online false information and sensitive remarks according to law and regulations.

## **2.4 Equal Communication and Communication to Enhance Discourse Affinity**

Young people, as objects to be guided, need educators to keep pace with The Times and find a balance between the seriousness of discourse and attractiveness. In terms of discourse tension, it is necessary to meet the needs of young people's growth and meet their expectations for knowledge acquisition. E-sports culture, two-dimension culture, rice circle culture, Versailles literature and other cultural forms that have gained a large number of fans among young people provide rich reference materials for ideological and political education. The sense of gain, achievement, honor and satisfaction are almost indispensable in the growth of young people, and the youth subculture provides the soil of psychological compensation for young people. Mainstream value dissemination can refer to the

construction mode of youth subculture, start from the subtle point, let young people experience feelings, and realize the physical and mental touch and awakening. Grasp the existing cultural system and discourse system of young people, connect the mainstream values, find a common language, apply innovative consciousness to transform the interpretation of young people's subculture, improve the cultural level on the basis of communication and interaction, and then improve young people's cognition."Generation Z" has a very high demand for the right to speak, and a strong sense of rights protection. The pursuit of individuality, freedom and equality is a distinctive feature given to contemporary youth by The Times. When accepting the dissemination of values, he refuses to indoctrination and "one-word speech", preferring equal communication and discussion. We should make good use of the bottom happiness logic of young people, pursue a simple emotional release, and let young people accept guidance and infection in a happy mood.

Zhihu has been recognized by the society for its precise positioning, attention to the youth, and strong plasticity of knowledge transmission. Its wide popularity among young people has, to some extent, fulfilled the needs of young people's expression and right of speech. The relationship between subject and object created by Zhihu and the elements of the communication field are of great reference significance for the ideological and political education of young people in the network cultural circle. To construct the discourse system of mainstream value communication, we must: from the perspective of subject-object relationship orientation, firmly grasp the discourse power of mainstream value communication, cultivate the backbone of discourse power, establish a circle group guidance mechanism, and fix the discourse power of mainstream value; Grasp the law of communication, create the elements of the circle and group scene, seize the sustainable and dominant communication nodes, and enhance the effective discourse path of mainstream value communication; Mainstream value dissemination requires discourse communicators to form a peer relationship with young people, be able to laugh at themselves and dispel them, carry out criticism and

self-criticism, engage in equal activities with young people, enhance the persuasiveness and affinity of discourse content, and lead the topic of the circle in a "soft" way to truly win the recognition of young people.

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