

Analysis of Discourse Expression among Youth Groups in the New Network Media Environment and Its Application in Ideological Education for College Students

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Abstract: This study aims to provide references for college students' ideological education by analyzing the discourse information of college students on the Xiaohongshu platform. The research conclusions indicate that the ideological cognition of contemporary college students presents the characteristic of "coexistence of high attention and in-depth confusion". Based on this, a four-dimensional innovative system of students' ideological education featuring "resource supply - interaction mechanism - technical empowerment - emotional support" is proposed, offering a replicable practical path to address the difficulties in college students' ideological education.

Keywords: Youth Group; Discourse Expression; Ideological Education for College Students; Xiaohongshu

1. Introduction

In the omnichannel media era, the interaction and convergence between physical space and cyberspace have forged a new contextual expression context [1]. Xiaohongshu, as a social application deeply loved by college students, contains a wealth of discourse information from them. This study aims to capture comment data under specific keywords related to college students on Xiaohongshu, deeply analyze their emotional states and discourse expression characteristics, and provide valuable references and insights for ideological education in universities.

2. Analysis of Emotional State and Discourse Expression Characteristics in the Daily Life Dimension

2.1 Research Methods

This study selected 16 keywords across 6 dimensions: identity (college student, freshman), relationships (dormitory relationships, interpersonal relationships, teacher-student relationships, romantic relationships), learning (study plans, daily courses, self-study), practice (internship, practice),

entertainment (gaming, tourism, check-ins), and environment (campus environment, dormitory conditions). Using web scraping technology, relevant comment data from Xiaohongshu was obtained. After equalizing the proportion based on the above keyword classification, the time period from June 9, 2022, to February 1, 2025, was selected, resulting in the collection of 1487 relevant comment data points from Xiaohongshu. Based on this, natural language processing and sentiment analysis techniques were used to process and analyze the data, drawing sentiment distribution histograms, positive/negative comment ratio charts, word clouds, and word frequency charts to visually present the emotional states and discourse expression characteristics of college students.

2.2 Analysis of College Students' Emotional State

2.2.1 Overall sentiment distribution

From the sentiment distribution histogram, the sentiment scores of college students show a certain distribution characteristic. Among them, the number of sentiment scores in the 0-0.2 (extremely negative) and 0.8-1 (extremely positive) intervals is relatively small, while the number in the 0.4-0.6 (neutral) interval is larger. This indicates that the overall emotional state of college students is relatively stable, and extreme emotional expressions are not dominant. However, the total proportion of extreme emotional expressions reaches 31.67%, which is still an issue worthy of attention. (As shown in figure 1)

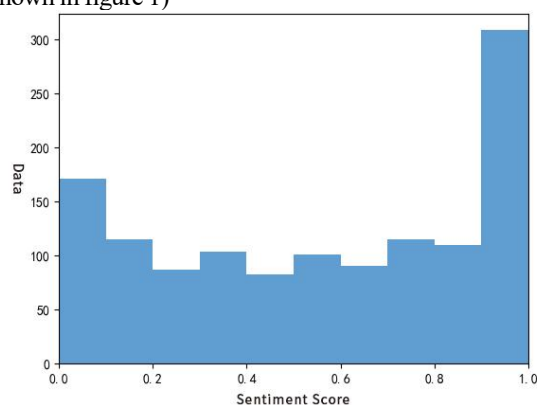


Figure 1. Sentiment Score Histogram

2.2.2 Proportion of positive and negative sentiments

The positive and negative comment ratio chart shows that positive comments account for 55.52%, and negative comments account for 44.48%. This indicates that in the discourse expressions of college students on Xiaohongshu, positive emotions slightly outweigh negative ones, but the presence of negative emotions cannot be ignored. (As shown in figure 2)

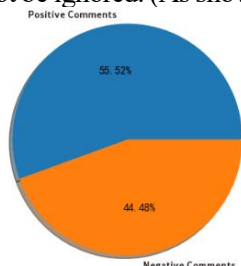


Figure 2. Chart of the Proportion of Positive and Negative Comments

2.2.3 Emotional differences under different topics

The positive comment word cloud shows high-frequency words commonly used by college students in positive comments, including "game, tourism, check-in," etc., such as: "Playing games with dorm mates is really super fun!" "Recently discovered some very beautiful check-in spots, went with friends, feeling life is wonderful. Just like in college, we explore new places together, leaving beautiful memories." This reflects that college students can gain more pleasure from entertainment and leisure activities.

The negative comment word cloud shows high-frequency words commonly used by college students in negative comments, indicating that in topics like dormitory relationships and interpersonal relationships, the expression of negative emotions is relatively more frequent, such as: "There are many conflicts among people in the dormitory. Once, I had a quarrel with a roommate over a small matter, and the other roommates all sided with them, making me feel very isolated." "Feeling isolated by dorm mates, they always deliberately avoid me and don't talk to me." (As shown in figure 3, 4)



Figure 3. Negative Comment Word Cloud



Figure 4. Positive Comment Word Cloud

2.2.4 Main topics of concern

The overall word frequency chart shows the distribution of all high-frequency words in college students' comments. From the chart, it can be seen that words like "dormitory," "internship," "study," "feel" appear with high frequency, reflecting the main topics college students focus on in their comments. Among them, the word "dormitory" appears with a frequency of about 10.53% of the total high-frequency word occurrences, indicating a high level of attention to aspects related to dormitory life, often involving dormitory relationships, environment, etc.; "internship" appears with a frequency of about 7.24%, indicating the importance college students place on internship experiences, opportunities, and related topics; "study" appears with a frequency of about 5.92%, showing that study remains one of the core daily concerns for college students, covering course learning, study methods, etc.; "feel" appears with a frequency of about 6.1%, reflecting that college students tend to express their personal feelings and emotional experiences in comments. (As shown in figure 5)

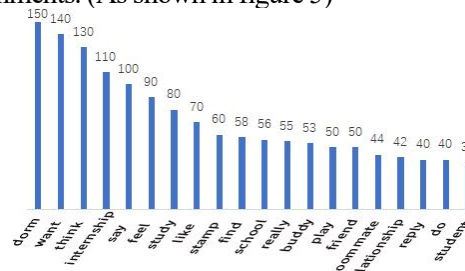


Figure 5. Comment Word Frequency Chart

2.3 Analysis of College Students' Discourse Expression Characteristics

2.3.1 Sentiment distribution analysis

From the sentiment distribution histogram, it can be seen that the emotional expression of college students shows a tendency towards sensitivity, which is related to their psychological characteristics. They are at an important stage in life, facing pressures

from academics, employment, interpersonal relationships, etc., and are prone to negative emotional reactions.

2.3.2 High-frequency word analysis

From the overall word frequency chart and word clouds, it can be seen that words like "dormitory," "feel," "study," "internship" appear frequently. This reflects that college students' discourse on Xiaohongshu mainly revolves around dormitory life, personal feelings, study and internships, embodying the diversity of topics they focus on in comments. These topics are also the main issues and challenges college students face in their university life, and constitute an important part of their emotional expression.

2.3.3 Discourse content classification

Life Category: Heavily involves details of dormitory life, such as dormitory conditions, roommate relationships, etc. For example, phrases like "The hair dryer in the dorm is always broken," "Roommates are too noisy, affecting rest," "They are always being sarcastic towards me, really annoying," "I'm only a freshman and already can't stand the dorm relationships, feeling heavy and resistant as soon as I return to the dorm," "University collective dormitories are really an unfriendly design," etc. These reflect college students' attention to and demands for dormitory life.

Study Category: Includes study plans, course difficulty, self-study situations, etc. Such as "Made a new study plan today," "This course is too difficult, completely incomprehensible," "Don't know how to schedule review time and homework for the day," "I want to ask about making plans, what to do when the previous step isn't finished and the next goal arrives," etc., reflecting the thoughts and confusion of college students during the learning process.

Social Category: Mainly revolves around interpersonal relationships, such as dormitory relationships, friend relationships, romantic relationships, etc. Phrases like "Had a conflict with my roommate, feeling really upset," "Being in love is so happy," "When will I ever learn the lesson of interpersonal relationships," "It's not that I want to complain about my roommates, in my view they don't have major problems either, it's just that we are not the same type of people, forcing myself to chat about their things makes me so tired," etc., showcase the emotional experiences of college students in social aspects.

Entertainment Category: Involves entertainment activities like gaming, tourism, check-ins, etc. Expressions like "I checked in at the popular online scenic spot last weekend and had a great time," "This

game is too fun," "Want to play script murder," "Really want to go to these places with natural scenery," "Can two people play escape room?" etc., reflect college students' sharing of their entertainment life.

2.3.4 Discourse style characteristics

College students' discourse expression exhibits distinct individuality and contemporary characteristics. Si Haonan (2024) argues that the Generation Z youth group tends to obtain information and express their own views through the internet, and forms a "tribalized" online discourse expression with group characteristics [2]. Ren Juan et al. (2017) found that young people have created various new words and new discourse expressions through new media platforms, such as internet buzzwords, folk art, and humorous art [3]. Their language is concise and vivid, with a tendency to employ internet buzzwords and emoticons for emotional communication. On occasion, their discursive practices within the cyberspatial domain demonstrate the features of textual collage, cultural appropriation, and vernacular authenticity [4]. Emojis, as well as internet neologisms such as "juéjuézi" (a colloquial term of praise, literally meaning "extremely outstanding" and functionally equivalent to "awesome" or "fantastic" in English) and "yyds" (an acronym derived from the Chinese phrase "yǒng yuǎn de shén," which translates to "eternally awesome" or "the absolute best" in English), frequently appear in their comments. Such linguistic choices effectively enhance the interestingness and approachability of their discourse.

3. Analysis of Emotional State and Discourse Expression Characteristics in the Ideological Value Dimension

3.1 Research Methods

This study selects 15 hot topics categorized into three dimensions: individual (values, self-discipline, politics, rationality, self), social (sense of responsibility, social stratification, digitalization, AI/artificial intelligence, family-school relations), and national (China, international affairs, major power, nationality, development). Relevant comment data from Xiaohongshu is collected through web scraping technology to explore college students' comment tendencies regarding these topics on the online platform.

According to the above keyword classification, after equalizing the proportion, the time period from April 28, 2022, to March 28, 2025, was selected, resulting in the acquisition of 1870 relevant comment data

points from Xiaohongshu. Based on this, natural language processing and sentiment analysis techniques were used to process and analyze the data, drawing sentiment distribution histograms, positive/negative comment ratio charts, word clouds, etc., to visually present the emotional state of college students across the individual, social, and national dimensions and their discussion characteristics on ideological topics on social platforms.

3.2 Sentiment Analysis Results

3.2.1 Sentiment distribution situation

From the pie chart of "Proportion of Positive and Negative Comments", it can be seen that negative comments account for 31.32%, while positive comments reach 68.68%. This indicates that on the Xiaohongshu platform, positive emotions dominate college students' discussions on ideological topics. It shows that most students hold a generally positive and affirming attitude towards discussions on ideological issues or related learning topics, and can gain certain cognitive achievements and value recognition in the learning process. (As shown in figure 6)

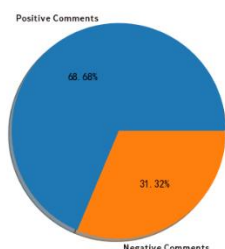


Figure 6. Chart of the Proportion of Positive and Negative Comments

3.2.2 Sentiment score histogram

The "Sentiment Score Histogram" shows the distribution of sentiment scores. The horizontal axis represents the sentiment score, ranging from 0.0 to 1.0, reflecting the quantitative value of the emotional tendency towards related content; the vertical axis represents the quantity, i.e., the number of comments within the corresponding sentiment score interval.

As can be seen from the figure, the number of comments is the highest (exceeding 700) in the interval where the sentiment score is close to 1.0, indicating that most comments have a relatively positive sentiment tendency and fall into the high sentiment score range. There is also a certain number of comments (nearly 200) around a sentiment score of 0.0, while the number of comments in other sentiment score intervals (e.g., around 0.2, 0.4, 0.6, and 0.8) is relatively small and distributed scattered. Overall, this chart shows the distribution of comment sentiment scores, reflecting the dominant proportion of comments with positive emotions in the data. (As

shown in figure 7)

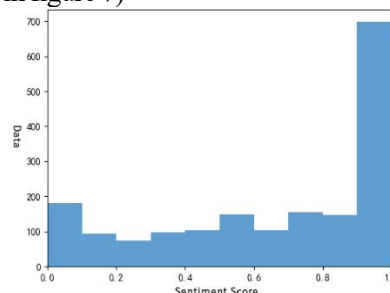


Figure 7. Sentiment Score Histogram

3.3 Word Frequency Analysis Results

3.3.1 Positive comment word cloud

In the "Positive Comment Word Cloud," words such as "ability," "values," "society," "China," "America" appear. This indicates that in positive discussions, college students pay more attention to their own ability building and the formation of correct values, and also show concern for the connection between their own learning growth and national, social, and international current affairs. It reflects that during the process of receiving ideological education, they are actively thinking about issues related to personal growth and social value realization. At the same time, words like "good," "like" also appear with a certain frequency, indicating that college students show positive psychological experiences and cognitive feelings towards thinking about the individual, social, and national levels. (As shown in figure 8)



Figure 8. Positive Comment Word Cloud

3.3.2 Negative comment word cloud

In the "Word Cloud of Negative Comments", terms such as "cannot", "problem", "self-discipline", "sense of responsibility", "EU (European Union)", and "Han nationality" are prominently featured. Combined with the contextual analysis, it can be inferred that when expressing negative emotions, college students may encounter certain obstacles in the process of ideological cognition. Specifically, they experience confusion and anxiety regarding personal self-discipline requirements, hold negative evaluations and concerns about the "sense of

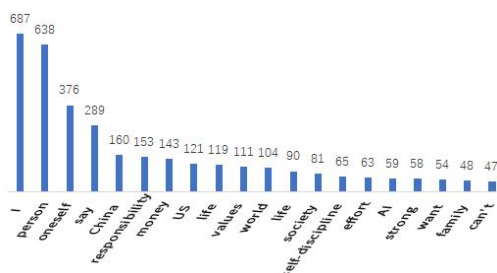


Figure 10. Comment Word Frequency Chart

3.4 Comprehensive Analysis

Based on the cross-validation of sentiment analysis and word frequency data, college students' discussions on ideological topics on Xiaohongshu cover multiple aspects such as personal growth and social values. The internet, with its decentralized discursive model, has impacted the traditional discourse power system, emerged as a platform for demonstrating the values of subgroups, and facilitated the development of subcultures, particularly youth subcultures [5]. They actively focus on their own ability building and values shaping, while also facing certain cognitive dilemmas, showing the characteristics of "intertwined growth concerns and social participation, coexisting value identification and cognitive anxiety." Among relevant comments, the proportion of positive comments is relatively high, but negative comments are not uncommon. For example, under the topic of "rural revitalization," some students share positive content about perceiving family and country feelings through volunteer teaching experiences, while others express confusion about "how to balance personal development and grassroots dedication."

College students' discussions on ideological values on Xiaohongshu reflect the structural contradictions in current ideological education for students: the traditional one-way indoctrination model is difficult to match Generation Z's demand characteristics of "situational learning + real-time interaction," leading to a disconnect between theoretical cognition and behavioral transformation. It indicates that in practical ideological education, schools and families have not fully helped young students resolve their cognitive dilemmas and value conflicts regarding individuals, society, and the country. Practical ideological education for students still needs active improvement, such as the depth and breadth of teaching content, and value guidance combined with growth and daily life. Meanwhile, online social platforms should conduct supervision, guidance, and regulation of discursive trends on the platforms, eradicate unhealthy tendencies in cyberspace, and

promote positive energy rooted in positive social values [6].

4. Suggestions for Improving the Teaching Methods of Students' Ideological Education

4.1 Build a Diversified and Mixed Resource Matrix

4.1.1 Development of scenario-based learning materials

To meet college students' diverse and real-time needs for ideological learning resources, schools and teachers can publish diversified, mixed learning resources on platforms such as Xiaohongshu. For example, create exquisite graphic notes to sort out core knowledge points like "ideal and belief" and "national conditions cognition"; record short videos to explain social hot topics, catering to students' fragmented learning needs. A case in point is the "Core Principles Talk Show" model, which transforms abstract theories into youth-friendly language-breaking down the concept of "a community with a shared future for mankind" into a short video titled "Seeing Great Power Responsibility from 'The Wandering Earth'" and uploading it to Xiaohongshu to stimulate college students' participatory appreciation. Establish an "open source library of ideological resources" and introduce enterprise collaborative innovation, such as cooperating with Tencent to develop the "Reform and Opening-Up Challenge Game," which deepens education on institutional confidence by simulating the decision-making process of special economic zone construction.

4.1.2 Demand-oriented resource adaptation

Proceeding from the perspectives of social hot issues, school news, and campus life that concern young students, we should seize favorable opportunities, encourage original content creation, and develop high-quality online cultural content [7]. Resource development must be closely linked to students' actual needs and learning scenarios. For instance, for course learning related to real life, provide materials such as past exam question analyses and key point summaries in the form of mind maps to help college students consolidate classroom learning outcomes, internalize correct ideological education viewpoints, and form a positive and scientific worldview, outlook on life, and values. To address the need to connect current learning with future careers, build an integrated content chain of "academic studies - occupation - career"-for example, launching a "Judicial Examination and Ideological Integration Course" that combines judicial examination

questions with the special topic of "comprehensive rule of law," turning exam preparation needs into value recognition. For practical needs, share learning cases related to "social responsibility," "rational cognition," and "social practice" to enable students to apply ideological knowledge to social reality. Given the many social challenges college students face—such as dormitory relationships, teacher-student relationships, and romantic relationships—colleges and universities should strengthen social education. Through social skills training, team-building activities, etc., cultivate students' communication skills, cooperation abilities, and interpersonal skills, and enhance their social adaptability.

4.2 Building a Two-Way Empowering Interactive Ecosystem

4.2.1 Platform-based teacher-student co-creation mechanism

Teachers can establish official accounts on Xiaohongshu to engage in interactive communication with students. A closed-loop system of "topic crowdfunding, content co-creation, and effect co-evaluation" should be built: relevant topics are released regularly to guide students in discussions and sharing their perspectives. Prompt responses and guidance should be provided to address students' questions and confusions, thereby strengthening teacher-student interaction and communication. Undertake precision-based screening and facilitate viewpoint contention with regard to heterogeneous information streams, and proactively transform young people's spontaneous cultural productive forces into controllable value cohesive force [8].

For instance, adopt the account operation model of "Voices of the New Era," launch monthly "Youth Insights" topic collections, and integrate outstanding submissions into the course case library. Implement a "dual-mentor" Q&A system, inviting outstanding figures from enterprises for joint tutoring. For example, JD Logistics cooperates with teachers and students of the supply chain major in universities to hold "story-sharing sessions by couriers", using cutting-edge industry cases to address practical perplexities regarding the "labor theory of value".

4.2.2 Socialized peer-led learning

Peer learning relationships are characterized by closeness and informality, which contributes to enhanced learning effectiveness. Thus, peer learning among students should be actively encouraged.

Develop a visual "Ideological Growth Map" system to enable students to share learning experiences and insights within groups. For example, build a "Red

Talent Growth System" that converts data from theoretical learning and volunteer services into shareable achievement badges, fostering social engagement and dissemination.

Cultivate student opinion leaders by selecting outstanding performers in ideological learning as "peer mentors." These mentors can share their learning methods and growth journeys on Xiaohongshu, leveraging the role of peer role models to stimulate other students' learning interest and enthusiasm. A case in point is organizing a "Post-2000s Propaganda Group" to interpret Chinese-style development through situational dramas, attracting a broad base of young students to participate in interactive learning.

4.3 Innovating Deeply Immersive Teaching Scenarios

4.3.1 Case workshop driven by real-world issues

Combine popular topics on Xiaohongshu and student-focused concerns to collect relevant cases and integrate them into ideological education. Develop a "Hot Event Decoding" course module: by analyzing issues such as "moral self-discipline" and "value rationality" in online hot events, guide students to reflect and discuss, enhancing their ability to apply knowledge to analyze and solve practical problems. For example, guide students to use classical principles to analyze the economic ethics behind "impulsive consumption"; establish a school-enterprise joint case center, such as co-building a "New E-commerce and Rural Revitalization" case library with e-commerce platforms like "Smzdm" and "Pinduoduo," using operational data to illustrate common prosperity practices.

4.3.2 Technology-enabled experience upgrade

Utilize multimedia technology to create vivid and engaging ideological education courseware and videos, capturing students' attention. Explore the use of virtual reality (VR) technology to create immersive learning scenarios, enhancing students' understanding and authentic perception of historical events, allowing them to experience content such as "cultural confidence" and "national development identity" firsthand.

For instance, set up a "VR + Red Education" teaching and research base, where students "travel back" to historical events through VR equipment—the immersive experience significantly improves educational effectiveness; develop an AI emotional companion system, such as establishing a "Ideological Tree Hole," where intelligent assistants identify students' confusions through NLP technology and automatically push customized

learning plans, helping students solve problems independently and improving the precision of ideological education.

4.4 Establishing an Emotion-Cognition Synergy Mechanism

4.4.1 Integration project of mental health and value guidance

In light of students' psychological issues that may be reflected in negative comments, organic integration of mental health education and ideological education should be achieved. Publish relevant mental health knowledge and cases on Xiaohongshu to guide students in properly handling pressures and confusions in study and life, fostering a positive mindset and promoting their all-round development. For example, develop a "Growth Pressure Transformation" course module and launch "Frustration Education Workshops," using Jiao Yulu's story of desert control to interpret the sense of responsibility of contemporary youth; build an all-weather support platform, such as opening a "Mind & Ideology" consulting account on Xiaohongshu, combining psychological counseling with value guidance to help students better alleviate daily psychological anxiety and confusion.

4.4.2 Data-driven dynamic optimization system

Establish an effective feedback mechanism to timely understand students' opinions and suggestions on ideological education. Collect students' feedback through Xiaohongshu's private messaging and comment functions, and promptly adjust teaching content and methods based on their questions and needs to improve the quality and effectiveness of ideological education.

For instance, build an "emotion-behavior" correlation analysis model, and adjust teaching content in a timely manner by monitoring changes in students' comment keywords (such as fluctuations in the mention rate of "involution"); implement an "annual education effect assessment," tracking improvement results from three dimensions: knowledge mastery, value recognition, and behavior transformation.

5. Conclusion

This study finds that contemporary college students' ideological cognition presents a prominent feature of "coexistence of high attention and in-depth confusion." Based on this, it is suggested to construct a four-dimensional innovation system of "resource supply - interaction mechanism - technology empowerment - emotional support": solve the

problem of knowledge alienation through a diversified mixed resource matrix, promote cognitive internalization with a two-way empowering ecosystem, enhance emotional resonance using immersive scenarios, and ultimately form a new paradigm of ideological education for students that conforms to the cognitive laws of digital natives. These practically verified improvement paths provide replicable solutions for solving difficult problems in ideological education.

Acknowledgments

This paper is a phased achievement of the 2024 research project on the work of the National Working Committee on Children and Women (NWCCW) in the context of online new media. (No. GGW-2024-C16).

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