

Research on Agenda Setting and Public Opinion Guidance of Social Security Events in the New Media Environment (Microblog)

-- Take "Juvenile Delinquency" as an Example

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ABSTRACT

Whether the issue setting of the media is correct or not plays a positive role in social construction. In the social security incidents in recent years, the withdrawal of cases due to the young age of the offenders has become a topic of intense discussion among the masses. This research intends to employ the content analysis method, in combination with the agenda-setting theory, to explore under this background how major new media platforms should correctly set issues, and evoke social attention and emphasis on such incidents. In the descriptions of these incidents, the emotional color is extremely intense, encompassing various emotions such as anger, disappointment, and regret. Driven by the dissemination of information, the correct setting of issues has indeed pushed all sectors of society to pay attention to such incidents and start calling on the government and legislative institutions to conduct a comprehensive review and significant reform of the relevant laws on juvenile delinquency. These calls not only come from the public but also from the families of the victims and various organizations from all walks of life, which is conducive to promoting social transformation and legal improvement through the guidance of public opinion, thereby achieving positive purposes.

KEYWORDS

Juvenile Delinquency; Issue Setting; Coding; Emotion; Public Opinion Communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

In December 2023, a father in Jingzhou, Hubei Province, posted that his 4-year-old daughter had been brutally killed by a boy under the age of 12, and there had been no progress in the case for more than a month. On January 25, 2024, the girl's father sent the "Decision to withdraw the case" provided by the police to the Southern Capital reporter, which showed that because the boy was less than 12 years old when he committed the crime, there was no punishment.

Capacity for responsibility, according to the criminal procedure law to dismiss the case. However, as soon as this incident was released, many official accounts and major v accounts on the Weibo platform published issues and carried out a lot of discussions. The uproar of public opinion made this incident reach a certain heat and height, and also aroused the public's attention to the juvenile crime incidents in social security incidents and the setting of the starting age of criminal responsibility stipulated by law. There are also cases in foreign countries where issues are spread through the media on platforms and then have far-reaching effects.

From another perspective, it can also be explained that the topic setting of the media still has the value judgment, orientation and demands of the media in the era of new media, which can guide the masses and platform users to spread and discuss a certain event or topic, which has a positive effect on social construction[1]. In the social security incidents such as this incident, only the juvenile delinquents have a "special" treatment, and the removal of the case because the offender is younger has become a hot topic among the masses. Therefore, this study also aims to use content analysis and agenda setting theory to explore how major new media platforms should correctly set up topics under this background, so as to play a correct role in guiding the ideological orientation and discussion of the masses, and at the same time to stand in the perspective of the masses, so as to arouse the attention of important departments on solving such juvenile crime incidents. Arouse the attention and attention of the society to such incidents.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Agenda-setting theory is one of the most fundamental theories in communication studies, first proposed by McCombs and Shaw. Its theoretical origins include two sources: Plato's Republic and Lippmann's Public Opinion. In Public Opinion, Lippmann, W. wrote, "The news media shape the images that we hold of the world," and he believed that "the subjective reality in our minds may be entirely different from the objective reality of the world[2]. We shall find that most of the time the press may not succeed in telling its readers what to think; But it is surprisingly successful at telling its readers what to think[3]". The theory also explains how news media tell the public what to think and how to think about certain issues. Scholars believe that mass media coverage of certain events and social issues at a certain stage can lead to widespread public concern and attention, making them the center of discussion in public opinion[4]. Meanwhile, some Chinese scholars argue that the central idea of agenda setting is that mass communication has the function of setting the "agenda" for the public. The media's news reporting and information dissemination activities give various "topics" different degrees of prominence in a way that influences people's judgments about the "big things" and their importance in the world around them[5]. Based on this, this more clearly points to the agenda-setting function and meaning of the medium. In this case, we can draw an analogy to mass communication. We can learn that mass media cannot present objective reality to the audience unchanged. On the contrary, mass communication can tell people what to think by adjusting the communication content, so that the audience can see mass communication and see the mimicry environment, thus affecting the audience. Hence, the theory of agenda-setting.

This theory has attracted much attention since it was put forward, and has been applied by many scholars in the study of many hot events. In general, the agenda-setting function is a linear process in three parts. The first step is to set the priorities of the issues to be discussed in the media - the media agenda. Secondly, the media agenda influences or interacts with public perception in some way, which is the public agenda. Finally, the public agenda in some ways influences what policymakers value, namely the policy agenda. This also proves the importance of the correct direction of public opinion.

Agenda-setting theory also involves the media ranking issues in order of importance[6], to influence the audience. In their book "Agenda-Setting: Mass Media and Public Opinion", McCombs and Shaw divide agenda-setting into two levels. The first level is the prominence shift, which is commonly referred to as traditional agenda-setting, which is classified as the outer agenda-setting part by the author. The second layer is the attribute significance transfer, that is, the attribute agenda setting, which is classified as the inner layer agenda setting part. Its existence itself is to tell people that there are attributes in all so-called information, and "attribute agenda" reveals that after people perceive the text information, there will be different combinations of elements, as well as the difference in proportion. Therefore, it can be found that when compiling the text, the writer will use different combinations of elements to form the impact on people. The third layer is the network agenda setting.

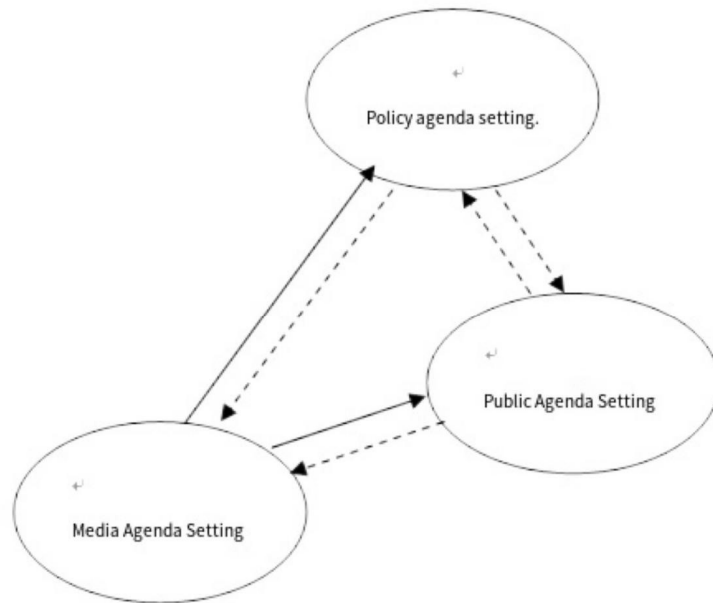


Figure 1. Agenda setting features a three-part linear process

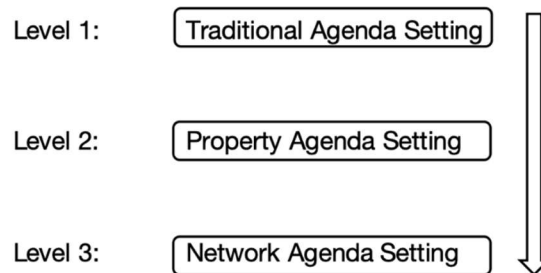


Figure 2. A three-part linear process of the agenda setting function

Based on this, agenda setting is also widely used in various fields to analyze various topics. For enterprises, negative reports on enterprises in the media can significantly affect the public's negative perception of the enterprises[7]. In the aspect of enterprise management, some "central issues" that represent the interests of the enterprise, are suitable for the development of the enterprise and are in line with national policies are set up in daily publicity reports and conveyed to the whole company through authoritative statements, so that employees can understand and understand the real situation of the enterprise or the industry, and clarify possible wrong public opinions, so as to create a good internal public opinion atmosphere of the enterprise[8]. In addition, it is also widely used in public opinion processing[9], research on cultural communication of Chengdu Universiade[10], even the study of Chinese policy from the perspective of time difference[11], The coverage is very broad. At present, I find that many scholars focus on the issues of crime and social security incidents, and adopt the theory of issue setting to analyze and study such incidents under the background of increasingly developed new media technologies. They believe that communication ethics, as an important content of journalism professionalism, is also facing the call for change, and crime news has changed from valuing truth, comprehensiveness and objectivity to paying equal attention to the ethical demands of "news facts" and "humanistic care"[12].

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Content Analysis

I used Nvivo12PLUS software to conduct qualitative analysis on the sample content of hot issues published by big v collected on Weibo. After the preliminary analysis and arrangement of the text materials, the next step is to encode the data using the method of grounded theory. For the coding of materials, through the induction and deduction of the text content, step by step clustering, that is, open coding, spindle coding and selective coding in turn, to establish the category and the relationship between them, and explore the influence of the topic setting of big v account on the communication of public opinion.

3.2. Word Frequency Analysis

Before encoding, I conducted word frequency query on the text data. After eliminating irrelevant words, the obtained high-frequency word cloud is shown in Figure 1. The larger the font size, the more times it is mentioned. As can be seen from the figure, the text content mainly highlights the issues about "age", "killing", "classmates", "juveniles" and "crimes". This shows that the hot issues of juvenile crime have been widely concerned in recent years, and malicious injuries such as the killing of peers by minors have gradually become a hot topic of discussion.



Figure 3. Word frequency of text

3.3. Coding Analysis

3.3.1. Reliability Test

Reliability is the test of document coding consistency, classification accuracy and method stability. In this study, I asked a coder to help me independently encode the same text materials, and then conducted coding consistency test through the "coding comparison function" in Nvivo12PLUS analysis software. We calculate the Kappa coefficient for each combination of nodes and files by Nvivo, and the coefficient results are 0.73. This value indicates that the two coders have a good

consistency in the score, and indicates that the coding process is consistent, and this coding has the necessary credibility and validity, which can be used for subsequent data analysis.

3.3.2. Coding Procedure

First of all, on the premise of retaining the meaning of the original materials as much as possible, I refined the text content into a relatively concise concept, and then categorized the concept. Through the analysis and comparison of concepts, I concentrated the same or similar concepts and unified them into the corresponding categories, so as to conclude a total of 15 categories.

On the basis of open coding, spindle coding is the integration of independent and decentralized open coding with unclear conceptual relations, and the internal relations at the initial category level are further analyzed. By clustering the category concepts generated in open coding, we mainly use the method of merging similar terms and coding with similar meanings, and finally get 5 main categories.

Selection coding refers to choosing a "core category" after systematic analysis of all the discovered concept categories, comparing and analyzing existing concept categories and concentrating on those codes related to core categories to find the core concepts. After gradually clustering the coding nodes, it is concluded that the interview content involves a core code, namely "hot spot propagation impact", and the coding table is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Coding table

core category	principal category	category	reference point
Hot spot propagation	content communication	12-year-old boy kills 4-year-old girl	1
		A 15-year-old boy was killed by a classmate	1
		A 16-year-old killing a classmate	1
	Legal reform	Lower the age of the minor Protection Act	3
		Push for repeal	2
		Additional act of fitness	1
	public awareness	Call for change	2
		Positive attention	2
		Rational analysis	1
	Emotional response	anger	5
		Calm emotions	1
		disappointment	2
		Feeling of regret	3
	Influence of public opinion	Increase exposure	1
		Provoke thought	4

3.3.3. Saturation Test

Theoretical saturation means that in the process of coding and analysis, new data no longer bring any new concepts or categories, and no more attributes and dimensions can be discovered, that is, the theory is complete and comprehensive enough that no more data needs to be collected. Theory saturation is an important quality standard for grounded theory research, which indicates that the

theory has reached a high maturity. To check that the results cover all the obtained data file information, saturation validation is performed using the reserved case text. The re-coding results of the reserved information show that the categories in the current model have developed well enough, and no new structural relationship has been found for the core category of hot spot propagation influence, and no new component factors have been separated from the main category. In view of this, it can be judged that the model constructed by the research has reached theoretical saturation.

4. RESULTS ANALYSIS

Under the current social background, the cases involving juvenile delinquency have triggered a wide range of hot discussions and deep thinking. These cases are not only legal matters, but also important issues of social morality and public safety. The agenda setting of big V accounts has an important impact on the dissemination of these public opinions. Here are the results of a detailed analysis of the text.

4.1. Communication Content and Emotional Response

The text covers a number of juvenile crimes, including the killing of a 16-year-old boy by his peers and the killing of a 4-year-old girl by a boy under 12. These events were spread through social platforms for the first time, and after the appeal of big V accounts, they immediately triggered widespread attention and emotional resonance from the public. This reflects the rapidity and extensiveness of information dissemination in modern society, the influence of big V accounts on event dissemination, and the public's heated discussion on juvenile injury cases in social security incidents.

In the description of these events, the emotional color is very rich, covering anger, disappointment, regret and other emotions. These sentiments reflect the public's feelings about the tragedy caused by juvenile crimes and their sympathy for the victims' families. The society has expressed strong dissatisfaction and indignation with the defendants' behavior of underplaying or evading legal responsibility, which is considered a serious violation of the rights and interests of the victims. The public's emotional response to the incident also reflects the ethical demands of current news communication, which attaches equal importance to "news facts" and "humanistic care"[12].

4.2. Legal Change and Public Awareness

The public opinion discussion caused by the forwarding of big V accounts mainly focuses on the way the law deals with juvenile crimes. Many people have expressed dissatisfaction with the protection measures of the current law, believing that the protection regulations on juvenile crimes in the current law are too lenient, leading to unfair results in some serious criminal cases. There is widespread public dissatisfaction and concern, especially in cases where due legal sanctions have not been imposed due to age restrictions. Calling for the repeal or amendment of the minor protection law has become a common demand of many people. Some remarks try to explore the possible ways to solve the problem of juvenile crime through rational analysis. In order to reduce the increase of criminal activities caused by excessive legal protection, it is suggested that the criminal crimes should be punished as adults. This view tries to propose more severe and effective sanctions from the legal point of view to protect social public safety and the safety of people's lives and property. These reflect the public's concern for social security and legal changes.

5. CONCLUSION

This study explores the role of public opinion guidance brought by communication content under agenda setting. It is not difficult to find that the high attention and participation of public opinion in

social security incidents, especially juvenile crime incidents, is not only the concern about specific cases, but also a wide range of questions and challenges to the legal and social system. Obviously, driven by the dissemination of information, the agenda setting of the release of content on the new media platform to promote the attention of all sectors of society to such incidents, and began to call on the government and the legislature to conduct a comprehensive review and major reform of the relevant laws on juvenile crime, which has received positive feedback. These voices not only come from the public, but also from the victims' families and social organizations, which is conducive to promoting social reform and legal improvement through the guidance of public opinion, so as to achieve positive purposes.

It is hoped that in the future, with the joint efforts of the public, reasonable legal reforms and social measures can be adopted to effectively reduce the occurrence of juvenile crimes and ensure social harmony and stability.

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