

Exploring We Media's Impact on Sex Education in Chinese University Students

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Abstract. Sex education is an essential component of public health, involving topics such as sexual health, relationships, and identity. In China, the Internet and We Media have become major sources of information for university students, potentially shaping their attitudes and behaviors regarding sex education. While there is a lot of literature on sex education in China and the influence of the internet, there is a need to understand the specific impact of We Media on university students' sex education. This paper will discuss the impact of We Media on sex education including sexual knowledge, sexual attitudes and sexual behaviors among Chinese university students. The study found that We Media provides Chinese university students with comprehensive sexual knowledge and understanding; however, exercising judgment and critical thinking about the content is necessary. Sexual attitudes have been correctly and positively reversed through the intervention of We Media. At the same time, the inappropriate behaviors resulting from Chinese university students' lack of correct understanding of sexual behavior have been reduced.

Keywords: We Media; Sex Education; Chinese University Student; Media Platform.

1. Introduction

In the contemporary society that is developing through digitalization, the field of education has witnessed this major change. As the Internet becomes an indispensable tool in learning, a new media platform called We Media stands out, breaking free from the limitations of traditional media, and redefining the way information is disseminated. In this era of digital communication, understanding the impact of We Media on the sex education of Chinese university students is crucial. Sex education in China has never been widely popularized, and traditional education methods face challenges due to social norms and cultural taboos. The rise and widespread use of We Media in the digital age present unprecedented opportunities to provide comprehensive and inclusive access to sex education for Chinese university students.

While a substantial amount of literature has conducted in-depth research on the relationship and impact between sex education and the Internet in China, there is a clear lack of study on the impact of We Media on sex education among Chinese university students. Understanding and discovering We Media's potential to influence Chinese university students' sexual knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors holds not only academic but also practical significance. The findings can provide foundational information for educators, policymakers, or researchers to formulate effective sex education policies involving We Media, promote the dissemination of sex education in the digital field, and offer a comprehensive understanding of sex among Chinese youth.

The focus of this study is to discover the impact of We Media on Chinese university students' sex education, including sexual knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. We Media, as a platform with different forms and personalities, is more free and fluid than traditional media. By examining the diverse content types of the We Media platform, along with its accessibility and popularity, this paper aims to uncover its potential impact on the dissemination of sexual knowledge, attitude change, and behavioral outcomes. The study will explore We Media's potential to complement traditional sex education and provide comprehensive information to Chinese university students in the digital age.

The main research method employed in this study is case analysis. Through an analysis of other researchers' studies in fields related to social media platforms and sex education, this paper has found that We Media, as a new media platform, has a comprehensive impact on the sex education of Chinese university students, especially in terms of sexual knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. This study will, through the analysis and summary of previous research, provide insights into the current role of We Media in sex education to promote a positive understanding and attitude towards sexual health in the digital field.

2. The Role of the Internet in Sex Education

2.1. Internet as an Education Tool

In this era of information interaction, the Internet has completely changed the way people obtain and share information, profoundly impacting the educational world. In an era where knowledge and information are at your fingertips, the Internet has become a powerful and indispensable learning tool. From traditional learning institutions to informal independent learning methods, the Internet has become an important partner in people's pursuit of knowledge. Compared with the Internet, using books or other traditional printed forms to search for information has become a thing of the past because the Internet allows for the fastest access to all information. The emergence of the Internet is inseparable from education, as it was first invented in a university and research institution. In the early stages of Internet use, it was primarily a platform for scholars and researchers alike to exchange information, bridge geographical gaps, and promote knowledge exchange. As time and technology have evolved, its functionality has expanded, becoming a valuable tool for students, educators, and others to gain knowledge.

The impact of the Internet on education and learning cannot be underestimated. It has reshaped the education system in the digital realm. First, the Internet provides learners with freedom beyond physical limitations [1]. The Internet eliminates the limitations of place, space, time, and geography, allowing learners to obtain high-quality educational resources and equal learning opportunities regardless of circumstances. Such unrestricted and flexible educational platforms have the potential to democratize educational opportunities, thereby reducing social and material disadvantage[1]. The Internet is viewed as a highly democratic medium that promotes freer and fairer educational interaction and information sharing. Secondly, the Internet supports a learning culture characterized by collective exploration, play, and innovation, rather than traditional hierarchical top-down personalized education [1]. Learning on the Internet often occurs in a many-to-many environment, in which the shaping of knowledge is actually constructed by society and culture. The Internet can create a rich social environment, allowing learners to obtain a variety of knowledge beyond their own surroundings. The Internet promotes powerful forms of situated learning and enhances authentic learning experiences. Third, the Internet changes the way individuals interact with knowledge. The Internet provides a large number of learning resources in different modes, including text, video, blogs, etc. This diversity provides learners with different learning styles and preferences, allowing individuals to choose knowledge resources that are more suitable for themselves. At the same time, the data analysis capabilities of the Internet can provide a more personalized learning experience based on individual needs and preferences, and these systems will adjust content and progress to optimize the learning process. In short, the Internet breaks down physical barriers, promotes collaboration and social learning, and provides personalized content that traditional education cannot provide, thereby revolutionizing the education system and becoming an indispensable tool for education.

2.2. Introduction to We Media

With the rapid development of the Internet, "We Media" has quickly become a new dynamic and transformative force in the digital field, changing the way people create, consume, and interact with ideas and information. In an era where almost anyone with an Internet connection can become a

content creator and influencer, the emergence of We media represents a shift in the way media is produced and information is disseminated.

“We Media”, also known as “self-media”, is a media form with social media as its core, run by individual creators, responsive to the latest trends, and highly interactive with the audience [2]. In the digital age, We Media has become a powerful and influential force, challenging traditional media. Bloggers or users of We media deliver normative or non-normative information to an unspecified majority of people or a certain group of people through the Internet. We Media creators prefer to be personal, universal, and autonomous communicators, disseminating ideas and information to the public through modern electronic means [3]. We Media occupies an important position in China's digital field. It started with media platforms and began to operate around social media platforms. It gradually became popular in China in the early 2010s. We Media mainly operates in the form of separate personal accounts, including verified celebrities, social media influencers, and independent accounts that produce original content [4].

We Media often has obvious personalities, which can be displayed through the uniqueness of the content or the personal style of the creator. The most important thing about the We Media account itself is to have a special and difficult-to-imitate personality, so that the audience can easily identify it from a large number of accounts [2]. Clear content positioning is crucial to We Media. It defines their own identity, helps identify their target audience, and can effectively leverage the advantages of their content as quickly as possible. One of the main attractions of We Media is low cost and low risk. The We Media platform usually has a free or low entry cost and can provide a creative platform for more content creators. This low-cost, low-risk platform environment encourages creators to experiment and innovate. We Media is a creative and accessible form of media that provides a platform for individuals or teams to share their unique opinions, interests, and expertise with the public, subverting the stereotypes of traditional media.

3. The Influence of We Media Platforms

3.1. Types of We Media Platforms

We Media is a content-diversified platform that enables everyone to create and share content. This form of media has become very popular in China. The content of We Media is mainly concentrated in three types: text, video, and audio-based.

Videos, with their visual nature, are attractive and encompass both long and short formats. Short videos have become a highly popular and effective form of We Media content because they quickly attract and entertain audiences. The content of short videos is usually brief, allowing viewers in a fast-paced world to seek instant gratification through rapid content consumption. This characteristic makes short videos the preferred choice for many. Brief is a key feature of short videos, contributing to their high shareability. Audiences are more likely to share small pieces of content that resonate with them, given that it doesn't take much time to watch. Short videos capitalize on this mentality, amplifying the impact of the content. The most common short video We Media platforms in China include Douyin (TikTok), Kwai, and Xiaohongshu. When educational and informative content is needed, long videos become the preferred We Media content mode [5]. Long-form videos are ideal for providing detailed explanations, tutorials, and educational content. Authors can delve deeper into topics through long-form videos, making them an option for sharing knowledge and building authority. Complex topics often require more time for research and discussion, and a long video demonstrates that the author has invested time and effort in exploring a topic thoroughly, making the content more authoritative. Long-form videos also contain in-depth analysis and research discussions that short videos may not convey. Chinese long video We Media platforms include Bilibili, iQiyi, Weibo, and others.

Even in an era dominated by visual content, text-based posts remain a compelling form of content on We Media. According to a data survey, 32% of surveyed consumers believe that text-based posts are

among the most attractive types of social media content [5]. When crafted effectively, textual content has a high chance of engaging and resonating with your audience. Simultaneously, text-based content fosters meaningful conversations on social media platforms. We Media, which utilizes text content as its primary mode, offers opportunities to initiate discussions, gather feedback, and gain a deeper understanding of audience preferences and needs. This participation can enhance the visibility of We Media content and expand its reach. Promoting participatory conversations also cultivates a sense of community among bloggers and their fans. When bloggers reply to and comment on followers' posts, they create a welcoming and inclusive online environment where followers feel valued and heard. Some of the main text-based We media platforms in China include WeChat Public Accounts, Weibo, Zhihu, and others.

Audio content, especially in the form of podcasts, is exceedingly popular among We Media content forms. Audio content provides viewers with a more convenient way to obtain information, particularly when reading or watching is not feasible. Audio content allows users to multitask efficiently, as they can listen while performing other tasks, thereby making the most of their time and acquiring knowledge simultaneously. Audio content offers a unique and time-saving means to communicate and share information.

3.2. Contents Available on We Media

The content in We Media is extensive and can meet audiences' different interests and preferences. Educational content, interactive content, and inspirational content are the three main types of content in We Media. Educational content is extremely valuable in social media, especially in the world of We Media, and can effectively engage and inform audiences. The purpose of educational content is to provide information, teaching, or valuable understanding to an audience. Educational content is shareable in We Media because it provides knowledge and solutions to many common problems. Audiences love content that helps them learn something new or improve a skill. Interactive content often captures the audience's attention and engages them in the content creation process, such as creating a challenge on a social media platform and sharing it with friends to pass on, with the "Bucket Challenge" being a popular example. In addition to educational and interactive content, inspirational content is also a content type often mentioned by We Media. Inspirational content typically encourages and uplifts and resonates with viewers on a personal or emotional level and can include inspiring quotes, stories, or positive words from the creator themselves. People share inspirational content to evoke positive emotions in their audience, connect the content to their own needs and desires, motivate themselves, and spread positive messages. These three content types effectively drive engagement and sharing of We Media content because they satisfy the audience's needs and desires for knowledge, interaction, and emotional connection from different aspects.

3.3. Accessibility and Popularity of We Media

Compared with traditional media, We Media has higher accessibility. We Media has a low threshold for use. Anyone with any Internet interface and electronic device can use it to transmit information. Moreover, We Media does not demand extensive professional knowledge or resources for content creation and sharing, unlike traditional media, which requires strict screening before and content sharing can occur. At the same time, We Media is not limited by geographical distance. Content creators from around the world can publish content and reach global audiences without having to be physically present. Content creators from different regions can collaborate to create content, share expertise, and create cross-border communities. These collaborations promote the exchange of ideas and culture that traditional media cannot.

We Media information spreads extremely fast, and virality spreads quickly on the Internet, especially with attractive and shareable content. As of June 2020, the number of Internet users in China has reached 940 million [6]. The widespread use of the Internet has laid the foundation for the influential role of We Media and its potential audience. The emergence of We Media has pioneered the decentralization of media, allowing every user and ordinary individuals to become content creators

and communicators [7]. One data point shows that since the beginning of 2014, We Media creators have grown exponentially, exceeding 2 million by 2015; by 2017, the number of industry creators reached a staggering 2.6 million [7]. The growth of this data marks that We Media's popularity and influence as a content creation platform are constantly increasing, and it has attracted a large number of participants to join We Media.

4. The Impact of “We Media” on Chinese University Students

4.1. The Impact on Chinese University Students' Sexual Knowledge

With We Media being so popular and accessible, it has already become an important tool in sex education. Simultaneously, most Chinese youth express and believe that the Internet and social media platforms are among their main sources for obtaining knowledge and information [8]. The topic of sex education has always been sensitive in China, and social norms and taboos have hindered the popularization of sex education. However, in the context of COVID-19, Internet learning and online education have accelerated, promoting the popularity of sex education on various platforms, including We Media platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, Douyin, and Bilibili.

The emergence of We Media has transformed how students acquire sexual knowledge, with the increasingly open and diverse nature of We Media becoming their first choice. We Media provides Chinese university students with easy access to a wide range of information related to sexual knowledge. The content in We Media is comprehensive and covers multiple topics related to sexual health and behavior, including reproductive health, condom and contraceptive use [9]. Through diversified content and platforms, We Media has expanded the scope of comprehensive information on sexual knowledge for Chinese university students. We Media's content supports the concept of comprehensive sex education, rejects an absolute abstinence perspective, and provides Chinese university students with a comprehensive understanding of sexual health and relationships.

At the same time, We Media has the potential to promote Chinese university students' understanding of sexual orientation and self-identity, helping them better understand themselves and explore their identities, and allowing students to embrace and express their true selves. However, not all We Media content is completely healthy and beneficial. The quality, accuracy, and appropriateness of We Media content will vary greatly, and some of the content may lead Chinese university students to misconceptions about sexual knowledge. The commercialization and pornification of sex have begun to develop in the digital realm, where sexual content is used for profit rather than transmitting correct knowledge. This trend may lead to a distortion of sexuality, creating cognitive hazards for Chinese university students seeking sexual knowledge from the Internet.

4.2. The Impact on Chinese University Students' Sexual Attitude

Social media platforms such as We Media often have a positive impact on the sexual attitudes of Chinese university students. By providing comprehensive sexual knowledge, We Media platforms enable Chinese university students to understand their own safe behaviors related to sex, helping them form more informed and responsible sexual attitudes. China's attitude toward sexual behavior is influenced by culture and society. Traditionally, it is believed that sexual behavior can only be carried out within the scope of legal marriage. A survey showed that half of university students believed that sexual behavior should not be promoted and that people were discouraged from engaging in sexual behavior [10]. Most Chinese university students have a conservative attitude towards sex, reflecting that people still maintain traditional values and conservative attitudes towards sex in Chinese society. However, when this group of Chinese university students engaged in sexual knowledge intervention using social media platforms like We Media, their attitudes towards sex changed significantly. This study continued to find that the intervention university students had a significantly higher attitude toward approving and encouraging sexual behavior than before [10].

Through the content intervention of social media platforms such as We Media, Chinese university students have gradually developed a positive attitude towards sex, no longer avoiding the topic of sex, and have a correct and positive understanding of sexual behavior. In another study, some participants expressed a more open-minded view toward sex education content on social media after being exposed to We Media content. They hope that these contents can be more systematic and accurate, and also express that they hope to obtain higher quality and comprehensive sex education materials on platforms such as We Media [11]. At the same time, this also shows that media platforms such as We Media have a positive impact on changing Chinese university students' attitudes towards sex.

4.3. The Impact on Chinese University Students' Sexual Behaviors

Due to China's social and historical background, Chinese people do not have a correct understanding and treatment of sexual behavior, especially Chinese university students who have just entered society as adults. A study found that among students who have had sexual intercourse, some students had their first sexual experience when they were underage. This phenomenon is more common among boys, and concurrently, a small number of students have experienced forced sexual behavior [12]. This study shows that Chinese university students are facing challenges brought about by sexual behavior and its risks. Chinese university students do not have a correct understanding of sexual behavior, which may cause sexual-related violence problems. As long as there is correct sexual knowledge, sexual intercourse accidents will be reduced. As a platform that provides comprehensive sexual knowledge, We Media offers a range of content to Chinese university students, attempting to show students the importance of sexual knowledge and adjust Chinese university students' positive attitudes towards it. Having accurate information about sex can reduce the harmful consequences associated with sex, including unintended pregnancies, sexual violence, and abortion. In addition, the comprehensive sexual education content disseminated on We Media can enable students to take responsibility for their sexual health and relationships with others, respect others and themselves, and have a healthy sexual behavior and relationship.

5. Conclusion

We Media has emerged as a crucial tool in sex education, offering comprehensive and diverse sexual knowledge, especially among Chinese university students. Although We Media promotes openness and diversity in sex education, challenges also arise. Differences in content, accuracy and appropriateness may lead to misunderstandings. Simultaneously, the commercialization and pornification of the digital realm have intensified the risk, potentially distorting university students' understanding of sex. Therefore, critical and rational thinking is a necessary condition for acquiring healthy and comprehensive sexual knowledge. Social media platforms, especially We Media, have a positive impact on the sexual attitudes of Chinese university students. We Media helps Chinese university students develop an informed and responsible attitude by providing comprehensive sexual knowledge. We Media's content not only promotes people's more open views on sex education but also reflects people's desire for higher quality and more comprehensive sex education knowledge on digital platforms. We Media plays a crucial role in addressing the problem of Chinese university students, especially the lack of correct understanding and treatment of sexual behavior. It reduces issues related to sexual behavior, including underage sexual experiences and sexual violence, by providing comprehensive insights into sexual literacy.

The role of We Media is not only to provide knowledge but also to actively try to instill the importance of healthy sexual knowledge in college students and adjust their attitudes towards sex. By providing sex education content that encourages responsibility, respect, and health, We Media has become a significant force in shaping sex education for university students.

As We Media continues to grow into a force in the digital realm, leveraging its capabilities and features to enhance sex education is not only a possibility but a necessity. However, it is essential to pay attention to the correct use of We Media and content censorship. We Media possesses the freedom

and fluidity that traditional media lacks. If the We Media platform cooperates with traditional educational institutions and incorporates digital sex education into formal curricula, it will promote the popularization of comprehensive and healthy sex education. Ensuring a more standardized and comprehensive approach to target populations by expanding the scope and impact of sex education work is also necessary. Additionally, advocating for responsible review and supervision of sex education content on the We Media platform is crucial. Censoring content can help strike a balance between freedom of expression and ensuring content meets educational goals and social norms. Regarding sex education in China, the positive aspects of We Media should be used to address challenges and develop strategies to create a more comprehensive and responsible sex education environment for Chinese youth.

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