`Original Research Article`

The multidimensional characterization of self-empowerment and oversight of others' consciousness among college students in the context of self-media

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Abstract: In the context of the flourishing development of self-media, the phenomenon of college students' self-empowerment has been highlighted, and their obscuring of others' consciousness has been observed to manifest in a number of different ways. In the context of information acquisition, the phenomenon of the 'information cocoon predicament' has emerged. This is characterised by the narrowing of cognitive perspectives as a result of algorithmic recommendations and independent screening, which lead to the consumption of a large amount of homogenised information. This has the effect of limiting the scope of knowledge to specific fields, disconnecting students from the diverse perspectives of others, and fostering a sense of detachment from the wider world.

Keywords: The self-media field; College students' self-empowerment; Other-awareness masking

1. Introduction

In the context of the flourishing self-media landscape, there has been a notable rise in the self-empowerment of university students. However, the phenomenon of the obscuring of others' consciousness in this process represents a significant and under-acknowledged aspect that merits further investigation. This section will analyse the multi-dimensional characteristics of this phenomenon in order to reveal the complex mechanisms and far-reaching impacts behind it. From the 'information cocoon predicament' in information access, to the 'virtual social barriers' in social interaction, to the 'self-expansion' in discourse expression, the multi-dimensional presentation of self-empowerment has been a significant contributing factor to the growing awareness of the Other among college students. This has resulted in a reduction in college students' sense of otherness. The objective of this analysis is to establish a robust foundation for the subsequent investigation of the process of deconstruction and reconstruction of college students' sense of otherness. This will provide a crucial theoretical framework and practical guidance for the promotion of individual growth among college students and the harmonious development of society.

2. Cognitive narrowing and otherness alienation in the information cocoon dilemma

In the rapidly expanding domain of self-media, the phenomenon of college students' self-empowerment has become increasingly prevalent, affording them unparalleled autonomy and the right to choose in the realm of information acquisition. However, in the absence of effective guidance and checks and balances, this self-empowerment has resulted in the emergence of the "information cocoon predicament."

The capacity for self-empowerment affords college students the prerogative to curate information in accordance with their own interests, preferences, and subjective inclinations. Self-media platforms utilize sophisticated algorithms to analyze a multitude of behavioral data points, including browsing history, liking behavior, and commenting content, to create an information push tailored to the specific characteristics of

individual users. This shift has effectively transformed college students from passive receivers of information to active sifters, giving them the illusion of control over their information access. However, this autonomy is ultimately constrained by the limitations of oriented information construction. To illustrate, college students with an interest in specific fields (e.g., eSports or fashion trends) demonstrate a tendency to actively follow and frequently interact with related content. The platform algorithmic function continuously pushes out a substantial amount of homogenized information, including eSports event reports, players' news, fashion new product releases, and fashionable outfit sharing. Over time, as postulated by the theory of selective attention in cognitive psychology, the cognitive resources of college students are heavily focused on the processing of this kind of information, thereby forming a kind of path dependence on information intake.

At the level of cognitive development, this path dependence gives rise to the phenomenon of cognitive narrowing. In the information environment constructed by college students, the excessive focus on specific domain knowledge gradually limits their cognitive system to a narrow scope. A scientific knowledge structure should encompass the integration and interaction of multidisciplinary and multidisciplinary information. However, students who are confined to a narrow information diet, and who are therefore trapped in an information cocoon, are unable to explore knowledge in other fields for an extended period of time. From the perspective of social cognition and interpersonal relationship theory, cognitive narrowing serves to further alienate the concept of otherness. An individual's capacity to recognize and empathize with others is contingent upon extensive and in-depth exposure to social information and multicultural experiences. College students in the information cocoon predicament are psychologically distanced from the Other due to their narrow cognitive horizons. The theory of interpersonal attraction and repulsion posits that cognitive difference and information gap are important factors leading to changes in interpersonal distance. In the "information cocoon" woven by college students, the cognitive gap between them and others is widening, making it difficult for them to think differently and empathize with others.

3. Group segregation and exclusion resulting from the existence of "virtual social barriers."

The process of self-empowerment affords college students a considerable degree of autonomy in their social choices. This enables them to actively construct or integrate into specific social groups based on their own identity, interests, geography, and other multidimensional factors. Examples of such groups include student organizations formed based on campus clubs or various communities of enthusiasts gathered because of their common interests. This process reflects the active construction of college students as subjects in the social network. It also reflects the active construction of college students as the main body in the social network, whereby they shape a social environment that meets their needs and expectations through active social practices. Within these groups, based on frequent interaction and information sharing, members gradually form a strong sense of group identity and belonging according to the theory of group cohesion. Furthermore, the cultural norms and values within the group are continuously strengthened and passed on.

In the absence of effective guidance and diversified social incentives, college students have unconsciously diminished inter-group communication and integration while strengthening intra-group ties. To illustrate, consider the contrasting social interactions of science and engineering students and literature students. Due to the inherent differences in disciplinary knowledge systems, cognitive styles, and academic cultures, these students often gravitate towards forming relatively independent social circles on self-media platforms, with information

exchange primarily occurring within their respective groups. This tendency towards segregation is evident. This separation impedes the ability of both parties to gain a comprehensive understanding of each other's knowledge structure, way of thinking, and life experience. This, in turn, provides a cognitive foundation for the formation of stereotypes.

In the context of group segregation, which is characterised by limited communication and information flow, college students are particularly susceptible to the formation of stereotypes and prejudices towards individuals outside their immediate social circle. Similarly, cognitive biases are also generated among college students from disparate regions due to regional cultural differences and information gaps. Such stereotypes and prejudices subsequently give rise to exclusionary behaviors. Driven by the psychology of self-empowerment, college students often regard others outside the group as threats or deviants, and exhibit rejection of others in their social behaviors, refusing to integrate and participate in others. This is driven by the psychology of self-empowerment, which maintains the identity and unity of the group. This kind of exclusionary behavior, which is conducive to group conflict, not only impedes the normal social interaction among individuals but also has a detrimental impact on the formation and development of college students' sense of otherness. The concept of otherness necessitates an understanding, respect, and tolerance for the differences and diversity inherent in various social groups. However, within the context of group segregation and exclusion, college students often find it challenging to adopt an alternative perspective and empathize with those outside their immediate circle. The situation and needs of others are overlooked, and a comprehensive map of social cognition cannot be constructed. This ultimately results in the gradual obscuring of otherness in the context of self-empowerment, which exacerbates social division and antagonism. This has led to significant challenges in the construction of harmonious and pluralistic social relations.

4. Egoization and neglect of the other caused by the expansion of self-discourse

In the communication pattern of the self-media context, the presentation of college students' self-empowerment in the discourse has triggered a complex chain of effects, and the phenomena of egoization and neglect of others induced by the "expansion of self-discourse" imply a profound logic of communication psychology and social interaction.

The field of self-media affords college students a high degree of autonomy in discourse expression and wide dissemination power, enabling them to transcend the discourse limitations of traditional media and insert their individual cognition, emotion, and concepts into the public discourse space through the diverse forms of the self-media platform. This process of empowerment in communication should facilitate the active participation of college students in the discussion of social issues, the construction of a pluralistic discursive landscape, and the enrichment of social dialogues. Nevertheless, in the absence of adequate instruction in media literacy and guidance on discourse ethics, some college students have been unable to fully exercise their discourse power.

The self-presented discourse expressions of college students on self-media platforms have the potential to manifest their self-image and strengthen their identity. However, in the over-expansion of self-empowerment, this tendency of self-presentation has evolved into what is termed "self-discourse expansion." In the practice of self-media content creation and dissemination, individuals tend to focus on their own subjective experience and cognitive framework when constructing their discourse system, regarding their own feelings, insights, and experiences as the core of their discourse while marginalizing the voices and demands of others.

From the perspective of game theory as it relates to discourse power, this kind of behavior can be seen as

an imbalanced use of discourse power by college students who have undergone a process of self-empowerment. In pursuing the maximization of their own discourse influence, they disrupt the equilibrium of power within the digital discourse domain, thereby constraining the prospects and avenues for others to engage in equitable dialogue. This kind of behavior contravenes the principles of interactivity and plurality in online communication, thereby precipitating a gradual decline in the online communication platform from an ideal space for the integration of multiple viewpoints to a unilateral stage for individual self-expression. The disregard for the other caused by the "expansion of self-talk" serves to further erode college students' sense of otherness. The cultivation of otherness is contingent upon the individual's cognitive acceptance, emotional resonance, and value respect for disparate subjects in social interactions. However, the proliferation of self-talk makes it challenging for college students to transcend egocentric cognitive limitations and gain a nuanced understanding of the position, feelings, and needs of others. For instance, in the context of an online discussion on social justice, if college students dominate the discourse from the perspective of their own social class or interest group, and exclude the voices of other groups by expanding their own ego-discourse, they will be unable to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complexity of the social justice issue and the pluralistic demands of different groups. Consequently, it will be challenging for them to form a comprehensive, objective, and tolerant cognitive judgment of social justice, which will impede their sense of social responsibility and civic literacy. It will be challenging for them to develop a comprehensive, objective, and inclusive cognitive judgment of social justice, which may impede their capacity to enhance their sense of social responsibility and civic literacy.

5. Conclude

In conclusion, the self-empowerment of college students in the age of self-media has led to a diversification in the ways in which awareness of the other is obscured. The information cocoon, virtual social barriers and the expansion of self-talk have weakened the sense of otherness at the levels of cognition, social interaction and expression, respectively, to the detriment of individuals and society. It is therefore imperative to reverse this situation and reshape the sense of otherness through deconstruction, in order to facilitate the growth of college students into responsible and tolerant members of society, and to promote the healthy development of the wider community.

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