

Mass Media with Positive Impact on Personal Behavior and Ethical Judgments

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Abstract: The advent of the internet has prompted more scrutiny of individual conduct and generated many moral appraisals thereof. Nevertheless, the moral assessments have had both beneficial and detrimental effects on society. Hence, the subject matter explored in this article pertains to the influence exerted by mass media via positive attention and assessment on individual behaviour. The research methodology used in this work is outlined as follows: Firstly, this study focuses on the selection of news broadcasts that highlight persons that possess substantial social power in contemporary society. Secondly, a comprehensive behavioural analysis is performed to examine the moral appraisal of these individuals by the general public. Numerous studies have shown that the scrutiny of individual conduct by the public may provide positive outcomes for both the collective and society at large, provided that both journalists and consumers of news engage in appropriate behaviours. This research proposes that individuals, when confronted with individual behaviour, need to impartially assess its morality in accordance with actuality, using a composed and unbiased judgement.

Keywords: ethical judgment, mass media, individual behaviour

1. Introduction

The proliferation of the internet has resulted in a significant surge in the volume of information disseminated by online media, thus leading to a corresponding rise in the quantity of information acquired by individuals [1]. In contrast to previous eras, contemporary society benefits from an expanded array of channels via which individuals may get information pertaining to societal matters and interpersonal relationships [2-4]. This augmentation is mostly attributed to the proliferation of several social media applications and websites [5]. Consequently, individuals are more inclined to prioritise comprehensive and intricate information, alongside broader societal news, compared to previous times. There is a growing trend among individuals to direct their focus towards certain aspects of human conduct and evaluate them via moral commendation and censure.

These behaviours have shown some beneficial effects; yet, they have also given rise to certain challenges. Certain forms of mass media have been associated with adverse effects as a result of insufficient direction and the absence of established behavioural standards [6]. One instance of language violence directed at individuals or groups may have a detrimental impact on their daily functioning, while the dissemination of incorrect language norms across society can also have negative consequences [7]. Consequently, a multitude of adverse consequences have ensued throughout society. Hence, the objective of this study is to examine and address these issues.

This article aims to examine the effects of mass media behaviour that emphasises personal conduct and conducts moral analysis on society. It will explore both the positive and negative impacts of this behaviour, as well as analyse the underlying causes. Specifically, the study will investigate the circumstances in which public attention to personal events is beneficial, as well as those in which it has negative consequences. Lastly, This research will put forward some remedies for these adverse consequences. This research examines the coverage of actual social events and the subsequent public engagement with them, exploring the good and negative consequences. It also aims to extract and summarise the effects of mass media appraisal on various individuals participating in these events, as well as the resultant outcomes.

2. The Cases and Debates

First and foremost, it is evident that mass media has the potential to provide advantages for the many entities engaged by means of online debates and garnering attention [8]. On June 1, 2023, an incident was reported involving a student from Jiangxi Vocational and Technical College of Industry who allegedly consumed a rodent's cranium during a meal served at the institution's cafeteria. Upon the online dissemination of this subject, it incited fervent debates, prompting a substantial contingent of internet users to initiate a protest against the aforementioned institution. Their protest centred upon raising concerns over the cafeteria's adherence to food safety standards. In response to significant public scrutiny, Jiangxi Industrial Vocational and Technical College submitted foreign items for examination, with the outcome of the examination revealing the presence of a duck neck. However, the aforementioned action failed to satisfy online users and numerous media outlets, since photographic evidence from the occurrence revealed that the alien entity had a striking resemblance to the cranium of a small mammal. On June 17th, the investigation findings regarding the "June 1st" food safety incident were disclosed. A collaborative investigative team, comprising the Jiangxi Provincial Department of Education, the Provincial Public Security Department, the Provincial State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission, and the Provincial Market Supervision and Administration Bureau, concluded that the foreign object, which was believed to be a "rat head" consumed by students in the cafeteria, was indeed the head of a rodent-like creature. The culmination of the situation ultimately transpired, resulting in the subsequent disciplinary measures imposed against the respective units involved. Undoubtedly, this measure ensures the protection of students' rights and enhances the significance that regulatory bodies place on food safety inside institutions, hence facilitating the reduction of the occurrence of such detrimental situations.

This incident exemplifies how the mainstream media's focus on individual occurrences has effectively fostered constructive moral direction across society [9]. During the course of the inquiry into the issue, a substantial proportion of online users showed their support for the individuals implicated and commended their bravery in exposing the misbehaviour of the educational institution. Undoubtedly, this resource serves as a significant assistance and source of support for a student enrolled in a college or university. The mass media has the potential to contribute to the support and empowerment of marginalised populations. Furthermore, in response to widespread scepticism expressed by online users and the media, the government has placed significant emphasis on the occurrence and undertaken a further inquiry, resulting in the successful elucidation of the incident's veracity. The mass media has also played a crucial role in ensuring justice for all parties involved and society as a whole. The unit responsible for falsifying the inspection findings on the "foreign object resembling a duck neck" has ultimately faced disciplinary action. The mass media has effectively overseen and facilitated the enforcement and management of unlawful and felonious behaviours.

The occasion in question saw the mass media effectively mirroring the attributes of news, by endorsing and advancing appropriate conduct, while simultaneously censuring and opposing inappropriate behaviour. The mass media demonstrated an ability to accurately assess the moral

character of the individuals involved in the event, hence yielding favourable outcomes. By means of moral critique directed at Jiangxi Industrial Vocational and Technical College, as well as the identification and subsequent suppression of illicit examination centres, we have effectively curtailed unlawful and felonious behaviours. Simultaneously, it serves as a behavioural limitation for additional dietary entities. Confronted with the influence of public opinion and the need to safeguard industry reputation, they are deterred from engaging in any more instances of illicit or detrimental food safety practises. The mass media's favourable moral assessment of the pupils participating serves as a means of safeguarding their vulnerable groups. Furthermore, it has engendered a heightened awareness of justice throughout the general populace, thereby directing their moral compass, and facilitating the discernment between ethical and unethical behaviour.

3. Plot Reversed

Nevertheless, many online behaviours continue to get disproportionate attention from the mainstream media, resulting in an exaggerated interpretation of personal conduct [10]. Consequently, this phenomenon might give rise to several adverse consequences. During the first days of May 2019, a female consumer made an online purchase of 18 apparel items from the establishment owned by Mr. Li, amounting to a sum above 4600 yuan. However, it should be noted that all garments were subsequently retrieved subsequent to the celebration of May Day. By examining the photographs inside the female client's social network, Mr. Li established that the garments acquired by the consumer had been previously used throughout the holiday season. The aforementioned action elicited a strong emotional response from Mr. Li, leading him to promptly disclose the incident on an internet platform. The episode in question has garnered significant attention from the mainstream media, resulting in a simultaneous expression of condemnation towards female clients and support for the vendor, Mr. Li. Following the public exposure of the event on the internet at midday on May 11th, the female customer promptly released an apologetic statement later that evening in response to mounting public criticism. Furthermore, she disclosed that a resolution had been reached with the business, wherein all clothing items would not be returned. Upon examining this particular outcome in isolation, it can be seen that it serves as yet another illustration of popular sentiment advocating for the principles of fairness and equity. However, the purchaser promptly disseminated a collection of substantiating data on the internet, demonstrating that subsequent to the disclosure of the occurrence, she endured instances of cyber aggression and the unauthorised disclosure of her personal information, so jeopardising the safety of both herself and her family. She implored online users to diminish their focus on this occurrence and refrain from causing damage to her and her family.

Undoubtedly, the conduct of this female client was inappropriate. The individual exploited a vulnerability inside the online purchasing system's "seven day no reason return and exchange" policy, engaging in fraudulent returns. This action contravenes the fundamental principles of integrity and reliability, resulting in potential financial burdens and losses for the shop that might have been avoided. Additionally, it undermines the intended function of the provision designed to safeguard consumer rights. Simultaneously, the shop owner successfully mitigated avoidable financial setbacks by using the influence of public sentiment. Simultaneously, as a consequence of this occurrence, Mr. Li's establishment garnered extensive recognition and saw a surge in its sales figures.

However, it must be acknowledged that the influence of the internet on this particular event is not wholly beneficial. The proliferation of negative comments on the internet has contributed to heightened levels of rage among individuals, thus resulting in a surge of unethical judgements. Numerous online users have expressed that the extent of their critical assessment about this issue surpasses the anticipated scope, and their ethical appraisals towards female clientele are also influenced by prejudice. The influence of the media on individuals' moral assessments is likely to be subject to distortion to some degree. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the influence of public

opinion has been seen to incite unsuitable conduct, including the use of derogatory language, acts of intimidation, and several other forms of damaging behaviour directed at female patrons and their families. Based on legal provisions, it is stipulated that female clients shall be subject to punitive measures and assume responsibility for any financial losses incurred by the establishment. However, as a result of the amplification of online public sentiment, the female consumer had a more profound psychological impact, which in turn had detrimental effects on both her family and other unsuspecting individuals. The mass media has been involved in unethical conduct as a result of making unethical judgements. Ultimately, this occurrence also poses a significant harm to the stability of the network. The act of intentionally revealing private information of others without their consent, engaging in verbal aggression and intimidation against others on online platforms, are all unlawful actions that have the potential to disrupt societal equilibrium. The influence of mass media on this particular occurrence is undeniably adverse and warrants regulation and cessation.

What are the reasons for the negative societal consequences resulting from media coverage in relation to various events? This phenomenon should be examined from three distinct perspectives. The first factor may be attributed to the adverse influence exerted by the media on the general populace. On October 13, 2011, subsequent to a pedestrian being struck by a motor vehicle, a total of 18 individuals who happened to be present at the scene consciously disregarded the incident and refrained from offering assistance to the wounded party. The police were not contacted by them. The child was brought to the hospital by the last scavenger aunt, but, regrettably, she did not survive. In this particular occurrence, it can be shown that a group of 18 individuals had moral deficiencies. The primary focus is on attributing the highest degree of criticism on the driver of the hit and run vehicle in relation to the occurrence. Nevertheless, as a result of apprehensions over exposure and public reception, the media specifically focused on 18 individuals passing by and disseminated incorrect instructions inside the news narrative. This phenomenon has led to an increased level of attention from internet users towards the apathy and sense of powerlessness shown by those passing by. Disregarding the presence of those who did participate in unethical conduct, when considering the specific circumstances at hand, it is plausible that some passersby may not have seen the wounded girl, so perhaps avoiding the prospect of encountering a life-threatening scenario without any assistance. The media's biased portrayal of news events has resulted in the public's indiscriminate judgement of individuals, leading to reputational harm and the dissemination of unjust moral counsel. Consequently, there has been little focus on the genuine unlawful and criminal activities perpetrated by van drivers, leading to a diminished impact of news coverage on society.

Additionally, the public's illogical judgement and behaviour towards personal events contribute to this phenomenon. The first observation pertains to the tendency of netizens to unquestioningly accept news events without independently verifying their veracity, resulting in the formation of prejudiced public opinions. Consequently, this uncritical acceptance of information has inadvertently contributed to the perpetration of unlawful actions, so blurring the line between mere discourse and illicit conduct. Furthermore, the tendency of netizens to comply blindly sometimes results in a polarisation of perspectives. Nevertheless, in several instances of news occurrences, discerning the accurate determination of which party is correct and which is incorrect proves to be an insurmountable task, since both sides may exhibit shortcomings. Currently, if public sentiment were to once again favour a single political party or just scrutinise the ethical shortcomings of a single party, such a stance would be incorrect and counterproductive to the advancement of justice and the cultivation of societal moral progress. Ultimately, it is not seen morally reprehensible for internet users to use public sentiment as a means to penalise wrongdoing and advocate for virtuous conduct. However, it is imperative to prevent the emergence of radical conduct, such as cyber violence, doxxing, and other illicit activities. Alternatively, it is advisable to use a more gentle and suitable strategy that emphasises the supervision

of the party at fault in order to provide compensation for losses and rectify their behaviour, rather than resorting to mere retaliation.

Moreover, the network's deficiency lies in the absence of limitations. The absence of effective real name identification protocols on the internet has resulted in a significant deviation from moral and legal standards seen in offline contexts, leading individuals to engage in unscrupulous behaviour while communicating and disseminating information online. This phenomenon exacerbates the prevalence of cyberbullying and other related behaviours. Simultaneously, it is noteworthy that the current legislation pertaining to the internet remains imperfect, lacking efficient network methods and website configurations to effectively regulate and govern immoral discourse on the digital platform. However, the emergence of social media has enabled individuals to assume the roles of "journalists" and "news publishers", so making the evaluation of the information they disseminate unfeasible. When individuals are deprived of the capacity to scrutinise and regulate news occurrences, some individuals may disseminate fabricated or hyperbolic material with the intention of garnering attention or using online aggression to fulfil certain objectives. Consequently, this may result in the public directing inappropriate and inaccurate attention on personal conduct.

4. Discussions

This research offers many recommendations for enhancing the manner and scope of public media coverage of individual conduct. First and foremost, it is essential for media outlets to establish a standardised approach towards news material, with a focus on ensuring a fair and comprehensive depiction of events, while also enhancing the credibility and authenticity of their reporting. The primary objective of the media should not be to pursue attention or generate attention, but rather to engage in truth-seeking endeavours, provide equitable and unbiased commentary, and exercise moral judgement. This is done with the intention of providing accurate and beneficial moral advice to the general public.

Furthermore, it is important for individuals engaged in conversations pertaining to human behaviour to exercise control over their own moral judgements. Rather than unjustly condemning innocent individuals from a position of moral superiority in an attempt to showcase their own high moral standards and sense of justice, they should instead focus on regulating the moral integrity of their judgements. There is a need for increased participation of individuals and institutions in the online sphere to provide education to internet users on the unlawful nature of online violence, as well as to advocate for the constructive influence of positive language on others. Simultaneously, in instances when individual conduct incites fervent debates, it is essential to steer individuals towards adopting a reasonable viewpoint and impartially assess the moral and immoral actions shown in the event from several angles.

Furthermore, there is a need for enhancement and refinement of legislation pertaining to the internet, as well as the strategies used to address unlawful and criminal activities associated with online public discourse. Simultaneously, social media platforms are mandated by legal restrictions to enhance their scrutiny of speech dissemination. An illustrative instance of enhancing the transparency of the network is the inclusion of the city and province of the speaker in online speeches. This practise serves as a good example, effectively reducing the level of obscurity inside the network. The disclosure of personal information on the internet has the potential to influence the speech of netizens, leading to a greater degree of self-restraint that aligns with the moral norms seen in offline communication. Consequently, this may serve as an effective means of curbing illicit online activities.

Furthermore, as seen in the preceding research, the mass media has exhibited heightened excitement in publicising unpleasant occurrences with the aim of augmenting news clicks and achieving other objectives. This phenomenon is evident in their news coverage, as they devote a significant amount of time to elucidating and scrutinising the immoral aspects. Nevertheless, the

importance of news extends beyond the mere revelation of unsavoury occurrences inside society; it also serves to foster a constructive social atmosphere and facilitate the advancement of societal ethics. The act of critiquing adverse occurrences is undeniably vital. This phenomenon not only garners more public awareness and scrutiny of the negative aspects of society, but also contributes to the prevention of future occurrences. Additionally, it aids individuals in discerning ethical distinctions, therefore serving as a catalyst for rectifying and enhancing moral principles. However, it is imperative that we should not overlook the significance of good energy occurrences. Firstly, the act of reporting and commending positive energy occurrences serves as a means of incentivizing the individuals involved, so bolstering their drive to engage in ethical actions, fostering a sense of inspiration to perpetuate virtuous acts, and facilitating assistance towards others. Additionally, a strategy for fostering pleasant feelings in society involves augmenting the dissemination of favourable occurrences on the internet. When confronted with an abundance of pessimistic news on the internet, individuals tend to experience emotions of anger and disillusionment towards society, hence potentially intensifying their inclination towards suspicion and animosity towards others. By enhancing the online visibility of events related to acts of benevolence and altruism, individuals are likely to have a heightened sense of trust in others. Consequently, they may be inspired to replicate these positive actions in similar circumstances, as reported in the media, so benefiting both individuals and society at large. Hence, it is essential for mass media to adopt a proactive approach in depicting good occurrences and directing viewers towards paying heed to individuals or organisations who exhibit more moral conduct in news events. This may be achieved by use positive language to commend them.

5. Conclusion

This article concludes that the active scrutiny and ethical evaluation of individual conduct by the mass media yield specific advantageous societal guidance and merits. However, it is contingent upon the mass media employing appropriate methodologies and a suitable degree of attention to effectively observe and assess negative personal occurrences. Simultaneously, it is essential for the media to disseminate information on good occurrences and have a more beneficial influence on society. This research proposes that news reporters use an objective approach when reporting on personal behaviour, relying only on factual information. Concurrently, those who consume news and engage in moral judgements of personal behaviour should also do a comprehensive analysis of the moral circumstances of the involved parties, considering justice from several perspectives. The primary focus of this article is to undertake a comprehensive examination of the influence of persons who get significant media attention. Additionally, the paper proposes some solutions that may serve as valuable references for other researchers. Simultaneously, it is important to acknowledge several limitations in existing research, including the absence of a comprehensive categorization of social news with respect to its influence on human behaviour, as well as the lack of analysis on the diverse societal consequences resulting from public attention directed towards various news categories. In order to enhance the practical application of future research, it is necessary to categorise and analyse individual behaviours according to their respective categories and societal ramifications.

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