

“The Controversy over a Teacher’s First Escape in the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake”: Exploring Folk-mentality Reflected via the Internet

Yang Liu (Corresponding author)

Department of Psychology, Qufu Normal University
57 Jing Xuan Rd W., Qufu 273165, Shandong, China
E-mail: hongjunceo@163.com

Bencheng Liu

College of Literature, Qufu Normal University, China

Lili Ai

Department of Psychology, Qufu Normal University, China

Xuefeng Gao

Department of Psychology, Qufu Normal University, China

Abstract

This study extracted the netizen’s comments about Meizhong Fan’s case by using the method of systematic sampling on the Homepage of MSN China. It employed a method of content analysis to explore the folk-mentality reflected via the Internet. The study shows that both the affirmative and the negative netizens don’t have significant differences in the comment dates. Both of them tend to report comments at the weekend. But, both the affirmative and the negative netizens have significant differences in the comment time. The affirmative netizens are significantly more than the negative netizens in browsing the Internet in the daytime, and at night the negative netizens are significantly more than the affirmative netizens in browsing the Internet. Both the affirmative and the negative netizens have significant differences in dialectical dimension, and the affirmative netizens are tend to be dialectical. Both the affirmative and the negative messages have significant differences between emotional / rational dimensions, between the forgivable / unforgivable dimensions and also between the aggressive / unaggressive dimensions. The folk-mentality of netizens to the Meizhong Fan case tends to be emotional, unforgivable and aggressive.

Keywords: Internet, Content analysis, Folk-mentality, Irrational, Forgiveness, Aggressiveness

1. Introduction

On May 12, 2008, at 14:28, the Wenchuan earthquake took place, which was the most intense disaster since the founding of China. On May 18, 2008, the State Council of the People’s Republic of China announced 19th May to 21th May in 2008 as the national mourning days in remember of fellowmen who died in Wenchuan earthquake.

The teacher named Meizhong Fan, who worked in Guangya Middle School of Dujiangyan in Sichuan Province, fled to safety zone ahead of the entire class after the earthquake. And later he said on his blog complacently: “I have never been a brave person who only cares about my own life”, “I am a man of pursuing freedom and justice, but never sacrifice oneself for others! At the moment of life or death, only for my daughter, I might consider to make sacrifice. Others, even my mother, I won’t make sacrifice.” (Wang, 2008)

According to this phenomenon, netizens discussed furiously on the Homepage of MSN China. The affirmative netizens thought that was understandable. Selection of the first escape in times of crisis is an instinct. He is an ordinary man first and then a teacher. As he said, “Putting others before oneself or sacrifice is an option, but not virtue”. It’s an individual freedom to save others’ life or protect oneself. The negative netizens thought that was

against a teacher's morals, this action makes student lose trust and respect for teacher. More importantly, Meizhong Fan also said complacently that "he even doesn't save his mother", which is not only against virtue, but also loses the minimal conscience of human being (Wang, 2008) Up to 10:50 on August 15th, 2008, the affirmative netizens' votes had reached 93088, the negative netizens' votes 69277, the affirmative comments 3314, and the negative comments 3574.

Chinese scholar Yiyin Yang said (2006, PP.117-131), social mentality was the social mood state among the whole society or social community/category in a period, which is the sum of social sentiment, social consensus and social values. Social mentality is manifested through the society's prevalence, fashion, public opinion and communitarian's feeling of social life, confidence to the future, social motive, social emotion and so on. It is interacted with the mainstream ideology, which has fuzzy, potential and emotional impact to the social behavior through the mechanisms of social identity, emotions infection etc. It comes from the homogeneity of the social individual mentality, but not the same as the sum of the individual mentality. It's a newly generated psychological phenomenon possessed of innate character and function, reflecting the macro psychological relationship formed by mutual construction between individuals and society. Group mentality is another similar concept. Chinese scholar Jiangang Huang (2004) continued the discussion of group mentality of Lebone and Freud, and held that group mentality "actually refers to a state of mind and psychological tendencies emerged after an individual obtaining a 'psychological group', and pointed out that group mentality had ten abstract characteristics (① objectivity ② globality ③ systematicness ④ character of self-assembling ⑤ primitiveness ⑥ dynamics ⑦ chemical ⑧ indirection ⑨ potentiality ⑩ contradictoriness) and eight concrete characteristics (① scenical ② potentiality ③ conformity ④ emotionality ⑤ randomness ⑥ interactivity ⑦ randomness ⑧ explosive)

The 6th national congress of Chinese Social Psychology Association in October 2006 was held in Huangshan, Anhui Province. During the meeting, Zhaoxu Li put forward the suggestion of carrying out research for Folk (culture) Psychology for the first time, and he said Folk (culture) Psychology research was beneficial for the expansion of psychology research field. The research on the law of the masses' mental activities will not only improve the exchange between Cognitive Science and Neuroscience, and constitute the crucial supplement to them, more fundamentally, but also reveal that there is culture difference between the East and the West in fundamental level or not as great as we imagine. (Qu, 2007)

Folk mentality belongs to Folk Cultural Psychology research. The so-called folk-mentality is feelings of non-official mainstream, non-academic and non-logical orientation. In middle and low society, formed from (individuals or groups) social change and human evolution under which the specific condition of social life. By the end of June 2008, Chinese netizens have reached 253 million and the rate of China's netizens has reached 19.1% (CNNIC, 2008). We can see that the scale of Chinese netizens has developed fast, and remarks of netizens on the Internet are overwhelming. Therefore, we believe that the comments can be a reflection of folk mentality.

This paper explored folk mentality, which is a reflection of the Meizhong Fan's case by the method of content analysis. Firstly we explored the content structure of responds of both affirmative and the negative netizens, then analyzed the differences of mentality in dimensions of dialectical, emotional / rational, forgiveness, aggressive. And according to the difference between the affirmative and the negative messages we found the mentality tendency of the whole netizens.

2. Method

2.1 Content analysis

Content analysis is a kind of quantitative analysis method based on qualitative research. It transforms the literature represented by language to data, and the result will be analyzed by statistics. Through analysis the "quantity" of the literature, we can find out the features that can reflect the essence of the literature and be easy to count, which can overcome the subjectivity and the uncertainty of qualitative research, and reach the more accurate and deeper comprehend to the nature of the literature (Ma, 2000, PP.346-349)

The characteristics of content analysis are objective, systemic, quantitatively. Content analysis is a quantitative analysis method based on of qualitative analysis. Quantification is the remarkable characteristic. It transforms the information represented by language to digital data, and the result will be described by statistics. Through quantitative analysis of the information, we can find out the features that can reflect the essence of the information and be easy to count, which can overcome the subjectivity and the uncertainty of qualitative research, in order to reach the more accurate and deeper comprehend to the nature of information (Zhou & Qiu, 2005, PP.594-599).

As this research is aimed to analyze and explore the messages of Meizhong Fan case, we want to explore folk mentality reflected from the Internet. Content analysis is very suitable for the research.

2.2 Sampling

We firstly collected messages on the Homepage of MSN China

(<http://msn.y.net.com/eventmsnpk.jsp?eid=40757908&cd=life>) using systematic sampling, respectively 300 comments of both sides were began to extract from the 250th layer to the 1147th layer (per-250th-layer has been shielded in negative side.) every three layers. Sampling time span is from May 31 2008 18:10:27 to June 7, 2008 15:22:19. Comments are regarded as invalid samples as follows: (1) no comment on content, (2) letters, numbers, punctuation, (3) directly copy others' replies. Based on the statistics analysis, after deleting 36 invalid samples, there are 284 valid samples in affirmative side and 280 samples in negative side.

2.3 Design and steps

2.3.1 Date and time of comments

The dates of comments were divided into weekend (Saturday, Sunday) and working days (from Monday to Friday). There are three weekends in the selected samples: May 31 (Saturday), June 1 (Sunday), June 7 (Saturday), the rest is working days.

The time periods of comment were divided into "early in the morning (00:00:00-05:59:59)", "morning (06:00:00-11:59:59)", "afternoon (12:00:00-17:59:59)", "night (18:00:00-23:59:59)".

2.3.2 The principle for dividing units

Punctuation is regarded as demarcation. In the adjacent statements to this unit of analysis ahead or behind, there are some sentences elucidating additionally the unit, which are no longer established as a separate unit of analysis; Non-adjacent statements having the similar meaning of this unit can be regarded as a separate unit of analysis; Without punctuation, space serves as demarcation; The unit of analysis which isn't caused by Mei-zhong Fan case is treated as non-relevance. Netizens' comments were divided into 1430 units, and each comment of netizens was averagely divided into 2.54 units.

2.3.3 The principle for coding

As the principle of the bottom-up, the similar items are classified into the same category.

According to the principle, we firstly marked off the units, then simplified analysis unit as item, for example, "suggestions for dismissing xiao Fan" is simplified to "dismiss". Then we reduced items, using the way of "completely synonymous combination". The minority is merged into the majority. Such as "unworthy of a teacher", "shouldn't be a teacher", "unsuitable for a teacher" etc are merged into "unworthy of a teacher". But the homonym can't be merged, such as "selfishness" "scums". Then we collected the similar meaning of items together. For example, "selfishness", "shameless", "spit", "defector" etc are classified into "selfishness and shameless".

2.3.4 The analysis for items

The items are encoded into affirmative message, negative message and uncertain message. The item supporting and understanding Meizhong Fan is classified into affirmative message, and the item attacking and against Meizhong Fan is classified into negative message, the vague item is classified into uncertain message. There are 139 kinds of items, including 35 kinds of affirmative messages, 66 kinds of negative messages, 38 kinds of uncertain messages.

Items are divided in emotional / rational dimension: items with emotion are encoded into emotional; items with judgment and reasoning are encoded into rational; vague as uncertain. Zhang Pei-chu think that rational/emotional usually refers to the base point of some characteristic of things and new acknowledge of personality, or perspectives, cognitive attitude, tendency of thought and processing means facing problems. The so-called "rationality" pays attention to objective law, and analyzes various factors and the relationship between both of them calmly and rationally. Thereby, the "emotionality" attaches importance to subjective consciousness, orientation of intuition, feelings, sensation and experience (Zhang, 2006, PP.16-19).

Items are divided in forgivable/unforgivable dimension: items with sympathy and understanding, tolerance to Meizhong Fan are classified as forgivable; items with anger and hatred are classified as unforgivable; vague as uncertain. In psychology literature, forgiveness generally refers to two persons, one of them receives the severe and durable injury by the other in psychological, emotional, physical or moral aspect; Forgiveness is to make victims free of danger, hatred and fear, and an internal process which is no longer desired to revenge

violator(Denton&Martin,1998,PP.281-292). Pingleton defined forgiveness as that the victims give up revenging the offenders after being damaged (Pingleton, 1997, PP.403-413). Hargrave et al thought that forgiveness was that victims would not hate offenders (Hargrave & Sells, 1997, PP.41-53). North (1987, PP.336-352) thought forgiveness was that victims eliminated the anger and hatred to offenders, and treated him/her with compassion, mercy and love. These definitions focus on the mental changes of the injury victims. Enright and his colleagues expanded the definition of North, thought that forgiveness should include the cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses to the victims. And the definition of North only refers to emotional reaction of forgiveness. Therefore, they thought forgiveness was that the victim eliminated cognition, emotional and negative behavior, and that positive cognition, emotion and behavior appear (Enright, 1991). McCullough et al think that forgiveness is a series of processes of motive changes which prompt the victims empathize to offenders based on theories of empathy, altruism and accommodating. The process reduces the motive of revenging and alienation, and enhances the motive of being kind to violator, and causes compromise between victims and violators. They also point out that forgiveness is a process of prosocial motivation, not motive. (McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997, PP.321-336)

Items are divided in aggressive/unaggressive dimension: the items with snap, sneer and deny are classified as aggressive. For example: shameless. The rest is classified as the unaggressive. Anderso put forward the General Aggression Model (GAM), and he defined aggressive as the behavior that hurt others with purpose, and pointed out that “assaulters believe that aggressive behavior will do damages to target and the goal with motivation avoiding damages”(Anderson & Bushman, 2004,PP.27-51). Cricks & Dodge point out that aggressiveness comes from flaw and damage in individual social information processing. The aggressive individuals are more likely to focus on the aggressive stimulus, and tend to account for vague social environment information aggressively, and response aggressively. (Crick & Dodge, 1994, PP.74-101)

2.3.5 The dividing of dialectical

The comments with all affirmative items are “pure affirmative message”, and the comments with all negative items are “pure negative message”. The comments with affirmative items and negative items are “mixing message”. The comments with uncertain items are “uncertain message”. Our way of thinking is the “whole—analysis” (Nisbett, Peng, et.al., 2001,PP.291-310; Hou Yu-Bo, 2007,PP.211-216), will be mixed in the disputed event netizens comment “mixing message” and “uncertain message” as the dialectical comments, “pure affirmative message” and “pure negative message” as analytic comments.

2.3.6 Statistics and analysis

We make differences test on comment date, comment time and the affirmative/ negative item dimension. We also make differences test in emotional / rational dimension, the forgivable / unforgivable dimension and the aggressive/unaggressive dimension for both the affirmative and the negative messages, then in dialectical dimension. After statistics, we enter data into chi-square test 1.61 (exploited by Zi-Yue software) to make differences test. We also do descriptive statistics for the data.

2.4 The reliability analysis for coding

The reliability of content analysis refers to the degree of consistency that more than two researchers analyzed the same materials according to the same dimension, to ensure the reliability of the outcome of content analysis reliably and objectively (Dong, 2004).

The formula for calculating the reliability

$$R(\text{Reliability}) = \frac{n \times \text{Mutual Assent of Average}}{1 + (n - 1) \times \text{Mutual Assent of Average}}$$

The n represents the number of judge, mutual assent of average is the mutual assent degree between two judges and the formula for calculating:

$$\text{Mutual Assent} = \frac{2M}{N1+N2}$$

The M represents the number of agreed items, the N1 represents the analysis number of the first judge, and the N2 represents the analysis number of the second judge (Dong, 2004).

The pretest coder of this study was undertaken by the researcher and another student majoring in psychology. 20 messages are selected randomly from valid samples as pretest samples. Results show that reliability of all kinds of items is from 0.919 to 0.987. The reliability between two coders is above 0.90, and the coding results conform to objective demand (Table 1).

3. Results

3.1 Date and time for comments (Table2) (Table3)

After χ^2 test as shown in table 2, there is no significant difference between affirmative and negative netizens' comment date ($\chi^2(1, N=564)=0.54 < \chi^2_{0.05}(1)=3.84$, $p > 0.05$), the difference isn't significant. Both the affirmative and the negative netizens tend to publish messages on weekends.

After χ^2 test, the affirmative and the negative netizens have significant differences in comment time, $\chi^2(3, N=564)=64.54 > \chi^2_{0.05}(3)=7.81$, $p < 0.01$. The difference is significant, we should do further test.

We merge "morning" and "afternoon" into "daytime", "night" and "dawn" into "night", then do difference test for the comment time, $\chi^2(1, N=564)=13.22 > \chi^2_{0.05}(1)=3.84$, $p < 0.01$ the difference is significant. The affirmative netizens are more likely to go through Internet on daytime than the negative netizens, and the negative netizens tend to go through Internet at night.

3.2 Analysis of difference in the affirmative and the negative message dimension (Table4)

After χ^2 test, the affirmative and the negative netizens have significant differences in the affirmative and negative message dimension, $\chi^2(1, N=1196)=264.71 > \chi^2_{0.05}(1)=3.84$, $p < 0.01$. The affirmative comments are significantly more than the negative side in affirmative messages dimension, and in negative messages the contrary is the case. From this it can also be seen that there are affirmative-message-based (43.87%) in comments of affirmative netizens and negative-message-based (78.02%) in negative side.

3.3 Analysis of difference in emotional/rational dimension (Table5)

After the test, the affirmative and the negative messages have significant differences in the emotional/rational dimension, $\chi^2(1, N=1191)=320.65 > \chi^2_{0.05}(1)=3.84$, $p < 0.01$. The difference is significant. Messages in negative side are significantly more than the other one in emotional dimension, and in rational dimension is contrary.

3.4 The analysis of difference in forgivable / unforgivable dimension (table 6)

The affirmative and the negative messages have significant differences in the forgivable / unforgivable dimension. The negative messages are significantly more than the affirmative messages in forgivable dimension, and the affirmative messages are more significantly than negative messages in unforgivable dimension.

3.5 The analysis of difference in aggressive / unaggressive dimension (Table7)

After χ^2 test, the affirmative and the negative messages have significant differences in the aggressive / unaggressive dimension, $\chi^2(1, N=1196)=650.20 > \chi^2_{0.05}(1)=3.84$, $p < 0.01$. The difference is significant. The negative messages are more significantly than the affirmative messages in aggressive dimension.

3.6 Content category of comments

Affirmative messages (35 kinds) (see figure 1, table 8) are divided into "sympathy and understanding", "tolerance and forgiveness", "life instinct", "true in itself", "reflection", "idol and example", "others" etc.

The negative messages (68 kinds, figure 2, table 9) are divided into "character problem" "despise and spurn" "duty" "introspection" "laugh and irony" "irony" "dismissal and suspension" "others" etc.

3.7 Content analysis of comments (see table10, table11, table12)

The netizens tend to be emotional. (table 10)

The comments of netizens tend to be unforgivable. Here, the proportion of unforgivable and forgivable items is 52.6:25.3, which is different from the former sentence "up to 10:50 on August 15th, 2008, the affirmative side's votes had reached 93088, the negative votes 69277, the affirmative netizens' comments 3314, and the negative netizens' comments 3574." Firstly, because the affirmative comments have a large part of negative message (32.36%) (see table 4); Secondly, averagely every negative netizens' comment is decomposed into 2.78 units, which is more than the affirmative side (2.30 units averagely), so clearly the ratio of the unforgivable comments is more than the forgivable ones.

The netizens tend to be unaggressive.

3.8 Dialectical comments of both sides (see table13)

After test, there is remarkably difference in dialectical dimension, $\chi^2(1, N=564) = 14.43 > \chi^2_{0.05(1)} = 3.84$, $p < 0.01$. The difference is significant. Comments of affirmative netizens' tend to be dialectical relative to ones of negative side.

4. Discussion and conclusion

4.1 Time of comment

In reactions triggered by Meizhong Fan case, the results show that the affirmative netizens spent significantly more time than the negative side during the daytime online, and at night the contrary is the case. And the reason may have to do with that people merely issue excessive remarks governed by morality during the day and that in the evening people will inevitably issue excessive remarks due to freedom of thought and without too many morality constraints.

According to the survey, the main body of netizens in china is still the younger generation under 30, which accounts for 68.6% of Chinese netizens (CNNIC, 2008). Both sides tend to publish comments on weekends, so we can speculate that surfing on internet is a way of pastime for young man.

4.2 Non-rational folk morality reflected

In the comments of Meizhong Fan case, "emotional" items account for 60.5%. Thus, we can see that netizens treat it with emotional view in response to Meizhong Fan, related to netizens of younger. As the main body of Internet users in China is mainly young people, young people's thoughts, ideas and views are still at a very early stage, so it is difficult to form rational and objective understanding to the social events.

In emotional / rational dimension, the affirmative netizens' comments are significantly more than the other one in rational dimension. Rationality refers to face the society objectively, and emotionality is a manifest of mood which is one-sided understanding for the thing, lack of analysis and understanding. With affirmative-message-based of affirmative netizens and negative-message-based of negative netizens, it can be inferred that comments of affirmative netizens tend to be more rational than ones of negative netizens. To construct a harmonious society, we need to train citizens with rational concept, which is important for that. However, there is much difference between the current Chinese citizens (especially young) and rational citizens demanded. Netizens showed emotional mentality mainly when facing Meizhong Fan case, which is not good for constructing the harmonious society. A really harmonious society should be rational citizens based. Therefore, we must cultivate rational citizens (especially young groups) for constructing the harmonious society, which can promote social development overall, steadily, harmoniously, sustainably.

4.3 Unforgivable folk morality reflected

Facing Meizhong Fan case, both the affirmative and the negative messages have significant differences in the forgivable/unforgivable dimension. The affirmative messages are significantly more than the negative messages in forgivable dimension, and the negative messages are significantly more than the affirmative messages in unforgivable dimension. In the affirmative and the negative messages, we see the unforgivable messages account for 52.6%. According to this, we can see the netizens are mainly unforgivable for Meizhong Fan. Because the main body of Internet users in China is mainly young people who are more likely to be emotional, of one-side understanding of society, and often take a negative attitude towards bad social phenomenon, it's hard for them to face the case with tolerant heart.

The harmonious society we want to build is composed of various groups of people, where there are people there are contradictions, contacts certainly will occur. Only there is mutual respect among people, understanding, supporting and living in harmony, they can do well in their own job, at the same time, make progress together and realize personal existence value. For reaching this goal, each member should have forgivable attitude. They can put oneself in one's shoes and be considerate facing actual problems. If a person is too harsh, simple things can be changed to the complicated, but if tolerance, complex things can be simplified. Therefore, people should have forgivable attitude.

4.4 Aggressive folk-mentality reflected

Facing Meizhong Fan case, the aggressive items account for 46.0%. So, we can see netizens show aggressiveness in response to Meizhong Fan case. As the main body of netizens is young people, who are more likely to impulse and speak rudely, it is unavoidable to talk aggressively. Additionally, there is significant difference in emotional/rational dimension, messages in negative side are more significantly than ones in affirmative side in aggressive dimension. Due to positive-comment-based in affirmative netizens and negative-comment-based in

negative ones, it can be inferred that internet users in negative side tend to be aggressive relative to affirmative side.

Aggressiveness can prompt aggressive behaviors. If most groups in society are aggressive, which can cause interpersonal tension, it is difficult to make hard relationships between people. Therefore, to construct a socialist harmonious society, we need to create an altruistic, harmonious environment, which can help us construct harmonious society.

Facing Meizhong Fan case, the unaggressive items account for 54.0%. Thus, we can see in responds to Meizhong Fan case, although netizens showing aggression, most of them still hold an “unaggressive” attitude.

4.5 Dialectical comments of both sides

Facing Meizhong Fan case, we can see that there is significant difference in dialectical dimension, comments of internet users in affirmative side tend to be dialectical. Facing this case, we hope the netizens not only see the human nature of Meizhong Fan, but also the side of violating morality. We should look at problems all-sidedly.

Cultural psychology research shows that easterners' thinking mode is holistic: it emphasizes relationship, the harmony among the body, the environment and environmental impacts, admits contradict and learn to view the world. While the westerners' way of thinking is analytical: it emphasizes the nature of something and looking at problems logically, non-contradictorily (Nisbett, Peng, et al., 2001, PP.291-310; Hou, 2007, PP.211-216). However, data from published comments of Chinese netizens does not show that dialectical (whole) thinking is obviously better than the analytical thinking. So the hypothesis that psychological differences will discount reflected from the folk culture is proved preliminary, “non-college” trait of the folk culture psychology is reflected.

To construct a harmonious society is an innovate activity in real life. Therefore, we should face all kinds of unharmonious factors, and solve the unharmonious factors with positive attitudes. To discard the linear and one-sided thinking, we should follow dialectical thinking appropriate to construct harmonious society, so we can grasp the key of the construction, and pay attention to whole situation in order to keep order and closely related tension among concrete constructions.

4.6 Suggestions

Facing Meizhong Fan case, netizens showed non-emotional, unforgivable, aggressive etc negative mentality. Therefore, we put forward the following suggestions for this situation: firstly, strengthen the leading role of the public opinion. Propaganda and news reports should give prominence to positive information and pay less attention to dark side of man. Zemin Jiang said: “correct direction of public opinion is a fortune of the party and the people, wrong direction is a disaster”. Secondly, to publicize and strengthen the Chinese traditional culture is helpful to improve the quality of the thinking mode, for example, Zhong-Yong thinking etc, so as to make the society form a harmonious and stable mentality. Zhongfang Yang (2001) pointed that according to Zhong-Yong thinking, the opposing polarities coexistence is a natural thing. Zhong-Yong thinking regards the two polarities as Yin and Yang, not like the western thinking seeking the inherent, constant characteristics of things (elementalism), but two kinds of opposing polarities. Zhong-Yong practice thinking is that the actors should make a good choice between two of them in order to achieve the best action. Thirdly, education department should strengthen the students' moral education, especially pay attention to guide teenagers forming good morals. The task of moral education is to develop moral thinking way as the goal, to stimulate the conflict between moral cognitions and to improve the judgment in the process of solving conflicts, and in the end to develop individual moral behaviors.

This paper just digs folk mentality facing Meizhong Fan case to throw away a brick in order to get a gem. The internet penetration rate is only 19.1% (CNNIC, 2008). So, the folk mentality through the Internet is only a small part, we will do the further research in scope and depth next step.

Besides, the Internet station do not contain personal information, so it's hard to analyze the structure of comments group, characteristics and folk mentality of each group, which is a pity of this research.

References

- Anderson, C. A., & Bushman, B. J. (2002). Human aggression. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 27-51.
- CNNIC. (2008). *Statistical Survey Report on the Internet Development in China*. China Internet Network Information center.
- Crick, N. R., & Dodge, K. A. (1994). A review and reformulation of social information-processing mechanisms in children's social adjustment. *Psychological Bulletin*, 115 (1), 74-101.

- Denton, R. T., & Martin, M. W. (1998). Defining forgiveness: An empirical exploration of process and role. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 26(4), 281-292.
- Dong, Q. (2004). *Research Methods in Education and Psychology (Revision)*. Beijing: Beijing normal university publishing group.
- Enright, R. D., the Human Development Study Group. (1991). The moral development of forgiveness. In W. Kurtines & J. Gerwitz (Eds.), *Handbook of Moral Behavior and Development* (pp. 123-152). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hargrave, T. D., & Sells, J. N. (1997). The development of a forgiveness scale. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 23 (1), 41-53.
- Hou, Y. B. (2007). Research progress in thinking styles from the perspective of cultural psychology. *Advances in Psychological Science*, 15 (2), 211-216.
- Huang, J. G. (2004). *Psychology of crowd*. Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press.
- Ma, W. F. (2000). Application of content analysis method in the social and scientific information science. *Information Science*, 18(4), 346-349.
- McCullough, M. E., Worthington, E. L., & Rachal, K. C. (1997). Interpersonal forgiving in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 321-336.
- Nisbett, R., Peng, K., Choi, I., & Norenzani, A. (2001). Culture and system of thought: Analytic and holistic cognition. *Psychological Review*, 108, 291-310.
- North, J. (1987). Wrongdoing and forgiveness. *Philosophy*, 62, 336-352.
- Pingleton, J. P. (1997). Why we don't forgive: A biblical and object relations theoretical model for understanding failures in the forgiveness process. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 25, 403-413.
- Qu, Q. Q. (2007). *The concept of ghost viewed by university students*. Thesis of Bachelor, Qu fu: Qufu Normal University.
- Wang, S. (2008). The Controversy over a Teacher's First Escape. [Online] Available: <http://msn.yinet.com/eventmsnpk.jsp?eid=40757908&cd=life>. 18:10:27 May 31, 2008—15:22:19 June 7, 2008.
- Yang, Y. Y. (2006). The psychological link between the individual and society: the concept of social mentality. *Sociology Studies*, (4), 117-131.
- Yang, Z. F. (2001). *How to understand the Chinese*. Taipei: Yuan-Liou Publishing Co., Ltd.
- Zhang, P. C. (2006). Emotional / rational and self-recognize. *Shanghai Artist*, 2006, (4):16-19.
- Zhou, L. M., & Qiu, J. P. (2005). On the web-based content analysis. *Journal of the China Society for Scientific and Technical Information*, 2005, 24(5):594-599.

Acknowledgements

The research described in this paper was partly supported by China Postdoctoral Science Foundation funded project. (20070410478).

Table 1. Test of content analysis reliability

| | Item | Affirmative and negative messages | Emotional / rational dimension | Forgivable / unforgivable dimension | Aggressive / unaggressive dimension | Category |
|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Agreeable number | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 |
| Unagreeable number | 1 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Completely agreeable number | 39 | 34 | 34 | 37 | 39 | 36 |
| Mutual assent of average | 0.975 | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0.925 | 0.975 | 0.90 |
| Reliability | 0.987 | 0.919 | 0.919 | 0.961 | 0.987 | 0.947 |

Table 2. Date for comments

| | The affirmative netizens | The negative netizens | Total |
|-------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Working day | 8 | 11 | 19 |
| Weekend | 276 | 269 | 545 |
| Total | 284 | 280 | 564 |

Table 3. Time for comments

| | The affirmative netizens | The negative netizens | Total |
|-----------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Morning | 123 | 135 | 258 |
| Afternoon | 61 | 4 | 65 |
| Night | 69 | 118 | 187 |
| Dawn | 31 | 23 | 54 |
| Total | 284 | 280 | 564 |

Table 4. The statistics of comments

| | The affirmative netizens' comment | | The negative netizens' comment | | Total |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage | |
| The affirmative message | 286 | 43.87% | 92 | 11.83% | 378 |
| The negative message | 211 | 32.36% | 607 | 78.02% | 828 |
| Uncertain message | 155 | 23.77% | 79 | 10.15% | 234 |
| Total | 652 | 100% | 778 | 100% | 1430 |

Table 5. Messages in the emotional/rational dimension

| | The affirmative message | The negative message | Uncertain message | Total |
|-----------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Emotional | 129 | 700 | 36 | 865 |
| Rational | 246 | 116 | 127 | 489 |
| Uncertain | 3 | 2 | 71 | 76 |
| Total | 378 | 818 | 234 | 1430 |

Table 6. Affirmative and negative messages in the forgivable / unforgivable dimension

| | The affirmative message | The negative message | Uncertain message | Total |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Forgivable | 362 | 0 | 0 | 362 |
| Unforgivable | 0 | 752 | 0 | 752 |
| Uncertain | 16 | 66 | 234 | 316 |
| Total | 378 | 818 | 234 | 1430 |

Table 7. Messages in aggressive / unaggressive dimension

| | Affirmative message | Negative message | Uncertain message | Total |
|--------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Aggressive | 4 | 654 | 0 | 658 |
| Unaggressive | 374 | 164 | 234 | 772 |
| Total | 378 | 818 | 234 | 1430 |

Table 8. The sum of the category of affirmative comments

| Category | Items |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Sympathy and understanding(92) | put oneself in another's position(34); layfolk(24); understandable(21); mental pressure(5); victims(5); overcritical(3) |
| Tolerance and forgiveness(83) | tolerance(57); expression improper(20); behavior improper(4); ability limited(2) |
| Life instinct(82) | instinct(38); behavior proper(24); survival(18); normal(2) |
| True in itself(81) | honest(32); right(18); individual freedom(11); within the law(8); free and clear(7); harmless(2); freedom of speech(2); self- protection(1) |
| Reflection(20) | occupation discrimination(14); disrespect him(4); lucky(1); low key(1) |
| Idol and example(10) | admire(5); example(2); Peking University's pride(1); justice(1); industriousness(1) |
| Others(10) | hypocritical commentator(4); low treatment of teachers(3); life equality(2); not necessarily violate(1) |
| Total(378) | 35kinds |

Table 9. Category of negative netizens' comments

| Categories | Items |
|------------------------------|--|
| Character problem(248) | Without any sense of shame(117); impiety(44); selfishness(44); wickedness(29); unhuman(17); without conscience(13); unforgivable(5); bad character(5); pricks of conscience(2); excessive(1); deliberately do something one knows is wrong(1) |
| Despise and spurn(203) | curse(48); spit(28); degenerate(20); Peking University's shame(19); animal(12); retribution(10); non-human(7); quibble(5); indignant(5); despise(4); Chinese disgrace(4); beat him(3); should not being born(3); Sichuan's shame(2); beast(1); drag out an ignoble existence(1); unwanted(1) |
| Duty(162) | be unworthy of teacher(77); teacher's responsibility(27); stoop virtue of the teaching profession(25); irresponsible(10); mislead the young(6); responsibility(5); professional ethics (3); breach of duty(3); ineptitude(2); defend his wife against an injustice(2); obligation(1); be unworthy of father(1) |
| Introspection(75) | don't say(35); lamentable(21); introspect(13); apologize in public(2); unwise(1); too rational(1); atonement(1); strengthen ethics of profession(1) |
| Despise and spurn(51) | show(26); speculation(20); ignore him(5) |
| Laugh and irony(49) | satirize(19); lamster(9); death-in-life(9); psychological problems(8); receive education needlessly(2); "thinker" (1); change name(1) |
| Dismissal and suspension(24) | fire(20); resign(2); unemployment(2) |
| Others(6) | underline of a person(2); twist humanity(1); violate possible(1); investigate legal obligation(1); speechless(1) |
| Total(818) | 66kinds |

Table10. The sum of comments in emotional/rational dimension

| Emotional/rational dimension | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Emotional | 865 | 60.5% |
| Rational | 489 | 34.2% |
| Uncertain | 76 | 5.3% |
| Total | 1430 | 100% |

Table 11. The sum of comments in forgivable/unforgivable dimension

| The forgivable / unforgivable dimension | Number | Percentage |
|---|--------|------------|
| Forgivable | 362 | 25.3% |
| Unforgivable | 752 | 52.6% |
| Uncertain | 316 | 22.1% |
| Total | 1430 | 100% |

Table 12. The sum of comments in aggressive/unaggressive dimension

| Aggressive / unaggressive dimension | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Aggressive | 658 | 46.0% |
| Unaggressive | 772 | 54.0% |
| Total | 1430 | 100% |

Table 13. The sum of dialectical comments of both sides

| | The affirmative netizens' comment | The negative netizens' comment | Total |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|
| Dialectical comment | 159 | 112 | 271 |
| Analytical comments | 125 | 168 | 293 |
| Total | 284 | 280 | 564 |

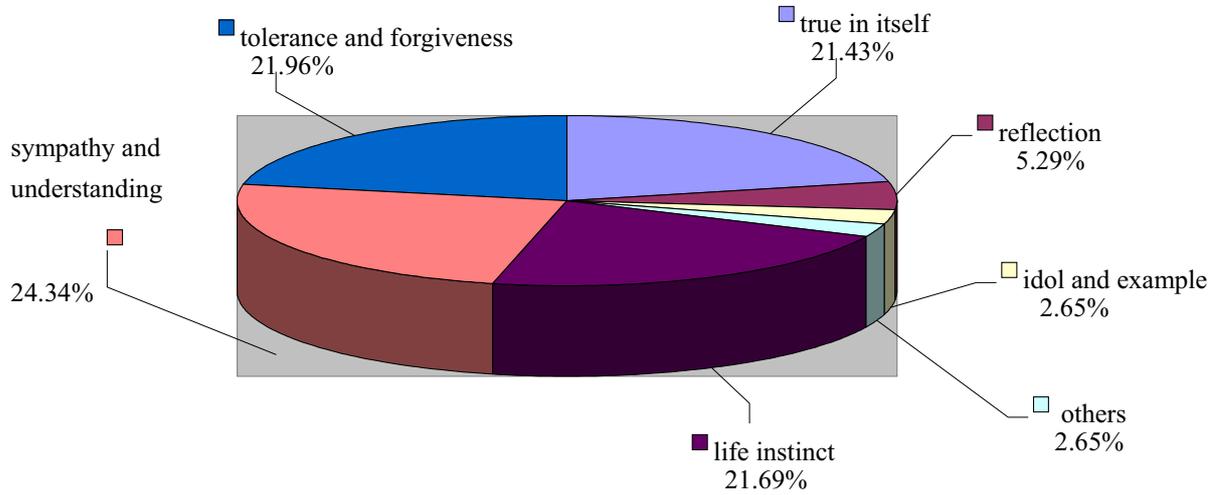


Figure 1. Category of affirmative comments

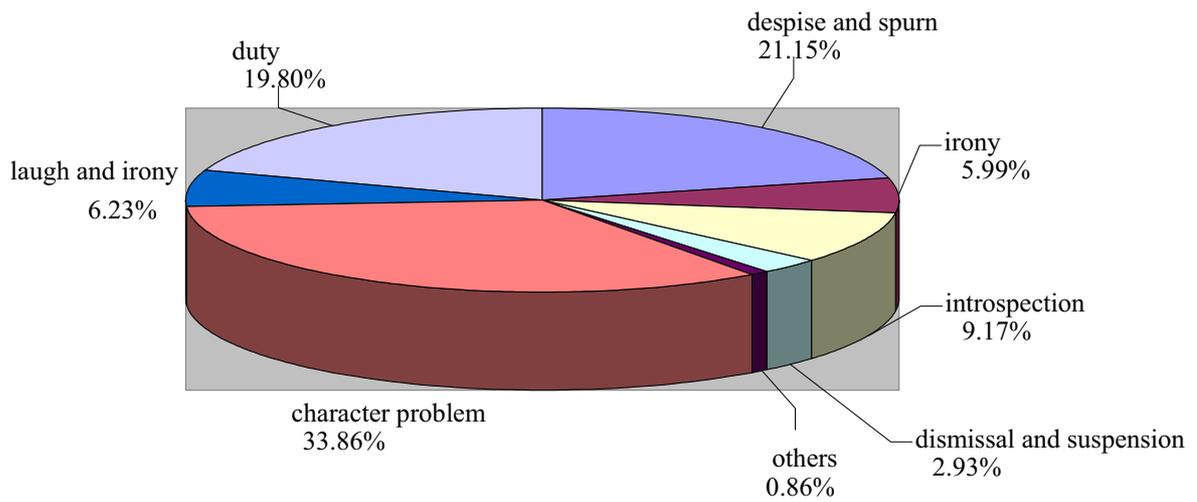


Figure 2. Category of negative netizens' comments