HOW DOES THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO REACT TO SOCIAL CRISIS

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Abstract

In order to examine the Chinese government’s strategies and stances reflected on its social media account during a social crisis, this research uses a content analysis of 391 Weibo posts from four official government accounts. The researcher uses one-way ANOVA, Chi-square and independent-sample t test to compare the strategies and stance reflected in different phrases and between two types of government accounts.

The results reveal that the Chinese government tended to adopt an accommodative stance towards social crisis. Among four government accounts, the posts from government-controlled media accounts showed a less accommodative stance. Moreover, posts from government-controlled media accounts are more likely to try explaining the cause of crisis, while the posts government-agency accounts are making promises for the future like establishing policies to secure a better environment and clean the air. Finally discussion focuses on the speculations that might lead to the results.