

A Study on the Current Situation and Improvement Strategies of New Media Literacy for Students in Normal Colleges and Universities—A Case Study of Nanchang Normal University

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Abstract: *With the development and popularization of new media technology, people's ways of obtaining, communicating, and disseminating information have undergone profound changes. The level of new media literacy among students in normal colleges and universities not only affects their own growth and development but also relates to the quality and effectiveness of media education for primary and secondary school students. Taking Nanchang Normal College as an example, this study analyzes the current situation and existing problems of the new media literacy of normal students through questionnaires and interviews and puts forward the corresponding improvement strategies, including carry out multi-form and multi-channel popularization and publicity of new media literacy education, establish a systematic new media literacy education curriculum system, strengthen the diversification of teaching methods and evaluation methods, strengthening the expertise level of new media literacy for teachers in normal colleges and universities.*

Keywords: *normal colleges; college student; new media literacy; cultivation*

1. Introduction

New media technology refers to information communication technologies characterized by digitalization, networking, and intelligence, such as the Internet, mobile communications, satellite broadcasting, et cetera. The development and popularization of new media technology have profoundly changed how public acquire, communicate and disseminate information and have significantly impacted public's ways of thinking. New media literacy has become an important concept and ability in this context. New media literacy refers to public's ability to effectively choose, understand, evaluate, and use various information sources and forms of information in the new media environment as well as the ability to have a clear understanding and critical awareness of their roles and responsibilities in information dissemination. New media literacy includes the following aspects: first, the ability to understand, recognize and use visual, auditory, and other sensory information; second, the ability to control and transform digital media; third, the ability to disseminate and reprocess digital content universally; fourth, the ability to question, analyze and evaluate digital content; fifth, they should have a clear understanding of their positions and roles in the digital environment and abide by the corresponding norms and moral principles[1].

As students of normal universities who are an important source of future primary and secondary school teachers, they not only need to have a high level of new media literacy to adapt to social development and change but also need to apply it to education and teaching practice, improve the quality and effect of education, and guide primary and secondary school students to cultivate good new media literacy. Therefore, exploring the current situation and improvement strategies for students' new media literacy in normal colleges and universities is significant.

2. Method

In the face of the complex and changing social and media environment, correct understanding and good use of new media is an essential quality for contemporary normal college students [2]. In order to

deeply understand the expertise level of the new media literacy of students in normal colleges and universities, This study takes Nanchang Normal University as an example to investigate and analyze the current situation of new media literacy among students in normal colleges and universities through questionnaires and sample interviews, aiming to find out the problems existing in the process of cultivation of new media literacy in normal colleges and universities at this stage and propose corresponding solutions.

The questionnaire referred to Chen Shihua's "The Status and Deficiencies of New Media Literacy of College Students Based on the Survey of a University in Nanchang", and the problems have been simplified and optimized to be more in line with the normal colleges' current situation, which mainly includes three dimensions: the basic understanding of new media, the evaluation of new media literacy, and the application of new media. The questionnaire includes four parts: The first part is a basic situation survey, including gender, grade, major, et cetera; The second part is a basic understanding survey of new media, which mainly examines whether the subjects have a clear understanding of the basic characteristics and functions of new media, such as the diversification of content, the diversification of communication channels and forms, the rapidization of communication time, the popularization of agenda setting, et cetera; The third part is the investigation of evaluation of new media literacy. Focusing on the subject's ability to discern the truth, understanding the moral cognition, legal cognition and analytical ability of normal college students in the process of using new media.; The fourth part is a survey on application of new media literacy aiming to understand respondents' ability to use new media flexibly to obtain information to meet their own learning, work and life needs, and whether they can produce information independently to participate in social affairs. The questionnaire is designed with a 5-level Likert scale, with five options for each question: strongly agree (5 points), agree (4 points), neutral (3 points), disagree (2 points), strongly disagree (1 point).[3] According to the analysis, a total of 230 questionnaires were distributed in this study, excluding invalid questionnaires with a time of less than 60 seconds, there were 213 valid questionnaires, with a recovery rate of 92.6%.

With the rapid development of information networks, new technologies have spawned new ways of communication. The old barriers to information dissemination have been broken, and a new media system is being formed. "Everyone is the medium; everything is the medium" has become possible. In the face of the complex and changing social and media environment, correct understanding and good use of new media is an essential quality for contemporary normal college students [2]. In order to deeply understand the current situation of the new media literacy of students in normal colleges and universities, this study takes Nanchang Normal University as an example to investigate and analyze the current situation of the new media literacy of students in normal colleges and universities in the form of questionnaires and sample interviews, aiming to find out the problems existing in the process of talent training in normal colleges and universities at this stage and propose corresponding solutions.

Based on the questionnaire survey, 10 students were randomly selected from the questionnaire respondent as interviewees and conducted in-depth interviews with them through WeChat video or voice for about 30 minutes. The interviews mainly focus on the following aspects: first, their understanding and opinions on new media literacy; second, the problems and confusion they faced in using new media; third, what needs and suggestions they have to improve their new media literacy; fourth, what expectations and intentions they had in normal colleges to carry out new media literacy education.

3. Results

Based on the data collected by questionnaire survey and interview method, this study has the following research results:

3.1 Students in normal colleges and universities have a deviation in their understanding of the new media literacy

Students in normal colleges and universities generally realize the importance of new media literacy in today's society and education, but they do not have a clear and systematic understanding of its specific connotation and standards. According to the data from the questionnaire and the interview information, students in normal colleges and universities have a strong ability to accept and use new media. However, students often only focus on how to use new media tools or obtain information, ignoring the ability to judge and criticize the quality, authenticity, values and other aspects of information, and the ability to recognize and reflect on their own role and responsibilities in information dissemination. For example, when using new media tools, some students do not pay attention to protecting their personal

information and privacy, making them easily susceptible to online fraud, harassment and other infringements; when obtaining information, some students do not check the source and reliability of the information, belief in online rumors or fake news, or even share them with others, causing distortion and misinformation; some students do not consider the impact and consequences of information, make irresponsible remarks at will, infringe on the rights and interests of others or hurt the feelings of others, causing online violence or public opinion crisis.

3.2 New media is a double-edged sword for students in normal colleges and universities

Students in normal colleges and universities widely use various new media tools and platforms in their daily lives, such as WeChat, Weibo, TikTok, Zhihu, etc. They use these new media to obtain knowledge, information, entertainment and other content, as well as communicate and interact with others to meet their learning, living, emotions and other needs. The reasons and motivations for their use of new media are mainly in the following aspects: firstly, to adapt to the development trend of informatization and digitalization in today's society, and improve their information literacy and skills; secondly, to expand their knowledge and horizons, understand different opinions and information, and enhance their innovation ability and critical thinking; thirdly, to seek the content and activities that interest them, satisfy their curiosity and thirst for knowledge, and enrich their spiritual life; fourthly, to establish and maintain their social network, share their thoughts and feelings with others, gain the recognition and support from others, enhance their confidence and self-esteem. In the questionnaire and interviews, their attitude towards using new media is generally positive, believing that new media has brought them a lot of convenience and benefits, and also contributes to their professional development and teaching practice.

However, they also face some problems and difficulties in using new media. In the interview, the interviewees introduced the difficulties they currently face in using information, such as information overload, information anxiety, information leakage, Internet addiction, et cetera. Specifically, first, the amount of information received by students exceeds their processing ability, resulting in their inability to screen, analyze, remember, and apply information effectively; second, students feel uneasy, nervous, and anxious about the acquisition and processing of information, which affects their mental health and learning efficiency; third, when students use new media, they do not pay attention to protecting their personal information and privacy, and are vulnerable to online fraud, harassment and other infringements; fourth, students rely too much on new media, ignoring other important matters in real life, resulting in problems in their socialization, study, work, and other aspects [4]. These problems affect students' effective use of new media resources to improve their professional level, and comprehensive quality and are not conducive to them becoming qualified teachers.

3.3 Effective methods are needed to improve the new media literacy expertise level of students in normal colleges

According to the results of the questionnaire survey, more than 95% of normal school students strongly demand and desire to improve their new media literacy, but only 3% of questionnaire participant believe that the current methods and methods are sufficient and effective. This reflects the urgent needs and expectations of students in normal universities for the improvement of new media literacy, but it has yet to be effectively satisfied and supported under the existing education system and resources. For example, they need more systematic and scientific new media literacy education curriculum and guidance, teacher training, and assessment mechanisms related to new media literacy, and require more educational environment and facilities compatible with new media literacy. In the interviews, students expressed their hope to learn new media-related knowledge through professional or elective courses systematically. They hope that new media literacy education can combine professional characteristics and practical needs, adopt diversified teaching methods and evaluation methods, focus on combining theory and practice, and stimulate students' initiative and participation.

4. Discussion

In order to improve the new media literacy level of students in normal colleges and universities, according to the research results, effective education and training are needed from many aspects. Specifically, the following measures can be taken:

4.1 Carry out multi-form and multi-channel popularization and publicity of new media literacy education

Through various forms and channels, popularize and publicize the cultivation of new media literacy, and enhance the understanding and emphasis of students in normal colleges and universities to new media literacy. For example, experts, scholars, or practitioners in the new media field can be invited to give lectures or seminars at normal schools. They can introduce the theoretical basis and practical application of new media literacy and share their work experience and achievements in the new media environment. We can also use new media's communication advantages, such as the WeChat public account, Weibo, TikTok, et cetera. We can produce and publish interesting and useful content about new media literacy on these platforms. This can attract the attention and interest of students in normal colleges and universities and promote their enthusiasm for learning and participation.

4.2 Establish a systematic new media literacy education curriculum system

Guided by professional courses and assisted by elective courses, we will establish a systematic new media literacy education curriculum system. According to the characteristics and needs of students in different professional directions and levels, integrate appropriate new media literacy-related content into professional courses, and set up corresponding practical links or project tasks. Meanwhile, some general or interesting courses of new media literacy can also be provided in public elective courses to enrich the learning options and experiences of students in normal colleges and universities.

4.3 Strengthen the diversification of teaching methods and evaluation methods

Adopt diversified teaching methods and evaluation methods to improve the effect and quality of new media literacy education. In the teaching process, students of normal colleges and universities can be guided to explore, actively participate and express creatively by combining case analysis, group discussion, role-playing, simulation experiment, project production, et cetera [5]. In teaching evaluation, a combination of formative and comprehensive evaluation can be used to pay attention to the progress and performance of students in normal colleges in all dimensions of new media literacy rather than just examining their mastery of new media literacy knowledge. At the same time, the data analysis functions provided by the new media platforms, such as click rate, comments, retweets, and other indicators, can be used to provide feedback and evaluate students' performance and impact in normal colleges universities in the use of new media.

4.4 Strengthening the expertise level of new media literacy for teachers in normal colleges and universities

Strengthen the training and improvement of new media literacy for teachers' new media literacy in normal colleges and universities and provide a good demonstration role for new media literacy education. Teachers in normal colleges and universities are the implementers of new media literacy education and the disseminators of new media literacy education. Therefore, before carrying out new media literacy education for students in normal colleges and universities, it is necessary to train and improve teachers themselves effectively. People with experience or expertise can be invited to guide or share their knowledge and skills in new media literacy by organizing special lectures, seminars, workshops, et cetera, and encouraging teacher communication and interaction. At the same time, by establishing an online learning community or platform, teachers can learn and exchange content and resources related to new media literacy anytime and anywhere and improve their independent learning ability and new media useability.

5. Conclusion

Students of normal colleges and universities shoulder the burden of future education. Their new media literacy level is not only related to their own career and development, but also affects the quality and effect of media education for primary and secondary school students. This research tries to provide suggestions for the improvement of their new media literacy, so that these future teachers can perform better in education. However, there are some limitations and shortcomings in this study. For example, the research sample is small and cannot represent the situation of all students in normal universities. Therefore, in order to obtain a more scientific, objective, and comprehensive understanding and solve the

problem of the new media literacy education for students in normal colleges and universities in the future, it is necessary to expand the research vision further, deepen the research level.

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