

# Research on the Cognitive Law and Characteristics of College Students in the Era of Mobile Internet

Yin Liu

School of Marxism, Chongqing Electric Power College, Chongqing, 400044, China

1293154578@qq.com

## Abstract

Entering a new era, China is stepping into the era of mobile Internet at a faster pace. As the most widely contacted group in China, college students can't live without the Internet all the time, and their cognitive behavior is deeply influenced by the Internet. Therefore, studying the law and characteristics of college students' cognition under the background of the vigorous development of Internet is helpful to show college students' cognitive problems more comprehensively, and it is also helpful to investigate and think about the in-depth development of college students' ideological and political education under the background of mobile Internet.

## Keywords

Mobile Internet Era; College Students; Cognitive Law and Characteristics.

## 1. Introduction

With the continuous development of information and network technology, the appearance and development of mobile terminals such as mobile phones and tablet computers have greatly changed the traditional network, and the network has penetrated every aspect of everyone's life, greatly changing or influencing everyone's life. College students who grew up in the Internet age contacted the Internet earlier, and at the same time, they had a strong ability to accept new things and were more dependent on the Internet. At present, the total number of Internet users in China has exceeded 989 million, accounting for 70.4% of China's total population [1]. As of March 2020, the proportion of netizens with junior high school, senior high school/technical secondary school/technical school education is 41.1% and 22.2% respectively, and the proportion of netizens with college education or above is 19.5%.[2] As a modern way of information exchange and media, the Internet has a profound impact on the study and life of college students in China. Especially the convenience and popularity of mobile internet, which further breaks through the limitation of time and space. Mobile Internet has a profound impact on the daily life and behavior of college students, changing their lifestyle, and giving new connotations to the cognitive laws and characteristics summarized by college students in the process of understanding and reforming the world.

## 2. The Research Status of College Students' Cognitive Laws and Characteristics in the Era of Mobile Internet

The mobile Internet is an exotic product, and foreign scholars have made in-depth research on network problems, and their research directions and perspectives are diversified, and have made many fruitful research conclusions. In contrast, domestic scholars started the network research relatively late, but with the in-depth integration and continuous development of China's network society, it has shown a gratifying trend in recent years, and the research results are increasing. According to the CNKI Chinese database, a search on the topics of "Internet" and

"College Students' Cognition" has detected 39 related literatures, of which 38 are journal papers and only one is a master's thesis. Therefore, it can be seen that the research on college students' cognitive problems from the perspective of the Internet is a research hotspot, and it is not difficult to find that the current scholars' research on this problem is not deep enough, and the research depth needs to be further strengthened. In addition, in the past, many research used empirical or quantitative methods to study the cognitive laws and characteristics of college students. For example, Zhou Lei, Zhu Yu, Xie Xinyi, et al. wrote Internet Finance Risk Cognition, Risk Preference and Investment Behavior: New Characteristics of College Students in the New Era, Zhou Suna's Research on College Students' Entrepreneurship under the Background of internet plus-An Analysis Based on College Students' Entrepreneurship Cognition in Henan Province, and Zheng Chenxi's Cognitive Analysis of Contemporary College Students' Internet Finance -Taking 1066 post-90s college students as a sample. It can be found that the empirical research on college students' cognitive behavior has formed a set of systematic research methods and ideas. At the same time, these studies are innovative in research methods and perspectives, breaking through the limitations of previous studies that focus too much on college students' cognition of learning and living environment, and exploring the cognitive laws and characteristics of college students under the background of Internet from the perspectives of investment, finance and innovation and entrepreneurship, which provides a good reference for latecomers.

The situation is gratifying, but it is not difficult to find out through combing. At present, there are still the following problems in studying college students' cognitive laws and characteristics from the perspective of the Internet: First, the pertinence is too strong, and there are more research results of special cases, but less comprehensive and universal research results. Secondly, in recent years, there are many achievements, with uneven quality and few authoritative research achievements. Although this topic is a hot research topic, there are not several high-quality authoritative research results in recent years. Third, at present, the perspective and methods of research results are still relatively single, and interdisciplinary research results are relatively few. In the network era, especially in the era of mobile internet, the complexity of problems and behaviors has already exceeded the research boundary of a single discipline. However, most of the existing studies are from a single discipline perspective, and there are few interdisciplinary research results. Most of the studies are single problem studies aiming at phenomena, lacking regular summarization and refinement.

### **3. The Mobile Internet Era College Students' Cognitive Laws and Characteristics of Interpretation**

To study the cognitive law and characteristics of college students in the era of mobile internet, we must define what "mobile internet" and "college students' cognition" are. First, mobile internet is a new stage of network development, which mainly refers to a technical means of Internet access through mobile terminals such as mobile phones and tablets. From the technical point of view, the mobile Internet is a new form of network [3], which is formed by combining mobile communication with the Internet. It is mainly that users browse or search the network information through some client apps to obtain the information they want. Through this behavior, users greatly improve the convenience of obtaining information and make people work and live more efficiently.

College students' cognitive behavior includes two aspects: cognitive law and cognitive characteristics. Cognitive law is a systematic summary of the essence of things formed by people using their acquired knowledge to judge and analyse things. Cognition is the characteristic that people show when they analyse and judge objective things. To analyse the cognitive laws and characteristics of college students under the background of Internet, it is

necessary to analyse their cognitive behaviors, and find out the logic and characteristics behind their behaviors from the perspective of cognitive behaviors. However, cognitive behavior theory is different from other theories in its application, emphasizing that an individual is a learner, and needs to master the necessary knowledge and skills to develop the ability to solve problems [4]. College students, as social people, can't avoid interacting with others. With the evolution of communication media, it promotes the change of communication forms, which makes the interpersonal network formed in communication change accordingly. In this change, they gradually strengthen their understanding of objective things and master the methods to solve problems. Different from the traditional forms of communication, the online communication brought by the Internet completely subverts the cognitive habits of traditional communication, changing from traditional contact communication to non-contact communication, which brings about a great change in cognitive style, from offline objective cognition to online subjective cognition.

#### **4. The Cognitive Behavior of College Students in the Era of Mobile Internet**

People's cognitive process and cognitive ability are multi-level and multi-structured. Although in general, development is from low level to high level, from simple to complex; However, the development is also unbalanced and variable [5]. In the era of mobile Internet, three kinds of network behaviors and means, social communication, information acquisition and leisure and entertainment, constitute the main purpose and behavior of college students using mobile Internet. By analysing these three kinds of network behaviors commonly used by college students, we can infer the ways and habits of college students to know the society and the world in the network age, and then summarize their cognitive laws and characteristics.

At the level of social interaction. With the rapid development of mobile Internet and the large-scale promotion of portable service terminals such as mobile phones and mobile tablets, college students' group browsing the Internet has shown a trend of concentrating on mobile terminals. The 2014 Research Report of China Teenagers' Online Behavior released by China Internet Information Centre in June 2015 shows this phenomenon. Compared with the whole group of netizens, the mobile phone applications of young netizens, including college students, are richer and more diversified. Except for a few apps, such as mailboxes, which are slightly lower than the overall level, other apps are generally higher than the overall level[6]. In particular, the extensive use of QQ, WeChat, and Weibo makes college students' communication methods faster and more convenient. The various fresh functions of these softwares' satisfy college students' personality of seeking novelty and pursuing freshness and excitement to a great extent, thus easily exerting a strong influence on college students' cognition and evaluation of things.

At the level of information acquisition. With the rapid development of the Internet, the convenience of people surfing the Internet is greatly improved, and they can surf the Internet anytime and anywhere. The frequency and occasions of college students' surfing the Internet have increased significantly, and the behaviors and means of college students' online use have become more and more fragmented. When information is acquired, it is more embodied as "short, flat and fast", which easily leads to information representation. This will make it difficult for college students to get information deeply and systematically when they know things and will make it difficult for college students to know information deeply, thus weakening their ability to further understand and think about problems.

At the level of leisure and entertainment. In the era of mobile internet, leisure and entertainment is an important part of college students' group network behavior. It is an important new phenomenon to get emotional experience and satisfaction for entertainment and leisure, and college students' behavior of using the Internet has become more entertaining

and informal. Internet entertainment is rich, convenient and highly selective. Compared with the traditional Internet, college students are more eager to get emotional experience satisfaction and pleasure when using the mobile Internet, focusing on the pleasure, happiness and satisfaction brought by the mobile Internet. That is to say, college students are more inclined to achieve self-satisfaction and pleasure in online entertainment, so they have more random changes in their cognition. For example, they don't have strong fixity in their entertainment methods and forms, and most college students' entertainment and leisure hobbies are constantly changing.

## 5. The Cognitive Law of College Students in the Era of Mobile Internet

Through the analysis of college students' cognitive behavior, we know that in the new situation of mobile Internet era, college students' behavior becomes more complicated, which greatly expands their cognitive richness. Therefore, it is particularly necessary to use Internet thinking to investigate the cognitive behavior of current college students and summarize their cognitive laws.

1) On the cognitive level of objective things, college students in the context of mobile Internet pursue fresh stimulation, lack the ability to analyse problems in depth, and are more inclined to flexibly recognize objective things. Among college students, network usage tends to concentrate on mobile terminals such as mobile phones. With the rapid development of mobile Internet and the large-scale promotion of portable service terminals such as mobile phones and mobile tablets, college students' group browsing the Internet has shown a trend of concentrating on mobile terminals. With the more advanced and rich information circulation methods, college students in the new era have not yet possessed strong analytical and judgment ability. In order to satisfy their thirst for knowledge and curiosity, college students are constantly collecting massive information resources. However, the excessive pursuit of fresh stimulation is easy to make them lose themselves. College students are faced with the challenge of how to find the way forward, how to choose and how to distinguish in the complex environment.

2) On the cognitive level of subjective consciousness, college students under the background of mobile Internet are more independent and confident, tend to rely on their own subjective judgment and cognition to solve problems, and lack the ability of opposite thinking. With the rapid popularization and in-depth development of the Internet, the frequency and occasions of college students surfing the Internet have increased significantly, and the time spent surfing the Internet every day has been prolonged. According to the survey of Xinhua net, at present, college students in China spend about 5 hours and 17 minutes on smart phones every day, accounting for 22% of the whole day, and there is a phenomenon that the lower the grade, the more time they spend[7]. As the Internet itself is a collection of mixed information, in this case, most college students will selectively memorize what they have learned and deeply process what they are willing to accept with the help of their own learning foundation. Therefore, they are more inclined to know and analyse what they are interested in subjectively, and there is obvious selectivity and inclination in cognition. This is mainly due to college students' strong autonomy and their self-confidence in their judgment and cognitive ability when receiving massive information. Therefore, college students in the era of mobile Internet can easily break through their inherent thinking and initially form their own cognitive rationality through their own practice and with their own limited life experience.

3) On the emotional and spiritual level, college students from the perspective of the Internet have utilitarian and purposeful cognitive tendencies when they know things. With the progress and development of social economy, people are increasingly pursuing high-quality material living standards, and college students in the new era are inevitably affected by such an

environment. In real life, many college students will give priority to their own interests when dealing with problems, and gradually develop utilitarian cognitive concepts. Especially in the era of mobile internet, leisure and entertainment is an important motivation of college students' group network behavior. When college students use the mobile Internet, they hope that they can get emotional experience satisfaction and pleasure through the Internet. Naturally, they will unconsciously focus on the sense of pleasure, happiness and satisfaction brought by the mobile Internet, so that they can use the Internet for their own pleasure, ignoring the functional attributes of learning, education and expansion of the Internet, and simplifying and vulgarizing the use of the mobile Internet.

## **6. Enlightenment of Cognitive Rules and Characteristics of College Students in the Era of Mobile Internet on Ideological and Political Education of College Students in the New Era**

With the development and maturity of information technology, college students' cognitive behavior has developed unprecedentedly in breadth and depth. Compared with the traditional Internet era, mobile internet technology makes surfing the Internet more convenient and rapid and makes college students' virtual online life and real-life world more closely linked together. Therefore, to analyse the characteristics of college students' cognitive behavior in the era of mobile internet, we must deeply combine the development and communication characteristics of the Internet. Only by thinking about this problem from the perspective of Internet development can we comprehensively and accurately depict the global map of contemporary college students' cognitive characteristics [8].

First, the cognitive form is highly dependent on mobile devices such as mobile phones and tablets. There is no obvious difference and strong consistency in the ways that college students, regardless of gender, use to understand things around them. College students tend to go hand in hand in understanding the objective world around them, both through activities and through self-thinking. With the continuous development of China's economy, the income of residents has been continuously improved, and mobile communication devices have been widely popularized. The way that college students contact the Internet, regardless of gender, is mostly through mobile phones, computers, tablets, televisions and other information terminals, especially mobile phones, which have become an important window for college students to master information and know the world in the Internet era.

Secondly, in terms of cognitive style, college students in the Internet age show obvious gender differences in two dimensions: observing the real events around them and interpreting the implied meaning behind them. Girls tend to rely on feelings, but also prefer to analyse things from all aspects, attach importance to evidence, and pay attention to real and tangible events. They believe that what they see and hear is the truth and believe in their own experience. The difference is that boys believe in reason more, they are good at finding hidden meanings of things, think that actions should focus on the future, like imagination, like change, and don't like conformism. When studying the cognitive characteristics of college students, we should pay attention to the differences between boys and girls in collecting information girls pay attention to the facts they see, while boys pay attention to the reasons behind them.

Thirdly, it has emotional characteristics in cognitive performance. Relatively speaking, college students are a group with relatively simple social experience and simple thoughts. In the usual study and life, they will also face various pressures brought by their studies and employment, which will easily lead to the emotional changes of college students. Mobile Internet technology provides a platform for college students to express their views and vent their emotions, which can be used to publish and share their feelings and emotions at any time. Therefore, in the Internet age, college students prefer and are better at expressing themselves, and they are more

daring to express their opinions when encountering topics or events that they are interested in. When they show their cognition of objective things, they often add more subjective views on things. Therefore, college students' cognitive behavior also reflects emotional characteristics.

Fourthly, the cognitive content is characterized by authenticity. College students are in the critical period of forming their outlook on life and values. Compared with other mobile internet users, college students' cognitive behavior is relatively real. The living environment of college students is still in the "ivory tower", and the possibility of being driven by various interests in the society is relatively small, which has created their personality characteristics of daring to speak and telling the truth. In particular, at present, the Internet gives college students more space and platforms to express themselves, and their cognitive behaviors are mostly used to express their inner feelings and various experiences during their growth, which are highly life-oriented, so they have strong credibility and authenticity.

## **7. Enlightenment of Cognitive Rules and Characteristics of College Students in the Era of Mobile Internet on Ideological and Political Education of College Students in the New Era**

Mobile Internet is the product of the times and technological development. From a positive point of view, mobile Internet has greatly facilitated the study and life of college students, improved the efficiency of information exchange in all aspects of campus life, enriched the ways and channels for college students to know the world, and formed the cognitive law of college students' pursuit of freshness, longing for rationality and clear purpose in cognition, as well as four characteristics: consistent form, different ways, emotional expression and true content. Undoubtedly, college students are the pillars of the country and a strong driving force for social development and progress. The fundamental task of colleges and universities is to cultivate people with moral integrity. Through ideological and political education, college students will be trained into adults, so that they must develop the cognitive, learning and lifestyle and habits of "independent personality and independent thinking". Only then can the country have hope and the nation have strength. Therefore, it is very important to make good use of the sword of mobile internet technology, summarize and refine the cognitive rules and characteristics of college students in the Internet age, and organically combine it with our ideological and political education, so as to correctly guide and educate college students to establish correct cognitive outlook, outlook on life and values.

It is the future of the youth country and the hope of the nation. The party and the state have always attached great importance to, cared for and trusted the youth, and always insisted on taking the youth as the new force in the development of the cause of the party and the state. General Secretary Xi Jinping clearly pointed out that the prosperity of the youth makes the country prosperous, and the strength of the youth makes the country strong. If a generation of young people have ideals, skills and responsibilities, the country will have a future and the nation will have hope. Based on the scientific judgment that Socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, General Secretary Xi Jinping profoundly pointed out that the historical process of realizing the goal of "two hundred years" will run through the whole process of the growth and development of thousands of contemporary youth in Qian Qian, "building a well-off society in an all-round way, and the majority of youth are the new force and commandos". [9], "The Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation will eventually become a reality in the relay struggle of generations of youth"[10]. These expositions are General Secretary Xi Jinping's new orientation and requirements for the status and historical role of youth, scientifically explain the historical mission and responsibility of contemporary youth, and fully reflect the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core's high attention, full trust and ardent expectation for contemporary youth.

College students are an important part of China's youth groups, and they are also outstanding representatives of youth groups. In the rapidly changing era of mobile Internet, clarifying the cognitive laws and characteristics of young college students is to promote the healthy growth of young college students, do a good job in supporting and guiding their ideals and beliefs, and put the proper meaning in the title of "master switch" of ideals and beliefs. In particular, contemporary college students are faced with a profoundly changing society, a rich and diverse life and various ideological trends, and they need to be strongly guided in their ideals and beliefs. General Secretary Xi Jinping clearly pointed out that "it is very important to set up correct ideals and firm beliefs in youth. We should not only set them up, but also take root in our hearts, and strive for them all our lives"[11]. To guide the majority of young college students to base their ideals and beliefs on rational recognition of scientific theories, correct understanding of historical laws, and accurate grasp of basic national conditions, it is necessary to recognize the cognitive laws of college students in the current mobile Internet era, find out their cognitive characteristics, find out the breakthrough, grasp the key points, enhance the initiative and creativity of ideological and political education, truly guide thoughts into the mind, condense the positive energy of youth into the China dream of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and make youth contributions to the early realization of the Chinese dream.

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