

# Study on the Influencing Factors and Guiding Strategies of Public Opinion in Emergencies Based on the Perspective of Feedback

## -- Taking the Incident of "Night Riding Kaifeng Tide" as an Example

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### Abstract

With the rapid development of information technology and the in-depth penetration of social media, the speed of public opinion on emergencies has increased exponentially, and the scope of its influence has become more and more extensive, which not only reshapes the ecology of public opinion, but also poses unprecedented challenges to the social order and the ability of public governance. Against this background, intergenerational differences, as a profound social structural variable, increasingly emphasize the differences in information acquisition, cognitive interpretation paths, and emotional expression styles. Such differences not only affect the cognitive divergence and emotional distribution of public opinion events, but also catalyze the potential intergenerational tension in the process of public opinion evolution, forming a resonance fault between groups. How to achieve effective public opinion guidance in the context of coexisting multiple values, ease the intergenerational confrontation, and promote the reconstruction of public consensus has become an urgent and realistic issue. In this paper, we take the incident of "Night Riding Kaifeng Tide" as a typical case and analyze it from the perspective of feedback, and comprehensively use the literature review method and case study method to explore the driving mechanism and intervention path of public opinion evolution in emergencies. The study shows that the lack of information authority, the lagging emotional feedback mechanism and intergenerational communication barriers are important factors leading to uncontrolled public opinion. Therefore, this paper constructs a three-dimensional public opinion guidance framework based on "information feedback-emotional feedback-communication feedback", and puts forward a multifaceted and synergistic governance idea: the government should strengthen information disclosure and value guidance, the media should play the role of professional interpretation and bridge, and the social media platforms should improve algorithmic recommendation and social networking. The government should strengthen information disclosure and value guidance, the media should play the role of professional interpretation and bridge, social platforms should improve algorithmic recommendation and community governance mechanism, and the public should realize intergenerational communication in emotional identification. The conclusion of the study shows that the systematic guidance strategy under the perspective of feedback can help eliminate the intergenerational gap, realize the rational return of public opinion in emergencies, and provide theoretical support and practical paths for the modernization of the social governance system.

## Keywords

**Public opinion on emergencies; intergenerational differences; feedback perspective; public opinion guidance strategy; night riding Kaifeng tide.**

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

In contemporary society, information dissemination is highly developed, and public opinions regarding emergencies evolve rapidly, which has become a key focus of public attention and a major challenge for social governance. With the rapid development of Internet technology and the widespread use of mobile communication and social media platforms, the speed and coverage of information dissemination have increased, showing an exponential growth trend. According to relevant data, the number of global social media users has risen significantly over the past decade. Within just a few minutes after an emergency occurs, a massive amount of information flows are formed, reaching millions of audiences. This dissemination mechanism is characterized by high frequency and immediacy, breaking the time lag in traditional information diffusion and greatly enhancing the explosiveness, aggregation, and infectiousness of public opinions. It has a profound impact on government decision-making, public psychology, and social order. Public opinions regarding emergencies are a crucial channel for expressing public sentiment and may also trigger secondary social problems such as cyber violence, rumor spreading, and group polarization within a short period of time. Systematically studying the driving factors and evolution paths of public opinions regarding emergencies is of critical practical value and strategic significance for improving public opinion response mechanisms, enhancing risk governance capabilities, and maintaining social stability[1-3].

At the same time, the influence of generational differences in public opinion dissemination is becoming increasingly evident. Systematic differences among different age groups in information acquisition channels, media preferences, cognitive patterns, and value orientations have become key factors in the evolution of public opinions regarding emergencies. The younger generation, as "digital natives," shows strong initiative and emotional expression on social platforms, with their communication behaviors characterized by speed, diversity, and strong interactivity. In contrast, the middle-aged and elderly groups rely more on their social circles and traditional media for information integration, with a relatively slower communication pace but a deeper social influence. Against this backdrop, the phenomenon of information "reverse nurturing" among generations is gradually emerging. That is, the younger generation uses digital technology to feed back new information to the older generation, while the older generation, based on their life experience and value judgments, regulates the emotions and guides the beliefs of the younger generation. This "reverse nurturing mechanism" builds a bridge for cross-generational communication and viewpoint interaction in the evolution of public opinions, serving as a potential way to ease generational conflicts and a key resource for achieving rational public opinion guidance. How to activate this mechanism in the context of emergencies has become a core issue that needs to be urgently addressed in current public opinion governance[4-9].

### 1.2. Research Significance

Theoretically, current research on public opinion in emergencies, although covering multiple dimensions such as generation mechanisms, evolution models, and guidance strategies, mostly focuses on technological dissemination paths or government governance, lacking a systematic analysis of the role of generational factors in the evolution of public opinion. There is a deficiency in theoretical innovation from a feedback perspective. This study attempts to introduce the "generational feedback" analytical perspective, which has dual characteristics of

sociology and communication studies, to construct a mechanism model of generational interaction in the evolution of public opinion in emergencies. This will reveal the multi-dimensional paths of information flow, emotional regulation, and opinion influence between generations. This approach can enrich the research paradigm of public opinion in emergencies and provide an interdisciplinary integration path for the theoretical system of public opinion governance, promoting the development of public opinion research from static structure to dynamic collaborative evolution[10-15].

Practically, with the deep integration of social media into various aspects of daily life, public opinion in emergencies has shown new characteristics such as long dissemination chains, large emotional fluctuations, and significant generational differences. Traditional governance mechanisms are no longer fully capable of meeting the requirements of rapid response and targeted guidance. This paper takes the "Night Cycling in Kaifeng" incident as a typical case, analyzes the role model of generational differences in the evolution of public opinion, and proposes a guidance strategy framework centered on "information feedback - emotional feedback - intergenerational communication", providing operational strategy guidance for the government, media, and the public to collaboratively respond to emergency public opinion. This research can enhance the government's response sensitivity and governance adaptability in crisis communication situations, and also provide practical support for building an empathetic and rational public opinion interaction environment, promoting the construction of a more stable and inclusive social public opinion ecosystem[16-18].

### **1.3. Research Content and Methods**

#### **1.3.1. Research Content**

This study focuses on the influencing factors and guiding strategies of public opinion in emergencies, taking the "Night Cycling in Kaifeng" incident as the center to conduct a systematic analysis, revealing the internal logic and key variables in the evolution process of public opinion, and proposing practical guiding strategies. The research content mainly includes the following five aspects: First, it sorts out the background of the event and the triggering mechanism of public opinion, and by reconstructing the development process of the event, identifies the initial conditions and core drivers that trigger public opinion. Second, it analyzes the phased characteristics of public opinion evolution, and elaborately dissects its dynamic evolution process in the initial stage of the construction of the dissemination path, the middle stage of diffusion and emotional escalation, and the later stage of calming down and public opinion reflection. Third, it pays particular attention to the intervention role of generational differences in the evolution of public opinion, and through a comparative analysis from the dimensions of information reception, emotional feedback, and value stance, examines the different performances of young and middle-aged and elderly groups in terms of public opinion participation methods, dissemination behaviors, and opinion formation. Fourth, based on the above analysis, it constructs a theoretical model of public opinion influencing factors from the perspective of feedback, classifies and identifies core variables such as information channels, emotional expression mechanisms, and value resonance structures, and deeply analyzes the triggering and regulatory roles of generational interaction in the fluctuation process of public opinion. Fifth, it proposes a systematic framework for public opinion guiding strategies, focusing on three strategic paths of information feedback, emotional support, and generational communication, clarifies guiding principles and key links, and provides practical suggestions for the implementation of strategies in real situations, striving to provide theoretical support and operational paradigms for government departments, media platforms, and the public in public opinion guidance.

#### **1.3.2. Research Methods**

##### **(1) Literature Review Method**

Systematically review academic achievements at home and abroad in the fields of public opinion in emergencies, generational differences, feedback theory, and emotional communication, etc., to comprehensively grasp the current research status and theoretical frontiers. This method is beneficial for constructing the theoretical foundation and conceptual framework of this study, and can also identify the gaps and deficiencies in existing research on the intervention of the feedback perspective in public opinion research. Through the summary, integration, and critical analysis of a large number of literatures, this paper clarifies the theoretical status of generational differences as a public opinion variable, providing knowledge support for the subsequent model construction and strategy proposal.

## (2) Case Analysis Method

Select the "Night Cycling in Kaifeng" incident as a typical case and conduct a relatively in-depth analysis from an empirical perspective. This incident has the characteristics of obvious generational conflicts, clear dissemination paths, and complete public opinion evolution rhythms, and has strong representativeness and research value. By reconstructing the entire process of the event, it analyzes the evolution logic, audience structure, and generational expression differences of public opinion at different stages, and tests the applicability and explanatory power of the theoretical framework obtained from the literature review. Case analysis can enhance the practical relevance of the research and provide empirical samples and situational basis for constructing public opinion guiding strategies based on the feedback mechanism.

## 2. Overview of Relevant Theories

### 2.1. Overview of public opinion research on emergencies

#### 2.1.1. Definition and characteristics of public opinion on emergencies

Public opinion on sudden public events refers to the collective social response of the public, which includes cognitive judgments, emotional reactions, value positions, and behavioral tendencies, after a sudden social event occurs. This is not merely the accumulation of information but a dynamic social phenomenon resulting from the interaction of public psychology, social and cultural backgrounds, and media ecology. Such public opinion is characterized by its immediacy; once an event occurs, relevant information can spread rapidly through social media in a short time, attracting widespread public attention, often faster than traditional media channels.

Public opinion in emergencies exhibits a high degree of complexity and dynamism. The complexity stems from the event's sensitivity and uncertainty, the structure of information channels, the public's emotional state, and the mechanisms of media discourse, all influenced by multiple interacting factors. The dynamism is evident in the continuous fluctuations and reversals of public opinion as events evolve, information updates, and external interventions occur, making it unpredictable. External forces, such as government responses, media guidance, and the involvement of opinion leaders, play a crucial role in reshaping and regulating the evolution of public opinion. These characteristics highlight the significant public mobilization effect of public opinion in emergencies, which also poses major challenges to social stability and public governance. Conducting scientific analysis and guidance on public opinion in emergencies is of critical theoretical and practical value.

#### 2.1.2. Factors influencing the evolution of public opinion

The evolution of public opinion is influenced by the interaction of multiple factors. The core driving force comes from the combined effects of event characteristics, the communication environment, public psychological mechanisms, and external guidance mechanisms. The severity and complexity of an event form the internal variables that drive the formation of

public opinion. Generally, events with a wide impact, severe consequences, or strong emotional impact are more likely to attract public attention. The complexity of these events increases the difficulty for the public in interpreting information, leading to a variety of emotional and even conflicting viewpoints.

Secondly, the structural characteristics of media reshape the logic of public opinion dissemination. Social media platforms are characterized by immediacy and decentralization, which makes information dissemination more spontaneous and fission-like. The information screening mechanism is weakened, emotional expression amplifies, and the risk of rumor diffusion, misinterpretation bias, and emotional resonance increases.

The third point is that the public's psychological state plays a decisive role in the evolution of public opinion. Psychological mechanisms such as emotional sensitivity, cognitive bias, group polarization, and immersive resonance can cause public opinion to become irrationally amplified during specific periods. For instance, when an emergency first occurs, the public often exhibits intense emotions like anxiety, panic, and anger, which can quickly escalate public opinion, making it more aggressive and confrontational.

Finally, it's worth noting that external intervention mechanisms, such as the government's ability to manage public opinion, the media's role in setting agendas, social platforms' tools for controlling public sentiment, and the collaborative capabilities of social organizations, all have a guiding influence on the evolution of public opinion. Effective guidance can enhance information transparency, soothe public emotions, and encourage rational expression. However, if guidance is mishandled, it could intensify emotional reactions, leading to the loss of control over public opinion and social disorder.

## **2.2. Theoretical basis of the perspective of feeding back**

### **2.2.1. The connotation and development of the theory of feeding back**

The term 'reverse mentoring' originates from the biological field, initially referring to the reverse support behavior exhibited by offspring towards their parents. This concept was later adopted in social sciences and evolved into a generational relationship theory. It explains how the younger generation provides knowledge, information, and technology to the older generation. In traditional social structures, knowledge and values were primarily passed down unidirectionally from elders to juniors. However, in the digital and networked society of modern times, young people, with their enhanced media literacy and technological advantages, are increasingly taking on a 'reverse mentoring' role in family communication, social interaction, and public opinion influence.

The theory emphasizes the 'reciprocity' and 'collaboration' in intergenerational interactions, valuing the continuous transmission of traditional experiences while acknowledging the reshaping effects of new knowledge and media on the original generational structure. In recent years, the feedback theory has been widely applied in various fields, including family education, media communication, and elderly social governance. It has become a key theoretical tool for analyzing intergenerational mobility and negotiation mechanisms. By introducing the feedback perspective into public opinion research, it has expanded its explanatory scope, offering a fresh angle on how intergenerational interactions influence public opinion structures and emotional dissemination.

### **2.2.2. Application of feeding back perspective in public opinion research**

In the communication structure of public opinion during emergencies, different generations, due to differences in media usage habits, cognitive patterns, and social experiences, have developed unique communication behaviors and emotional expressions. As digital natives, the younger generation significantly influences discourse on social media platforms, often leading the discussion and shaping emotions early in the situation. They are highly sensitive to



information and active in expression, but they can also easily fall into emotional polarization and misinterpretation of information due to a lack of experience.

In contrast, while the older generation is slower in adapting to new media, they still hold significant influence in shaping public opinion. They rely on traditional media and social networks to gather information and play a stabilizing role within families and communities. From the perspective of feedback, young people use technology, information sharing, and emotional connections to influence the older generation, while the older generation, with their life experiences, value judgments, and rational expressions, provide feedback and adjustments to the younger generation.

This two-way interaction between generations establishes a 'consultative mechanism' in public opinion dissemination. During the escalation of public opinion, it helps to achieve a cross-generational balance and prevent the spread of group extremism. This feedback mechanism is not only a model of intergenerational relations but also a key variable in guiding public opinion. It provides theoretical support and intervention points for social communication, policy promotion, and group stabilization during emergencies.

### **2.2.3. Explanation of intergenerational differences from the perspective of feeding back**

The perspective of feedback can provide a theoretical foundation for explaining the manifestations of intergenerational differences in public opinion dissemination. These differences are key factors that cannot be overlooked in the evolution of public opinion, particularly in terms of how information is obtained, interpreted, and expressed emotionally. The younger generation tends to use social media and other new channels to gather information, which allows for faster and wider dissemination, with a greater emphasis on the entertainment value and personalization of the content. In contrast, the older generation relies more on traditional media, where information spreads more slowly but is valued for its authenticity and authority. When it comes to interpreting information, the younger generation, influenced by internet culture, tends to interpret based on personal interests and values, often with a strong subjective bias. The older generation, however, draws on their rich social experience to analyze from traditional perspectives such as society and morality, placing greater importance on factual evidence. In terms of emotional expression, the younger generation is more likely to express emotions directly, which can easily resonate with the group, while the older generation tends to be more restrained and rational in their emotional expressions. The perspective of feedback suggests that these generational differences are not simply about superiority or inferiority, but rather about the complementary relationship between different generations in terms of knowledge, skills, and values. Through the feedback mechanism, the younger generation can pass on new information and communication technologies to the older generation, helping them adapt to the digital age's information dissemination environment. Meanwhile, the older generation can use their social experience and values to guide the younger generation, helping them view events rationally and avoid extreme emotional expressions. This two-way feeding process can alleviate intergenerational conflicts, promote the understanding and cooperation between generations, play a positive regulatory role in public opinion communication, and promote the development of public opinion toward a rational and stable situation.

## **2.3. Literature review and theoretical basis**

### **2.3.1. Public opinion evolution model**

The public opinion evolution model, a crucial theoretical tool, reveals the dynamic dissemination mechanisms and phased characteristics of public opinion during emergencies. It constructs a scientific cognitive framework that covers the entire process from the emergence to the spread, escalation, and eventual resolution of public opinion. Traditional models of public

opinion are primarily based on information dissemination theory and social impact theory, dividing the development of public opinion into four stages: the initiation stage, the diffusion stage, the peak stage, and the decline stage. During the initiation stage, public opinion is often triggered by the suddenness and uncertainty of emergencies, quickly capturing public attention. The initial spread of information is guided by the 'first voice.' As the situation progresses to the diffusion and escalation stages, the path of information dissemination becomes more complex, with emotional expressions frequently overlapping, leading to a clear trend of opinion differentiation and a rapid increase in public opinion tension. In this phase, the authenticity of information, the structure of media dissemination, and the feedback mechanism of public emotions become the core variables determining the direction of public opinion.

As the handling of events progresses, media agendas adjust accordingly, and public attention shifts, public opinion enters a phase of decline and calm. Social emotions gradually ease, discussion intensity decreases, and the influence of public opinion diminishes. In recent years, with the integration of complex network theory and big data analysis technology, scholars have developed more precise models for simulating public opinion dissemination. These models can simulate the activity levels of nodes, path weights, and the influence of key opinion leaders under various network topologies. The introduction of big data sentiment analysis technology has enabled these models to dynamically capture social emotional fluctuations, event attention levels, and changes in opinion trends, thereby enhancing their predictive capabilities for public opinion evolution and practical value in guiding decision-making.

### **2.3.2. Intergenerational communication model**

The intergenerational communication model, a key theoretical framework for studying the interactions among different age groups in terms of information understanding, feedback, and emotional resonance, is grounded in the intersection of social psychology and communication studies. It highlights that intergenerational communication is a dynamic, bidirectional negotiation process that encompasses multiple levels, including information encoding, decoding, feedback, and cognitive reconstruction. In real-world settings, young and older generations exhibit structural differences in knowledge background, media literacy, language habits, and values. These differences can easily lead to misunderstandings or emotional barriers during communication, affecting the completeness of public opinion expression and the formation of consensus.

The intergenerational communication model highlights that the diversity of communication channels is a fundamental variable for enhancing communication effectiveness. From traditional face-to-face interactions to using social platforms for information exchange, various media channels significantly influence the trust, acceptance, and efficiency of intergenerational communication. The model also emphasizes the importance of creating a positive atmosphere and maintaining emotional connections in communication settings. It posits that 'soft communication' elements, such as emotional resonance and emotional support, are key drivers in reducing cognitive conflicts and promoting collaborative understanding between generations. Throughout the process of public opinion dissemination during emergencies, the intergenerational communication model can identify the dynamic characteristics exhibited by different groups in information reception, attitude formation, and feedback, providing a theoretical foundation for strategies aimed at fostering intergenerational integration in public opinion guidance.

### **2.3.3. Public opinion guidance strategy model**

The public opinion guidance strategy model is developed based on the analysis of the evolution patterns of public opinion and the characteristics of public communication behavior. It is a systematic intervention and regulation mechanism that relies on the collaboration of multiple stakeholders and the layered implementation of strategies, guiding public opinion towards a

rational and stable direction. The model emphasizes four core dimensions: timeliness, transparency, differentiation, and participation.

First, establishing a public trust mechanism hinges on two key conditions: timeliness and transparency. When public opinion begins to emerge, the government or authoritative institutions must respond promptly, ensuring that authoritative information is disclosed and communicated transparently. This helps fill the information gap, curb the spread of rumors, and stabilize public sentiment. Secondly, the model highlights the importance of differentiated guidance strategies. Different groups have varying focuses, preferred media types, and methods of interpreting information during public opinion events. Therefore, the content and form of guidance should be finely tailored. For instance, for younger audiences, social media short videos and interactive topics can attract their attention. For older audiences, it is crucial to emphasize authoritative reporting and in-depth analysis.

The model places public participation mechanisms at the core, arguing that effective public opinion guidance is not merely a one-way information dissemination process. Instead, it involves interactive and consultative processes between the government and the public, as well as between the media and users. By establishing feedback channels, topic co-construction mechanisms, and spaces for rational dialogue through platforms, this approach can enhance the public's recognition of issues and their willingness to spread information, thereby reducing the risk of public opinion polarization. The construction of the public opinion guidance strategy model provides a theoretical framework for government agencies, media platforms, and social organizations, which helps improve public opinion governance capabilities and maintain social stability and public trust.

### **3. Analysis of the Evolution of Public Opinion on the "Night Riding of Kaifeng Tide" Incident**

#### **3.1. Background of the Incident and Outbreak of Public Opinion**

##### **3.1.1. Background**

The incident of "Night Riding in Kaifeng" occurred in the evening of September 15, 2024, in the Gulou District of Kaifeng City, Henan Province. At around 20:00 that night, more than 300 cycling enthusiasts gathered in the vicinity of the Gulou Plaza, intending to carry out a large-scale night riding activity, with many of them coming from the neighboring cities. Many of the participants came from neighboring cities, but during the ride, some of them violated traffic regulations by not wearing safety helmets, going against the flow of traffic, and occupying motor vehicle lanes, which seriously interfered with the normal traffic order and triggered widespread concerns about safety hazards among the public. The video related to the incident then spread rapidly on social media platforms, and that night alone, the microblogging topic's reading volume exceeded 1 million times, and also triggered a large number of comments and heated discussions. Public opinion focused on whether the cyclist's traffic behavior was appropriate, and also rapidly expanded to the right to use urban public space, the norms of public behavior for youth groups, and intergenerational cognitive conflicts and other deeper social issues, which quickly transformed the incident from a local incident into a social issue with a strong impact. This has quickly transformed the incident from a local incidental event into a widely influential public opinion case, and has become a typical example for studying the evolution and guidance mechanism of public opinion.

##### **3.1.2. Triggers of Public Opinion Outbreak**

The rapid outbreak of public opinion on the "Night Riding Kaifeng Tide" event was initially due to the suddenness and highly public nature of the event itself. Night riding is a kind of outdoor recreation method emerging among urban youth groups, which has certain characteristics of



self-organization of the community and a strong participatory atmosphere, and attracts a large number of young cyclists to join in enthusiastically, but some of the participants in the event were speeding, driving against traffic regulations, not wearing safety helmets and other obvious violations of traffic regulations, which directly touched the public's sensitive boundaries of urban road safety and public order. However, some of the participants in this event violated traffic regulations by speeding, going against the flow of traffic, and not wearing safety helmets, which directly touched the public's sensitive boundaries of urban road safety and public order. These behaviors endangered their own safety and posed a potential threat to normal traffic operations and pedestrian safety. According to eyewitness accounts at the scene and video footage circulating on the Internet, some of the cyclists rode at high speeds on main roads and commercial streets with heavy traffic, and even took high-risk actions such as driving side by side and chasing each other, which increased the risk of traffic accidents and triggered a high level of public concern about potential public safety hazards. and emotional backlash, becoming a direct trigger for the outbreak of public opinion.

All the immediacy and high interactivity of social media played a great role in promoting the dissemination and diffusion of public opinion. On the night of the incident, the related videos and images were soon widely disseminated on microblogging, jittering and other social platforms, and with the fissile dissemination mechanism of the social chain, a large number of users were attracted to participate in the commenting and re-tweeting of the incident. According to incomplete statistics, within two hours after the occurrence of the incident According to complete statistics, within two hours of the incident, the discussion volume of microblogging topics exceeded 50,000, and the cumulative playback volume of related videos on the Shake Tone platform exceeded 10 million times. Social media has created a space for the public to instantly watch and vent their emotions, and has also prompted users of different generations and positions to form a confrontation in the court of public opinion in the process of the constant flow of information. To make the situation even more complicated, some self-media accounts, in order to obtain traffic, have rendered the incident with headlines, emotions, and even inaccuracies, which has aggravated the public's anxiety and uneasiness, and caused public opinion to heat up rapidly. This has increased public anxiety and uneasiness, causing public opinion to rapidly heat up and go beyond the scope of the incident itself, eventually evolving into a social public opinion storm that encompasses multiple issues, including public safety, behavioral norms, and intergenerational cognitive conflicts.

### **3.2. Stage Analysis of Public Opinion Evolution**

#### **3.2.1. Dissemination Paths in the Early Stages of Public Opinion**

In the initial stage of public opinion on the "Night Riding in Kaifeng" incident, the dissemination of information mainly relied on the filming actions of individuals at the scene and the spontaneous sharing of social media. After the incident, the citizens and cyclists at the scene used their cell phones to record the relevant videos and pictures in the first instance, which were then quickly uploaded to mainstream social media platforms, such as Weibo and Jittery Tone. Social media platforms became the original trigger source of public opinion. According to the data displayed on social media platforms, within only 15 minutes of the incident, relevant video materials had already appeared on multiple social media platforms and triggered preliminary discussions. Subsequently, the content received a large number of retweets, comments and likes, and the dissemination of information showed an exponential spreading trend.

At this stage, the algorithmic recommendation mechanism of social platforms has a very crucial role, and those contents related to the event are pushed to a wider group of users because the platform identifies them as having a high degree of interactivity, making the relevant topic tags quickly appear on the hot search list, greatly enhancing the visibility of the event in terms of

public opinion, and public opinion dissemination presents the characteristics of multicentering, with a large number of users posting contents from different perspectives. Numerous users would post content from different perspectives, which complemented and corroborated each other, eventually building a multi-point concurrent and intertwined information dissemination network. In addition, some self-media accounts also quickly participated in the event, carrying out secondary editing and preliminary interpretation, which accelerated the fermentation process of public opinion.

### **3.2.2. Diffusion and Escalation of Public Opinion in the Midterm**

With the continuous dissemination of information, the public opinion of the “Night Rider Kaifeng Tide” incident has entered the stage of proliferation and escalation, and the scope of its impact and the intensity of dissemination have been outstandingly improved, and the degree of public participation has also increased significantly. Among the social media platforms, the hotness of topics related to the incident has continued to rise, and the amount of playback of the video content, According to incomplete statistics, within 24 hours after the incident, the reading volume of related topics on microblogging has exceeded 100 million, and the discussion volume has exceeded 100,000, and the playing volume of related videos on the Jieyin platform has accumulated more than 50 million times.

At this stage, the public opinion has broken through the limitations of local public opinion and expanded to the national level, eventually triggering cross-regional and multi-group public opinion participation. Traditional media have started to follow up on the incident, with TV stations, radio stations, and newspapers carrying out special reports to convey the incident to a wider social audience through official news channels, and online media participating in the construction of public opinion through in-depth reports, special features, and opinion debates. Online media participated in the construction of public opinion by means of in-depth reports, featured commentaries, and opinion contests, pushing the public to think about the structural problems behind the incident. The focus of public opinion gradually shifted from a single act of traffic safety to institutional discussions on urban governance, youth behavioral norms, public space management, and other dimensions, and the public's sentiment evolved from initial concern and uneasiness to questions about responsibility and criticism of policy deficiencies, with the intensity and complexity of public opinion increasing.

### **3.2.3. Calming and Reflecting on the Later Stages of Public Opinion**

When the public opinion developed to a later stage, the government departments intervened in time, and the handling measures were gradually implemented, so that the public's attention fell back, and the speed of information dissemination became obviously slow, and the Kaifeng Traffic Police soon initiated the investigation procedure, made a decision to penalize the relevant violations, and released a briefing on the handling of the incident by virtue of the official microblogging and other authoritative channels. The local government and the media jointly carried out traffic safety publicity and education work, emphasizing the concept of civilized riding and guiding the public to rationally view and express the relevant situation. To a certain extent, these measures have eased public anxiety, strengthened the credibility of the government, and created conditions for public opinion to cool down.

According to the social platform data monitoring situation, after a week after the incident, the heat of the topic related to it appeared a more prominent decline, the amount of discussion on the microblogging decreased day by day, and the rankings on the hot search list gradually retreated from the top position, but although the heat of the public opinion has receded, it does not mean that the social concern stopped, and the field of public opinion began to move towards the stage of rational reflection. The public opinion field began to shift towards rational reflection. Many users began to discuss topics such as urban traffic norms, public behavior ethics, and youth community culture, and called for the continuous strengthening of

institutional construction and public education. The latter stage of the public opinion prompted the relevant departments to review and revise their current management policies, and pushed all sectors of the society to recognize the governance challenges behind the new type of urban cultural activities, providing valuable social feedback on the prevention of similar incidents as well as on the improvement of public policies. It provides valuable social feedback for the prevention of similar events and the improvement of public policies.

### **3.3. Generational Differences in the Evolution of Public Opinion**

#### **3.3.1. Characteristics of Public Opinion Participation of the Younger Generation**

In the incident of “Night Riding Kaifeng Tide”, the young generation showed some characteristics of public opinion participation, including high frequency, high participation and high emotionalization. First of all, in terms of information dissemination efficiency, the young group is a typical “digital aborigine”. First of all, in terms of information dissemination efficiency, young people, as typical “digital natives”, are very skillful in using social media platforms such as microblogging and shaking sound, and have strong content production and diffusion capabilities. According to social media data, within 30 minutes after the incident, more than 70% of the related graphics and videos were posted and widely disseminated by young users, which provided the initial impetus for the rapid spread of public opinion.

Young people tend to be more emotional and personalized in their expression of public opinion, and most of the time they incorporate subjective experiences and emotional tendencies into their comments and opinions, and tend to be guided by their positional identity or attitude towards life when evaluating events. For example, some young cyclists defend their behaviors on social media platforms, emphasize the positive significance of night cycling as a healthy lifestyle, and They show a prominent resistance and dissatisfaction to social criticism. The young generation has a strong sense of belonging to a group in public opinion interactions, and uses social platforms to build a virtual “cycling community” centered on interests, with members responding to each other, forming an echo effect of public opinion. This closed “stratosphere” structure, to a certain extent, strengthens the trend of polarization of public opinion, expands the cognitive and emotional tension with the older generation, and promotes intergenerational confrontation to become more pronounced.

#### **3.3.2. Characteristics of Public Opinion Responses of the Older Generation**

Compared with the younger generation, the public opinion reaction of the older group in the “Night Riding Kaifeng Tide” incident is relatively rational, conservative and authoritative. Firstly, in terms of information access, the older generation mainly relies on traditional media channels such as TV, newspapers, official platforms, etc. The pace of information reception is relatively lagging behind, but the content filters are more rigorous. The credibility of the information sources is high, and their views are mostly expressed as a systematic analysis of the events from the macro level of social norms, public safety, and urban governance.

Elderly groups are more restrained in their emotional expression, and are less likely to show prominent emotional polarization, and their participation in public opinion is more often expressed as an appeal for the maintenance of public order, for example, some elderly users mentioned in their comments that night riding activities are worth encouraging, but they should be carried out within the framework of law and order, and emphasized civilized riding and safety norms, and that the elderly groups, with their higher social status and rich life experience, tend to assume the role of moral judgment and value guidance when expressing public opinion, and want to guide young people to establish normative awareness and behavioral boundaries by virtue of public voicing. With higher social status and rich life experience, older groups tend to take on the role of moral judgment and value guidance in the expression of public opinion, and want to guide young people to establish a sense of norms and behavioral boundaries by virtue of their public voices. Although this tendency of

“intergenerational admonition” is helpful to promote the rationalization of public opinion, in the social media environment, it is also easy to trigger the rebellious mentality and value resistance of the younger generation, increasing the intergenerational tension in the public opinion arena.

### **3.3.3. The Impact of Generational Differences on the Evolution of Public Opinion**

In the evolution of public opinion on the incident of “Night Riding in Kaifeng”, generational differences have become the key variables of public opinion participation behavior, playing a key structural influence on the pace of communication, expression of emotions, and public opinion direction. The younger generation is efficient in communication and rich in emotional expression, and with the communication network built by social media, public opinion erupts quickly, with strong emotional mobilization and confrontation, while the older generation plays a role in stabilizing public opinion and guiding value discussion in the middle and late stages of public opinion by virtue of its rational perspective and social experience, and prompts public opinion to shift from emotional catharsis to the return of rationality.

However, the structural differences between generations in terms of cognitive patterns, value demands, and understanding of information have also become potential risk factors in the evolution of public opinion. In this incident, many young cyclists held a negative view of the criticisms of older groups, feeling that older groups “don't understand young people's lifestyles! In this incident, many young cyclists had a negative view of the critical attitude of the older group, and felt that the older group “did not understand the lifestyle of young people”, creating a situation of resistance and even confrontation in cyberspace. This intergenerational antagonism has increased the polarization of public opinion at a certain stage, causing the public to be divided and torn apart in terms of discourse and emotional identity, and increasing the uncertainty and difficulty of governance in the public opinion arena.

In the process of guiding public opinion on emergencies, it is necessary to pay full attention to the division of communication structure and emotional tension caused by intergenerational differences, and build an intergenerational consultation platform with the help of a multi-level communication mechanism, so as to improve the level of mutual trust and the basis of consensus, and to achieve the goal of transforming “intergenerational confrontation” into “intergenerational co-construction”. In this way, the level of mutual trust and the basis of consensus can be enhanced, and the purpose of guiding public opinion from “intergenerational confrontation” to “intergenerational co-construction” can be achieved, guaranteeing that public opinion governance can be orderly and smoothly promoted under the background of diversified values.

## **4. Analysis of Public Opinion Influencing Factors from the Perspective of Feedback**

### **4.1. Theoretical Framework of Influencing Factors of Public Opinion**

#### **4.1.1. Classification of Public Opinion Influencing Factors**

The evolution of public opinion is the result of the joint action of multiple dimensional factors. Among them, the influencing factors can be systematically classified based on four main dimensions, namely, all the characteristics of the event itself, the environment in which information is disseminated, the psychological and behavioral characteristics of the public, and the external guiding mechanism.

First of all, all the characteristics of the event itself involve aspects such as its suddenness, severity, complexity, and the degree of its connection with public interests. These variables play a decisive role in whether the public can quickly form attention and initiate emotional expression, and will have an impact on the initial path of public opinion. For example, those

events involving public safety or group behavior, It is often more likely to evoke emotional resonance and can quickly become the focus of the Internet.

The information dissemination environment encompasses the diverse conditions of media channels, the speed of information dissemination and the breadth of coverage, as well as the stance orientation adhered to by media reports. The current ecosystem of social media has greatly enhanced the accessibility and immediacy of information, making it easier for public opinions to present a viral spread trend.

All the psychological and behavioral characteristics of the public, such as emotional response mechanisms, cognitive biases, herd mentality, information selection preferences, and intergenerational factors, will directly affect their interpretation tendencies and communication behaviors towards events, constructing a diversified trend of public opinion.

Finally, the external guidance mechanism refers to the intervention behaviors of the government, media and social organizations in the process of public opinion evolution. This involves aspects such as the strategy of information release, the rhythm of discourse guidance and the public interpretation mechanism. Effective guidance can help public opinion transform in a rational direction. On the contrary, it may amplify misinterpretation and emotional reactions. This has intensified public opinion.

#### **4.1.2. Analysis Framework of Influencing Factors from the Perspective of Feedback**

From the perspective of feedback, the framework of public opinion influencing factors can be subdivided into four nested dimensions, namely information acquisition, information interpretation, emotional expression, and intergenerational interaction. Among them, the moderating role of intergenerational differences in the evolution process of public opinion is particularly highlighted.

The dimension of information acquisition focuses on the differences among different generational groups in terms of information sources, acquisition efficiency, and information credibility. Such differences determine the audience's initial cognitive basis for events and will have an impact on their willingness to participate and emotional presuppositions.

The dimension of information interpretation focuses on the differences existing among generations in the logic of event evaluation and the construction of meaning, which is specifically reflected in the fact that different groups may hold completely different understanding paths and value judgments for the same event.

The dimension of emotional expression can present the style differences in public opinion feedback methods among different generations. Young groups tend to make immediate and emotional expressions, while older groups are more inclined to restrained, analytical and summative expressions.

The intergenerational interaction dimension is a key component of the feedback mechanism, emphasizing that in the process of public opinion dissemination, the younger generation provides information and knowledge explanations to the older generation through social platforms, while the older generation responds to the younger group by relying on experience output and value guidance, thus establishing a two-way regulatory mechanism of "information feedback - emotional feedback".

Such a framework can start from the level of micro-interaction to reveal the intensification effect of intergenerational differences on public opinion fluctuations and the buffering path, providing a theoretical basis for formulating precise public opinion guidance strategies.

### **4.2. The Impact of Intergenerational Differences on Public Opinion**

#### **4.2.1. Differences in information acquisition methods**

In the incident of "Night Riding Kaifeng Trend", the differences in information acquisition channels among different generations of groups have had a rather crucial impact on the



dissemination structure and emotional path of public opinion. The younger generation mainly relies on social platforms such as Weibo and Douyin to obtain information, demonstrating extremely high sensitivity to event acquisition and strong content distribution capabilities. Generally, at the very beginning of an event, they can obtain relevant information and then participate in the dissemination and discussion through forms such as short videos and interactive comments.

In contrast, the older group tends to obtain information through traditional media channels such as TV news and newspapers. Their process of receiving information has a more prominent delay. However, the authority and systematicness of the information source are higher. Such differences enable the younger group to quickly form an issue focus and generate emotional traction at the beginning of public opinion. Most of the older groups only get involved when the public opinion has developed to the middle and later stages, taking on the roles of reflection and order restoration. The differences in time and media structure between the two acquisition mechanisms jointly constitute the "rhythm gap" when public opinion fluctuates, and also plant hidden dangers for possible subsequent public opinion conflicts.

#### **4.2.2. Differences in Information interpretation methods**

The differences between generations in terms of information understanding and meaning construction are the key root cause for the emergence of opposing emotions in the process of public opinion evolution. Influenced by online culture, the younger generation pays more attention to personal participation experience and self-expression. Their understanding of night riding behavior mostly focuses on aspects such as lifestyle, aesthetic appreciation or collective identity. However, the boundaries of rules and the risks of social order have been ignored.

The older generation tends to focus more on analyzing events from the perspectives of social norms and safety order. They show a higher degree of vigilance and a tendency to criticize violations that occur during cycling. Such an asymmetry in the cognitive framework makes it easy for both sides to form "essential neglect" and "value misalignment" when public opinions confront each other. It has increased misunderstandings and emotional frictions in public opinion discussions, promoting the development of public opinion in a polarized direction.

#### **4.2.3. Differences in emotional expression methods**

The differences in emotional expression methods are also a key source of public opinion tension. The younger generation shows the characteristics of rapidity, sensibility and interactivity in emotional expression behavior, and is prone to achieve group resonance through various forms such as tagging language, emoticons and short videos. Although this expression method is infectious and convenient for mobilizing participation, However, it is also very easy to intensify conflicts and create public opinion opposition.

Relatively speaking, the older generation pays more attention to rational restraint and behavioral boundaries. Their way of expression is more inclined to be gentle and standardized. This way of expression has a certain regulatory effect on the stable development of public opinion. However, when facing the cyberspace dominated by emotions, it is also more likely to be marginalized or misunderstood as "preaching", intensifying the emotional backlash of the younger group. The lack of an intermediary communication mechanism between the two makes it difficult for emotions and rationality to effectively integrate in the public opinion space, forming a continuous tension structure.

### **4.3. The Feedback Mechanism in Public Opinion Guidance**

#### **4.3.1. Information feedback from the younger generation to the older generation**

In the "Night Cycling Kaifeng Trend" event, the younger generation achieved an information feedback behavior to the older group through social media. The younger generation provided

on-site videos and the perspectives of the participants, and explained their viewpoints and expressed their emotions in the comment section. In this way, the older group could understand the entire process of the event and the motives behind it more intuitively.

This information feedback behavior can shorten the time delay for the older generation to receive information. At the same time, it can also build a cross-generational cognitive channel, reducing misunderstandings and accusations caused by information asymmetry. The younger generation actively shares and responds with words, which to a certain extent promotes the understanding and tolerance of the older group towards the emerging lifestyle.

#### **4.3.2. Emotional support from the older generation to the younger generation**

During the event discussion, the older group, based on rational analysis and emotional stability, carried out value clarification and emotional comfort for the younger generation through public discussions and media voices. By pointing out the potential safety risks in night cycling activities and emphasizing the significance of standardized participation, they demonstrated a sense of responsibility. At the same time, there is also an attitude of understanding and tolerance.

This emotional feedback path that follows the concept of "guidance rather than suppression" can play a certain role in alleviating the resistance psychology of the young group, enhance their recognition of social norms, and ultimately achieve emotional repair and trust reconstruction between generations in the tension of emotions.

#### **4.3.3. The Role of Feedback Mechanism in Public Opinion Guidance**

The feedback mechanism serves as a bridge and a regulatory structure in public opinion guidance. It played a crucial role in the "Night Ride Kaifeng Wave" incident. On the one hand, information feedback broke down the information barriers between different generations, reducing the differences in understanding the event among different groups. On the other hand, emotional feedback guided the public to return to rational judgment when expressing emotions. Prevent public opinion from developing out of control.

The feedback mechanism, as a two-way regulation mechanism, is very crucial. It realizes information sharing and emotional support, builds an intergenerational dialogue platform, and provides basic conditions for multiple groups to achieve understanding and consultation in the same public opinion space. The application of this mechanism in public opinion guidance presents a possible path for the transformation from the "management - control" to the "collaboration - dialogue" governance model. It has key practical enlightenment value.

## **5. Public Opinion Guidance Strategies and Recommendations**

### **5.1. Basic Principles of Public Opinion Guidance**

#### **5.1.1. Timeliness and Transparency**

In the practical operation of public opinion guidance, timeliness and transparency are fundamental principles for building public trust, alleviating emotional fluctuations, and stabilizing public sentiment. Timeliness means that relevant management departments must respond quickly after the occurrence of an emergency, releasing authoritative information at the earliest opportunity to seize the advantage in information dissemination and effectively suppress the spread of misinformation. Transparency emphasizes the authenticity, comprehensiveness, and continuity of the information release process, ensuring that the public can access clear, accurate, and complete information about the event.

Taking the "Night Riding Kaifeng Tide" incident as an example, the Kaifeng traffic police department promptly intervened after the event occurred, initiated an investigation mechanism, and published a handling notice through its official Weibo account in a timely manner. This response effectively controlled the early spread of public opinion and established

an authoritative source in the public domain. The department disclosed the results of the penalties for the involved personnel and the subsequent safety management measures for night riding, thereby forming a stable “authoritative agenda” in the public sphere and increasing public trust in the government's handling capabilities.

It can be seen that a timely and transparent public opinion response mechanism meets the public's fundamental expectation for the right to know, helps reduce information asymmetry, alleviates anxiety in public discourse, and blocks the spread of rumors, thus providing foundational support for public opinion to return to rationality.

### **5.1.2. Relevance and Differentiation**

The effectiveness of public opinion guidance lies in precise intervention, which requires tailored and differentiated strategic arrangements. This principle emphasizes that guidance strategies should be designed according to audience characteristics, stages of public opinion development, and the nature of the event, with different designs in content, form, and communication channels to achieve targeted dissemination and segmented communication.

In the “Night Riding Kaifeng Tide” incident, significant differences in information preferences, cognitive patterns, and value orientations were observed between different generational groups. For the younger generation, guidance should rely on social platforms such as Weibo and Douyin, using formats like short videos, comment interactions, and Q&A to deliver concise, relatable messages that highlight the risks and responsibilities of night riding, encouraging reflection and behavioral regulation. For the older generation, traditional media such as television news and newspaper columns can be used for in-depth analysis, integrating rational discussion with emotional understanding to guide them in viewing emerging cultural phenomena with a more inclusive attitude.

Guidance strategies should be dynamically adjusted at different stages of public opinion. Early stages require strengthening agenda-setting and emotional calming; the middle stages focus on managing topic agendas and coordinating differences; the later stages turn to summary reflection and institutional improvement. By adopting flexible and audience-specific strategies, the accuracy and effectiveness of public opinion interventions can be enhanced while avoiding resistance or backlash caused by overly rigid or one-size-fits-all approaches.

### **5.1.3. Interactivity and Participation**

In the new media environment, interactivity and participation have become key indicators for evaluating public opinion guidance. Unlike traditional one-way communication, modern public opinion guidance emphasizes public feedback, expression, and co-creation throughout the information dissemination chain, encouraging the public to participate in public discourse in a rational and orderly manner. This transition from passive reception to active construction is essential.

In the “Night Riding Kaifeng Tide” incident, building diverse interactive mechanisms to enhance inclusiveness and responsiveness in the public sphere has become a key means to ease generational tensions and reconstruct public understanding. Government departments and mainstream media should use social platforms to monitor public concerns in real time and respond accordingly, forming a closed-loop communication structure of “question–response–re-dissemination.” Online and offline topic engagement activities, such as launching topic solicitations and short video interactions online, or holding traffic safety lectures and youth night riding salons offline, can activate public willingness to participate and their ability to negotiate.

Interactivity extends the reach of information dissemination and helps build consensus-based public discourse structures. Participation transforms emotional outbursts into responsible cognition and institutional advancement. Together, they support the shift from “control” to “co-

construction” in governance models and lay the foundation for deliberative governance in emergencies.

## **5.2. Public Opinion Guidance Strategies Based on the Feedback Perspective**

### **5.2.1. The Guiding Role of Information Feedback Strategy for the Younger Generation**

In the public opinion guidance system, fully leveraging the information feedback function of the younger generation is a key way to promote rationalization of public opinion and foster a positive public discourse ecosystem. As digital natives in the media environment, the younger generation possesses natural advantages in information acquisition, content creation, and the use of communication technologies. During emergencies, they can quickly construct issue networks and trigger public attention.

Taking the “Night Riding Kaifeng Tide” event as an example, the younger generation can guide public opinion in the following ways: First, by using the communication power of social media and their individual influence, they can actively release authoritative information, positive viewpoints, and rational voices. Through science-based short videos, infographic-style posts, and live topic broadcasts, they can convey essential knowledge, safety norms, and organizational logic about night riding, correcting misunderstandings and eliminating biases. Second, young people should actively participate in online discussions, using rational tones and diverse perspectives to respond to public doubts, alleviate anxiety, and prevent emotional discourse from dominating the narrative. In comment sections, reposts, and private messages, they can serve as “explainers” and “mediators”. Third, based on their innovative capabilities, they can develop digital tools related to night riding activities—such as risk assessment mini-programs, route visualization platforms, or guideline-oriented apps—to enhance public understanding and confidence in managing such events.

Through these information feedback strategies, the younger generation takes on the role of fact disseminators and value clarifiers, becoming both a communication bridge and a catalyst for rational discourse, thereby contributing to a more stable and diversified public opinion ecosystem.

### **5.2.2. The Soothing Role of Emotional Feedback Support for the Older Generation**

The older generation plays a crucial role in public opinion guidance, not only in passing on knowledge and experience but also in emotional regulation, value orientation, and intergenerational reassurance. Drawing on their rich social experience, mature judgment, and emotional authority in families and communities, they can offer emotional feedback at key points in public opinion development, mitigating anxiety and generational conflict.

In the “Night Riding Kaifeng Tide” incident, their emotional feedback can be analyzed in three aspects: Rational Analysis and Neutral Judgment – helping refocus public discourse on the core issues. Based on their understanding of social norms and safety, they can explain the potential risks of night riding through media commentary, community dialogue, or family conversations, thus deepening public awareness. Moderation and Understanding in Expression – by adopting inclusive language and a calm stance when facing explanations or defenses from the younger generation, they can reduce confrontational emotions and build trust. Value-Based Role Modeling – as moral exemplars, they naturally convey values such as rule awareness, public responsibility, and cooperative governance, guiding the youth to recognize behavioral boundaries while pursuing personal freedom and internalizing norms.

Overall, emotional feedback from the older generation aids in cooling down intense public sentiment and rebuilding rationality, providing ethical support and emotional cushioning for cross-generational consensus and reconciliation.

### **5.2.3. Intergenerational Communication Strategies to Promote Understanding and Cooperation**

During sudden public opinion incidents, generational conflicts often become explicit due to cognitive clashes, stylistic differences in expression, and varied media usage habits. To address this, building a systematic intergenerational communication mechanism is a key strategy to relieve tensions, bridge divides, and achieve coordinated governance.

First, efforts should be made to build a structured platform for intergenerational dialogue, creating an equal and open space for communication between the two generations. Various forms such as community councils, intergenerational Weibo live discussions, and online short video co-streaming interviews can be utilized to encourage constructive exchanges between different age groups on the cultural meaning, behavioral boundaries, and public ethics of night riding. Through the collision of ideas, a foundation for consensus can be found. Next, intergenerational cooperation projects should be promoted to enhance emotional connection and encourage practical collaboration. For example, joint public welfare activities themed around “safe night riding” can be organized, where young people take charge of planning and communication tasks, while older individuals provide guidance and experience-based support. Trust can be rebuilt during the process of working together. Finally, a tiered education and training mechanism should be advanced to improve the public opinion literacy and media competence of intergenerational groups. For the younger generation, it is necessary to strengthen education on responsibility and public expression; for the older generation, more emphasis should be placed on digital technology training and guidance for online expression, enabling them to adapt to the digital public opinion environment.

Constructing an intergenerational communication mechanism with strong interactivity, high participation, and timely feedback can effectively reduce intergenerational tensions within public discourse, improve the quality of public issue negotiation, and help establish stronger emotional bonds and public opinion consensus among different social groups.

## **5.3. Implementation Recommendations**

### **5.3.1. Role Positioning of Government and Media**

In public opinion guidance systems, the roles of government and media determine the authority of information dissemination and directly affect the stability of public sentiment and the rationality of societal perceptions. The government, as the main force in managing public affairs, must fully utilize its institutional authority and governance capacity, responding quickly to public opinion events and addressing information needs to minimize uncertainty and emotional escalation.

In the “Night Riding Kaifeng Tide” case, government departments should promptly verify information and use authoritative channels to publish factual reports addressing key public concerns. Timely response prevents speculation, rumors, and panic caused by information gaps. The government should also strengthen institutional construction by formulating targeted policies regarding the organization, participation standards, and safety supervision of night riding activities, using regulatory systems to define behavioral boundaries and enhance governance predictability.

Media, as both “narrative shapers” and “viewpoint balancers,” should adhere to objective, neutral, and comprehensive reporting principles, presenting complete facts and using in-depth analysis to guide public understanding of structural causes and systemic issues. Avoiding sensationalism, emotional overdrive, and misleading headlines is crucial to preventing “secondary public opinion disasters.” Coordination between government and media ensures consistent messaging, effective discourse alignment, and emotional stabilization—foundational to managing emergencies and rebuilding public consensus.



### 5.3.2. Public Opinion Monitoring and Guidance by Social Platforms

Social platforms are the core venues for generating and spreading public opinion. In the dynamic management of emergencies, they act as “early warning sentinels” and “context builders.” The sophistication, sensitivity, and interactivity of platform governance strategies directly impact the speed and trajectory of public opinion spread.

In the “Night Riding Kaifeng Tide” event, platforms should establish AI- and big data-driven public opinion warning systems to monitor unusual traffic, trending topics, and emotional polarization. Real-time detection and risk assessment—combining automated recognition with human intervention—create a responsive system. Misinformation and malicious rumors should be identified, downranked, or removed in accordance with legal regulations to contain false information chains.

Platforms should also take the initiative in guidance by enabling rational discussion tags, highlighting diverse viewpoints, and encouraging authoritative accounts to speak up. They should coordinate quickly with government and trusted media to prioritize and stabilize the release of official information. Through an integrated “technology–mechanism–discourse” system, platforms can provide essential digital support and discourse environments for rational public opinion development.

### 5.3.3. Building a Public Participation Mechanism

The public, as direct participants and emotional carriers of public opinion, exert profound influence through their behavioral tendencies and expressive styles. Establishing a scientific, regulated, and open participation mechanism is vital for co-building, co-governing, and co-sharing public discourse.

In the “Night Riding Kaifeng Tide” incident, the mechanism of public participation can be promoted from the following three aspects. Firstly, a multi-channel feedback mechanism should be established. By utilizing government new media comment sections, hotline platforms, and public suggestion channels, citizens should be encouraged to express their views, suggestions, and emotional expectations regarding the event. Institutionalized channels for collecting public opinion are conducive to guiding fragmented discussions into constructive consultation. Secondly, deliberative public participation activities should be organized, such as online public issue forums, offline citizen dialogue workshops, and youth night riding safety initiative solicitations. These efforts help strengthen the public’s sense of presence and influence in the process of social governance, enhancing their sense of behavioral responsibility and rationality in public opinion expression. Thirdly, the promotion of media literacy and civic responsibility education should be advanced. Through community education, university curricula, and social media publicity, the public's ability to identify misinformation, participate in public discussion, and express opinions can be improved. This helps guide rational and restrained expression in public discourse and prevents blind conformity and emotional amplification.

By building a public participation mechanism centered on opinion feedback, deliberative engagement, and educational improvement, the coordination and transparency of public opinion governance can be effectively enhanced. It can also improve public trust in the government and the media, fostering a positive interactive dynamic of diverse and collaborative governance.

## 6. Conclusion

Through in-depth research on the “Night Ride Kaifeng Trend” incident, this study, from the perspective of feedback, systematically analyzed the influencing factors and evolution patterns of the public opinion during emergencies, and proposed targeted guiding strategies. The

research results show that the different characteristics of the younger generation in information acquisition, interpretation, and emotional expression have a significant impact on the trend of public opinion. The younger generation, with its advantages in the application of digital technology and information dissemination, can quickly attract public attention and fuel the escalation of public opinion; while the older generation, with its rich social experience and rational thinking, provides important support for the rational return of public opinion. By constructing a framework of public opinion guidance strategies based on the perspective of feedback, this study proposed targeted strategies such as information feedback, emotional feedback, and intergenerational communication, and emphasized the collaborative role of the government, media, social platforms, and the public in public opinion guidance. These strategies have significant effects in alleviating intergenerational conflicts and promoting the rational return of public opinion, providing new ideas and methods for responding to public opinion during emergencies.

However, with the rapid development of information technology and the continuous changes in social environment, public opinion guidance still faces many challenges. The application of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data in public opinion dissemination is increasingly widespread, and the influence mechanism of these technologies on the evolution of public opinion still needs further research. In addition, the diversification of social structures and the diversification of public demands also pose higher requirements for public opinion guidance. Future research should further focus on the impact of emerging technologies on public opinion dissemination, explore more precise and efficient public opinion guidance strategies, and adapt to the complex and changing public opinion environment. At the same time, interdisciplinary research should be strengthened, combining theories from sociology, psychology, and communication studies, to deeply analyze the complex social phenomena in the evolution of public opinion, and provide strong support for maintaining social stability and promoting social harmony and development.

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