MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS
BELARUSIAN STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Department of Social Communication

GUAN Chenyu

SOCIAL MEDIA AS A PUBLIC OPINION FORMING TOOL

Master's Thesis
ANNOTATION
Speciality 7-06-0321-02 Communications

Academic supervisor:
Irina I. Ekadumova
Doctor of Science in Political Science,
Associate Professor

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ANNOTATION

The structure of the master's thesis includes three chapters. Chapter 1 describes the role of social media in the contemporary media landscape, Chapter 2 analyzes public opinion in the age of social media, and Chapter 3 examines techniques related to using social media to influence public opinion.

The master's thesis includes 69 pages, 4 illustrations, 5 tables, 1 appendix, and 69 sources used.

Keywords: social media, public opinion, mass communication, information dissemination, algorithmic influence, misinformation, opinion leadership .

The object of the study is social media.

The subject of the study are regularities of public opinion formation under the influence of communication in social media.

The purpose of the study is to identify relevant patterns and current trends in the formation of public opinion in social media in different political and cultural contexts.

The following methods were used in this study:

Content analysis - textual content (e.g., posts, comments, articles, etc.) on social media is systematically analyzed, including message themes, affective tendencies, linguistic styles, and transmission paths, so as to reveal the content characteristics of public opinion and the specifics of its expression.

Case studies are used to examine specific cases where social media have had a significant impact on public opinion, such as the StayHome campaign (COVID-19) and the Dauphin True Beauty campaign.

This thesis investigates the complex relationship between social media and opinion formation. Specifically, the thesis aims to examine how social media platforms influence public sentiment through various mechanisms, including algorithmic content curation, user-generated content, and the role of influencers. In addition, the dissertation examines the challenges posed by social media, such as the spread of misinformation and the creation of echo chambers, and explores strategies to mitigate these challenges. The main goal of this dissertation is to gain a comprehensive understanding of how social media influences opinion formation. By analyzing the mechanisms by which social media influences societal opinions and behaviors, this dissertation aims to contribute to the theoretical and practical knowledge in the field.