The effect of the online celebrities' 'imperfect image' on followers' sustained subscription

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Abstract: Online celebrities with millions of fans, their image are no longer close to perfection, but will design a character with defect. This paper divides the imperfect image of online celebrity into four dimensions: appearance, language, personality and information content. A model was created based on S-O-R theory to study on the affection of internet celebrities' imperfect image on sustained subscription will of their fans, with imperfect image as an independent variable, psychological distance as a mediating variable, sustained subscription will as a dependent variable and the type of online celebrities as a moderating variable.

1. Introduction

With the development of comprehensive social platforms, especially the rise of live broadcast platforms and video software, various online celebrities have entered people's attention, and millions of fans are no longer star patents. The number of their fans has grown geometrically, and the fan effect cannot be ignored.

As the celebrity effect of online celebrities becomes more and more obvious, what kind of online celebrities are more popular with fans has become the focus of attention. Compared with the perfect image displayed in front of fans, more and more online celebrities show their imperfect side in front of fans. In particular, online celebrities with millions of fans, their image is no longer close to perfection, but will design a character with defect. Unexpectedly, such an imperfect image did not receive the rejection of fans, but attracted more fans. The impact of such an imperfect image on the relationship between fans and celebrities and fans' continued subscription will be focused on.

2. Imperfect image definition

The concept of character image formation in literature coincides with the shaping of the imperfect image of bloggers. In the field of literature, it is widely believed that the defects in the design of a certain aspect when designing a character image [1] can not only depict the distinctive characteristics of the characters, but also reveal the characteristics of the person's life, situation, character, and psychology.

This is similar to the online celebrities shaping the image through the platform. This imperfection can increase the recognition of celebrities and increase the realism in the eyes of fans. Therefore, the imperfect image of the online celebrities is defined as: the shortcomings designed in the character shaping, to give the character a real and vivid image. From the perspective of literature, the portrayal of characters is often divided into three aspects: appearance, character and language. From the perspective of the imperfect image of the online celebrities, the imperfect image can also be divided into dimensions: appearance, language and personality. But unlike literary shaping, the audience of the online celebrities is followers. The most basic driving force for fans to follow the celebrity is the content he/she posted. Therefore, according to the particularity of the online celebrities shaping the image platform, the three aspects of appearance, language and character are

not enough to cover its image comprehensively. It is necessary to add the "information content" to the online celebrities' imperfect images.

In summary, this paper divides the imperfect image of the net red blogger into four dimensions: appearance, character, language and information content.

3. Imperfect image, psychological distance and sustained subscription

3.1 The effect of imperfect image on psychological distance

In this article, the psychological distance between the online celebrities and their followers refers to the social distance. The social distance includes the degree of difference between the self and others, the identity of the self-owned group and other, the sense of power and the intimacy with others. The imperfect image increases the realism of the online celebrities, making them to get close. From the perspective of psychological distance, that is, the degree of difference between fans and celebrities is weakened, and the sense of intimacy increases. Closed the social distance between fans and celebrities. When the psychological distance is shortened, that is, the sense of identity rises, so that the sustained subscription is higher.

Appearance defects positively affect the psychological distance between the online celebrities and fans. Fans will notice the online celebrities because of their appearance. However, in the popular online celebrities, a large part is not the beauty of the big eyes and white skin in the traditional sense. They are more or less inadequate in appearance. . Take the online celebrities in makeup as an example, a large number of celebrities are not the beauty. However, these online celebrities did not hide their appearance defects, but displayed them very generously. This kind of image display gives fans a sense of realism and intimacy. For example, the celebrity "Meng YuYu" is not a beauty in the traditional concept, but she has a million fans. Some of the followers subscribed her for the same shortcomings as her, and some for that she can be close. Therefore, when the online celebrities are shaping the image, the beauty in the traditional sense does not help stand out among the many celebrities. On the contrary, the lack of appearance may give the online celebrities a unique style and improve his/her recognition.

Language defects are positively affecting the psychological distance between the online celebrities and followers. In the past, when the Weibo platform could only use text and images to publish information, the language did not have much effect on the image of the online celebrities. However, with the rise of live broadcast and video applications, language has become an indispensable part of the net online celebritie's image. Even many celebrities have attracted a large number of fans through the language without posting personal photos. As the celebrities Yuzu, her Mandarin is not a very standard, so the video dubbing released always carries the dialect of Taiwan. But it is this lack of language that makes her gentle and unique.

Personality defects positively affect the psychological distance between the online celebrities and followers. Character is the most easily overlooked part of the image of the online celebrities. Usually, most of the information published by the online celebrities in their respective fields has positive implications and is rarely personal. But as it is said in literary creation, the character of a person is not a single one. Simply emphasizing a positive character in front of followers will be divorced from reality. Appropriate disclosure of defects in character is not a bad thing, such as "Xing Xiaoyao", she often expresses her views on certain things on the social platform straightly. However, this performance did not affect the followers' subscription on her. Instead, she created a straightforward and positive image in, increasing the followers' closeness to her.

The content defect negatively affects the psychological distance between the online celebrities and the followers. The content posted by celebrities is the basic driving force for followers' subscription. If the content of the published information is not strictly controlled, it is difficult to get the sustained subscription of the followers. The motivation factors that influence users' continuous subscription behavior mainly include information motivation [2]. Therefore, the quality of information published by the online celebrities affects the followers' sustained subscription. This

requires celebrities to focus on changes of followers' demand, clarify followers' appeals, and maximize the relevance of content. At the same time, the quality of the information cannot be ignored. The quality here is not only related to the knowledge reserve of the celebrities in the professional field, but also contains the interesting and readable content of the published information. Defects in publishing content can affect the subscription.

3.2 The effect of psychological distance on the followers' sustained subscription

Previous research pointed out that the followers' willingness to subscribe is reflected in the followers' a series of information dissemination behaviors such as comments. It is generally recognized that the most important factor of followers' information dissemination behavior is the pursuit of self-identity. Therefore, it can be considered that when the psychological distance is shortened, that is, the sense of identity rises, and thus the higher the willingness of subscription.

At the same time, according to Mehrabian and Russell's S-O-R theory [3], external stimuli affect a person's psychological state and thus reflect on person's behavioral response. When the imperfect image of the online celebrities is presented to their followers, the followers will judge such a flaw, and generate a kind of easy-closed cognition, which will affect their subscription on the online celebrities. That is to say, the imperfectness of the online celebrities gives the followers an external stimulus, and the followers have a sense of intimacy, which shortens psychological distance, thus affecting the behavior to sustained subscription.

Psychological distance has a positive effect on the followers' willingness to sustain subscribe, that is, the closer the psychological distance, the higher the willingness of followers to subscribe for a long term.

4. Hypothetical model

According to the above description, the hypothesis model of this paper is proposed. Due to the different positioning of the online celebrities, there will be a big difference in the content posted. The content published by some of the online celebrities is knowledgeable, but mainly the purpose is to entertainment followers. Some of the online celebrities are professional who only share knowledge. Therefore, the moderate variable "the Type of the online celebrities" is introduced into the model, as shown in Figure 1.
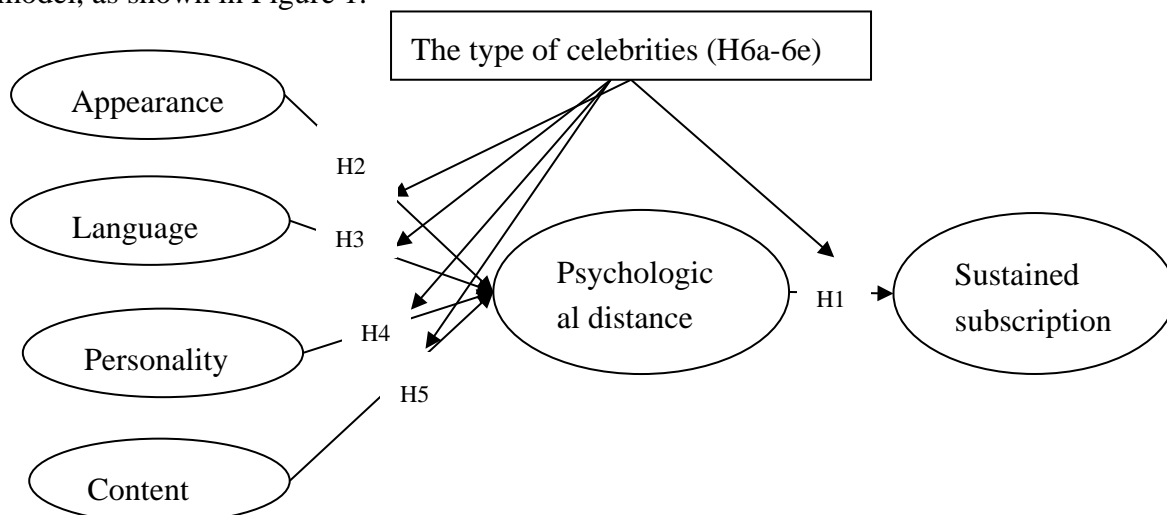

Figure 1. Hypothetical Model

5. Summary and future research

According to the hypothetical model of this paper, the online celebrities do not have to pursue a perfect image when shaping the image. Appropriate appearance defects will narrow the

psychological distance of followers, thus increasing the followers' willingness to subscribe. At the same time, language defects will not cause the reduction of followers' willingness to subscribe, but to some extent shorten the psychological distance between followers and celebrities, so that fans feel that celebrities are more easy-going.

When the published information has personal personality or emotional factors, the online celebrities need to be more careful, the character defect is difficult to grasp, it is easy to zoom in without any restrictions, which leads to the followers' willingness to subscription decline even they will not subscribe.

For professional celebrities, the quality of the published content needs to be strictly checked. The comprehensiveness and novelty of information are important parts. For non-professional celebrities, it is important to focus on the interest of information and the amount of information published. Entertainment is the driving force of followers for non-professional online celebrities.

This paper proposes a hypothetical model of the influence of the "imperfect image" on the followers' willingness to sustained subscription only based on the predecessors' literature and phenomena. In future researches, the scale and experimental ought to be designed based on the hypothetical model to verified it by empirical data.

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