

# Path Exploration of Improving College Students' Rational Expression Ability in the Fragmented Media Environment

**Huan Zhao\***

Nanjing Institute of Tourism and Hospitality, Nanjing 211100, Jiangsu, China

*\*Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

**Copyright:** © 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

**Abstract:** The instantaneity of information dissemination, fragmentation of content, and convenience of interaction in fragmented media have profoundly changed the way college students obtain information and their expression habits. As an active group in the online public opinion field, the cultivation of contemporary college students' rational expression ability is not only related to their personal growth and development but also directly affects the ecology of the social public discourse space and social value orientation. This paper analyzes the practical paths to improve college students' rational expression ability from four dimensions: strengthening educational guidance, platform governance, personal cultivation, and social collaboration, aiming to provide theoretical support and practical reference for cultivating new-era youth with independent thinking and rational expression abilities.

**Keywords:** Fragmented media; college students; rational expression ability; path exploration

**Online publication:** November 26, 2025

## 1. Introduction

With the development of mobile internet technology, fragmented media represented by short videos, Weibo, and WeChat official accounts have gradually become the main carriers of information dissemination. Penetrating into college students' study and life in a "short, flat, and fast" way, they also provide college students with convenient expression channels and diverse voice platforms<sup>[1]</sup>. Currently, some college students show emotional and bandwagon tendencies in fragmented expression, and even create controversies to attract attention<sup>[2]</sup>. This lack of rational expression ability may not only lead to the solidification of college students' cognitive biases but also weaken their ability to conduct in-depth thinking and constructive dialogue on public issues, interfere with the sound order of social public discussions, and even endanger social ideological stability<sup>[3]</sup>. Therefore, in the fragmented media environment, in-depth research on the paths to improve college students' rational expression ability and guiding them to establish correct expression concepts and master rational expression methods is not only an inherent requirement for colleges and universities to implement the fundamental task of fostering morality and cultivating people and improve the quality of talent training but also an important measure to purify the online space ecology and build a clear online environment<sup>[4]</sup>.

## **2. Strengthen educational guidance: construct a “curriculum + practice” cultivation system**

### **2.1. Optimize curriculum settings to lay a theoretical foundation for rational expression**

Colleges and universities should incorporate the cultivation of rational expression ability into talent training programs and build a curriculum system combining general education and professional education: first, offer core compulsory courses such as “Logical Thinking Training”, “Media Literacy Education”, and “Effective Communication and Expression” to systematically teach students knowledge of logical reasoning, information discrimination, and effective communication. Among them, the “Media Literacy Education” course should focus on improving college students’ critical cognitive ability of media information and helping them master basic methods of rational expression; second, integrate rational expression training into professional courses, design teaching links such as classroom discussions, academic debates, and case analyses combined with disciplinary characteristics, and guide students to express themselves using logic and evidence in a professional context; third, offer interdisciplinary elective courses, inviting experts in philosophy, sociology, journalism and communication to offer courses such as “Public Discourse and Rational Dialogue” and “Critical Thinking and Writing” to broaden students’ thinking horizons and enhance their multi-angle speculative ability.

### **2.2. Innovate teaching modes to strengthen practical training of rational expression**

Change the traditional one-way indoctrination teaching, and adopt interactive, discussion-based, and case-based teaching methods to provide college students with practical platforms for rational expression<sup>[5]</sup>. First, carry out classroom debate activities, select topics such as social hotspots and academic controversies, organize students to debate, and exercise their logical speculation, argumentation, and instant expression abilities in the debate; second, implement project-based learning, allowing students to conduct research on real social issues and write reports, and improve their abilities of information integration, logical sorting, and clear expression in collaborative inquiry; third, use online teaching platforms to set up interactive links such as discussion areas and message boards, guide students to express their views on teaching content, and teachers timely comment on and guide students’ expressions to correct their irrational expression problems.

### **2.3. Strengthen teachers’ morality guidance and give play to teachers’ demonstration role**

Teachers’ words and deeds in classroom teaching have an imperceptible demonstration effect on students<sup>[6]</sup>. Therefore, colleges and universities should focus on improving teachers’ media literacy and expression ability, and guide teachers to explain viewpoints in a rational, objective, and rigorous attitude during classroom teaching. At the same time, in communication with students, teachers should pay attention to rational guidance. When students express irrational views, they should conduct dialogue in an equal and respectful attitude, guide students to think rationally by presenting facts and reasoning, avoid simple criticism or suppression, and help them establish correct expression concepts<sup>[7]</sup>.

## **3. Standardize platform governance: create a media environment for rational expression**

### **3.1. Optimize algorithm mechanisms to break the constraints of “information cocoons”**

Fragmented media platforms should assume the main responsibility of information ecological governance, optimize recommendation algorithm mechanisms, provide college students with windows to access diverse information, and avoid falling into a closed loop of homogeneous information<sup>[8]</sup>. First, adjust algorithm weights, reduce the push intensity of single interest tags, and actively push content with ideological depth and objective viewpoints, such as authoritative media reports, academic articles, and policy interpretations, to broaden college students’ information horizons; second, introduce diversity coefficients, and intelligently insert content from different perspectives when college students are exposed to single-tendency information for a long time, guiding them to think from multiple angles to break the cognitive closed loop; third, reduce the recommendation weight of emotional and extreme content, limit its spread speed and scope, and reduce

misleading to college students' rational expression<sup>[9]</sup>.

### **3.2. Improve supervision mechanisms to purify the online expression space**

Online platforms should establish and improve content review and report response mechanisms to create a clear online expression environment<sup>[10]</sup>. First, establish a content review system combining intelligent identification and manual review to realize dynamic monitoring and filtering of platform content, timely intercept inciting, insulting, and false remarks, and prevent the spread of irrational emotions; second, establish a user expression behavior evaluation system, give positive incentives to rational expressions, such as improving account credit rating and increasing content recommendation weight, and remind, restrict traffic, or even ban accounts of users with irrational expressions, forming an effective constraint mechanism to guide users to standardize their expression behaviors; third, set up speech reporting channels to encourage reporting of inappropriate remarks, forming a good ecology of joint participation in supervision and governance by platforms and users; fourth, strengthen platform transparency construction and regularly publish content review standards.

### **2.3. build rational expression platforms to guide positive interactive communication**

Media platforms should take the initiative to create a clean and upright exclusive space for rational expression, providing standardized expression and communication channels for college students<sup>[11]</sup>. For example, set up special forums, speculative columns, or online debate platforms, encourage college students to conduct in-depth discussions on social hotspots and public issues, require participants to abide by expression norms and uphold the principles of respect and rationality; invite experts, scholars, and industry representatives to participate in online interactive exchanges, answer students' questions, guide them to form independent judgments in speculation, and encourage students to conduct in-depth discussions on hot topics to stimulate their enthusiasm for improving their own rational expression level.

## **4. Focus on personal cultivation: strengthen self-improvement of rational expression**

### **4.1. Cultivate independent thinking awareness and improve logical speculative ability**

College students should take the initiative to cultivate independent thinking awareness and avoid blind following and emotional expression<sup>[12]</sup>. Faced with the impact of fragmented information, they should keep a clear mind, learn to distinguish the authenticity of information and positional biases, not believe, follow, or spread unverified content; before expressing views, they should examine issues from multiple angles, clarify the logical chain, and avoid falling into binary opposition thinking of black and white. At the same time, college students should take the initiative to improve their logical speculative ability, extensively read classic works and authoritative documents, and master basic logical reasoning methods such as induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis, laying a cognitive foundation for rational expression.

### **4.2. Enhance media literacy and standardize personal expression behaviors**

College students should actively improve their media literacy and establish correct concepts of media use: first, learn the basic laws of media communication and network communication, understand the ethical norms and laws and regulations of network expression, and clarify the boundaries of their rights and obligations in the network space; second, master methods of information discrimination and screening, improve the ability to identify false information, learn to obtain true and accurate information using authoritative databases and official media, and resist the spread of bad or false information; third, standardize their own network expression behaviors, ensure that words are evidence-based and reasonable, eliminate emotional outbursts and personal attacks, participate in network discussions with a constructive attitude, and consciously maintain a clear network environment<sup>[13]</sup>.

### **4.3. Strengthen emotional control and cultivate rational communication ability**

As contemporary college students, they should pay attention to improving their emotional control ability and maintain calm

and restraint in expression<sup>[14]</sup>. When facing controversial topics, avoid being coerced by extreme emotions, learn to control emotional fluctuations, and treat different views with a calm and inclusive attitude; when having differences of opinion with others, take the initiative to listen to the other party's position, respect the expression of different views, understand the logic and concerns behind the differences through listening to different opinions, and replace opposition with dialogue rather than emotional confrontation; at the same time, learn to put oneself in others' shoes, examine problems from the other party's perspective, enhance empathy, and make expressions more inclusive and persuasive.

## **5. Build a collaborative mechanism: form a joint educational force of multiple parties**

### **5.1. Strengthen home-school collaboration to lay a growth foundation for rational expression**

The family is an important environment for college students' growth, and should form a joint educational force with colleges and universities to jointly improve college students' rational expression ability<sup>[15]</sup>. Colleges and universities should convey the importance of cultivating rational expression ability to parents through parent-teacher meetings and online communication, and guide parents to attach importance to the cultivation of their children's independent thinking and rational communication abilities; in daily life, parents should pay attention to their own expression demonstration, conduct equal and rational communication with their children, encourage them to express personal views, and provide targeted guidance on their expressions; at the same time, parents should pay attention to their children's network use, emotional changes, and network behaviors, timely detect signs of irrational expression, guide their children to standardize network expression behaviors, avoid being affected by bad online remarks, and thus establish correct values.

### **5.2. Promote school-society collaboration to create a social atmosphere for rational expression**

Colleges and universities should take the initiative to connect with social resources and cooperate with government departments, media organizations, and social organizations to jointly create a social atmosphere for rational expression. First, cooperate with government departments such as publicity departments and cyberspace administration of China to carry out "Network Civilization Entering Campus" activities, promoting network expression norms and civilized internet use concepts; second, cooperate with mainstream media, inviting media journalists and editors to enter the campus to carry out media literacy training, helping college students understand the authenticity principles of news dissemination and rational expression requirements; third, cooperate with social organizations to carry out practical activities such as volunteer services and social research, allowing college students to improve their communication and rational thinking abilities in the process of serving the society.

### **5.3. Strengthen inter-departmental collaboration to improve the educational guarantee system of colleges and universities**

Improve the operation mechanism of collaborative education among various departments in colleges and universities, concentrate efforts to create a good educational atmosphere, and form a joint force to improve students' rational expression ability. Party committees' publicity departments, student affairs offices, academic affairs offices, youth leagues, and other departments should clarify their respective responsibilities and divisions of labor, do a good job in coordination and linkage, and cooperate with each other to promote overall progress. The academic affairs office is responsible for promoting teaching reform and integrating the cultivation of rational expression ability into the whole teaching process; the student affairs office and youth league are responsible for organizing campus cultural activities and social practice to strengthen students' practical training of rational expression; the party committee's publicity department is responsible for strengthening campus public opinion guidance and network culture construction, creating a clear network space, promoting the main theme, and spreading positive energy. All departments should establish a regular communication mechanism, regularly assess students' ideological dynamics and expression behavior tendencies, timely optimize educational strategies, form a work pattern of full-process, all-round, and all-staff education, and effectively improve the systematicness and

effectiveness of cultivating college students' rational expression ability.

In the fragmented media environment, while providing college students with convenient information acquisition channels and expression platforms, it also brings challenges such as information overload, emotional communication, and shallow cognition. Faced with the complex online public opinion field, improving college students' rational expression ability is a systematic project that requires the joint efforts of schools, platforms, families, society, and college students themselves. Only through the collaboration and linkage of all parties to build a multi-level and three-dimensional training and guidance mechanism can we effectively respond to the impact of the external environment on the depth of college students' thinking and the quality of expression. In the future, with the in-depth integration of artificial intelligence technology into the field of education, colleges and universities should seize the opportunity of digital transformation, incorporate intelligent tools into the training system of rational expression ability, and provide a solid guarantee for cultivating a generation of young people with firm ideals and beliefs and rational thinking abilities.

## Funding

This paper is a phased achievement of the 2023 Jiangsu Provincial University Philosophy and Social Sciences Research Project "Research on the Cultivation Paths of the Cultural Outlook of New-Era Youths Under the Background of Cultural and Tourism Integration" (Project No.: 2023SJSZ0407); a phased achievement of the 2025 Nanjing Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Education and Teaching Reform Research Project "Research on the Collaborative Education of Ideological and Political Small Classes and Social Large Classes" (Project No.: 2025XJG13).

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

## References

- [1] Liu Y, 2025, College Students' Irrational Online Expression in the Omnimedia Era: Causes, Transmission Mechanisms and Resolution Countermeasures. *Scientific Consult*, (13): 15-18.
- [2] Wang H, 2020, Research on Effective Communication of Higher Vocational College Students with Others. *Think Tank Era*, (11): 52-53+86.
- [3] Sun XC, 2019, Research on the Construction Path of Rationalization of College Students' Online Opinion Expression. *China Collective Economy*, (30): 117-118.
- [4] He YF, 2019, Guide College Students to Express Their Opinions Rationally and Publicly. *Shanghai Education*, (12): 59.
- [5] Li LJ, Wang ZH, 2020, Research on the Impact of Internet Popular Language on College Students' Interpersonal Communication and Interaction Abilities. *University Logistics Research*, (2): 83-85.
- [6] Sun K, 2021, Research on the Impact of Information Fragmentation on College Students' Network Literacy Education in the New Media Era. *Knowledge Window (Teacher Edition)*, (09): 57-58.
- [7] Wang S, 2021, Research on the Impact of Fragmented Reading on College Students' Values in the New Media Era and Its Optimization Paths. University of Electronic Science and Technology of China.
- [8] Wang CQ, 2025, Value Reconstruction and Breakthrough of Journalists' Fragmented Expression Under the Short Video Wave. *News Culture Construction*, (19): 50-52.
- [9] Sun T, 2022, Research on Fragmented Learning Improvement Strategies to Promote College Students' Deep Learning. *University*, (35): 1-4.
- [10] Tang QH, Zhang T, Zhao MC, 2017, An Empirical Study on the Impact of New Media Reading on Postgraduates'

Cognitive Development. *Journal of Yangzhou University (Higher Education Research Edition)*, 21(03): 34-39.

- [11] Liu LH, 2024, The Impact of Information Fragmentation on Traditional Media and Audiences and Countermeasures. *News World*, (07): 20-22.
- [12] Li J, 2023, Strategies for College Propagandists to Operate New Media Platforms Using Fragmented Thinking. *West China Broadcasting TV*, 44(06): 87-89.
- [13] Tian HW, 2024, Research on the Fragmented Communication Paths of College Ideological and Political Education in the New Media Environment. *Talent Intelligence*, (09): 97-100.
- [14] Zhou FY, 2023, Reflections on the Phenomenon of College Students' Irrational Expression in Online Media in the Internet Era. *Digital User*, (33):161-162.
- [15] Yang T, Liu Y, Du QY, 2021, Research on the Current Situation of Public Rationality in College Students' Online Expression in the Era of Social Media [J]. *Youth Times*, 72(3): 150-152, 154.

**Publisher's note**

*Whioce Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.*