



Government and Public Reactions to Short Video Rumors: A Case Study of Thurman Cat and a Cup Incident

Zhu Hongren

School of the Arts and Media, The University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

hongren.zhu@student.unsw.edu.au

ABSTRACT

This study explores the complex relationship between government responses and public attitudes toward rumors spread through short videos, using the viral case of internet celebrity "Thurman Cat and a Cup" as an example. Focusing on a fabricated story about a child's lost homework, the research examines how these interactions influence regulatory measures and shape public opinion, particularly in public relations, advertising, and media. Through a qualitative case study approach, data were gathered from social media analytics, expert interviews, and public opinion surveys to provide a comprehensive understanding of both government actions and public reactions. The findings reveal that while government efforts to curb misinformation in short videos are largely driven by public demand for authenticity and accountability, public opinion is divided. Some view these interventions as necessary for maintaining social order, while others see them as an overreach that could stifle freedom of expression. Ultimately, this study highlights the delicate balance between regulation and freedom in the digital age, emphasizing the crucial role of public relations and media strategies in shaping both public discourse and government policy.

Keywords: Public Relations, Advertising, Media, Short Videos, Rumor Management, Government Regulation, Public Attitude