Review of the Chinese Internet Philanthropy Research (2006-2020)：Analysis based on CiteSpace

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Abstract: Internet Philanthropy (also known as Internet Charity, Micro Philanthropy, Online Philanthropy, or Online Charity) attracts much academic attention in China. However, there are no comprehensive reviews in this field yet. This article collects journal articles and books in Chinese and English academia from 2006 to 2020, and analyzes the knowledge mapping of this field with the help of CiteSpace. Four main topics are identified thus: crowdfunding and donation, nonprofit organizations and the public, communication, and micro philanthropy. Based on the definition of Internet philanthropy, this article discusses the specific development of the four topics. The article reveals that different disciplines are incorporated into the field of Internet philanthropy based on their theoretical resources and consciousness of problems with a variety of theories and methods. But there are also some problems, including lack of theory in-depth theories and lack of standardization of empirical research. Future research should pay more attention to the clarification of the concept "internet", the introduction of cross-disciplinary perception with a focus on organizations and humans and the abandonment of technology determination, and the development of methodology.

Keywords: Internet philanthropy；CiteSpace, fundraising；philanthropic communication；micro philanthropy

In the emerging sector of Internet Philanthropy in China, the Tencent charity campaign "99 Giving Day", Alipay Ant Forest, WeChat donation of daily steps, the incident of Luo Er (who attempted to raise funds for the treatment of his five-year-old daughter struck with leukemia), among others, have penetrated the daily life of Internet users to boost the popularization of the charity industry, while stimulating academic discussions involving disciplines of journalism & communication, public administration, and others. According to data provided by the Ministry of Civil Affairs, more than RMB 5.4 billion was donated to charity via online platforms in China in 2019, up by 68% year-on-year, while the number of clicks, followers and participants on the Internet giving platforms amounted to 10.9 billion, up by 28.6% year-on-year. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, a donation of over RMB 1.867 billion was raised via Internet platforms, engaging 49.54 million. The annual large-scale charitable donations and nonprofitable campaigns on the Internet have developed to be the most important public participation in the sectors of public administration, the Internet, and philanthropy in China.

According to the "2017 Report on the Development of Internet Philanthropy in China", the Internet Philanthropy in China has evolved from the stages of 1.0 and 2.0 to the stage of 3.0. [1] The Internet Philanthropy 1.0 refers to "philanthropy + Internet", with the Internet employed as a tool for philanthropy industry or campaigns. The Internet Philanthropy 2.0 means "Internet +

philanthropy", featuring increasing connectivity between Internet and philanthropy, with the Internet playing a dominant role while philanthropy as a part of the "Internet +". During the stage of Internet Philanthropy 3.0, the Internet integrates with philanthropy. The Internet becomes a gene of philanthropy, while philanthropy develops into an internal attribute of philanthropy. Jointly, the two combine the innovative genes of the Internet with the power of philanthropy for social good, thereby continuously promoting the iterative development of Internet philanthropy.

Apart from fundraising, the Internet has fueled the development of philanthropy by significantly increasing the transparency of public welfare, enabling the public to follow and monitor the project progress and the use of donations at any time. As such, the public trust in philanthropy has improved to a certain extent. In the meantime, Internet Philanthropy has penetrated multiple areas of public welfare, delivering fruitful results in a variety of sectors, such as targeted poverty alleviation, disaster reduction and relief, education assistance, environmental protection, and general health assistance. However, the development of Internet charity is still at the initial stage, facing a host of challenges. For instance, relevant laws and regulations are yet to be improved, the effective use of Internet technology and personnel training in public welfare organizations are in urgent need to be strengthened, and the behavioral norms of charitable organizations and the public trust need to improve.

Therefore, this article will review and analyze the relevant research on China's Internet philanthropy from academic perspectives. On the basis of combing through and clarifying the definition of Internet philanthropy, this article focuses on exploring the key areas, development characteristics, and progress of research on Internet philanthropy. Building on the CiteSpace-based knowledge graph analysis, this article gained insights into the characteristics of knowledge production in this field, followed by an overall review of related research in Chinese and English from 2006 to 2020. In terms of data sources, Chinese literature sources include CNKI for journal articles and the National Library of China for the monograph, while English literature has been sourced from the snowballed search of monographs and papers. Citespace software can be used for visual analysis of knowledge domains. Based on the co-citation analysis theory and pathfinding network algorithms, it produces complete development analysis of the discipline by drawing knowledge production maps, capable of identifying cooperation and co-occurrence relationships, high-frequency keywords, subject sources, and other data[①]. On this basis, this article proposed four sub-fields for research, namely crowdfunding and donation, nonprofit organizations & the public, philanthropic communication, and micro philanthropy. After introducing the specific research progress in each field, this article analyzes and evaluates the merits and drawbacks of existing findings, as well as the feasible orientations for future research.


1. CiteSpace knowledge graph analysis based on keywords

As Internet philanthropy is still a developing field of research, there hasn't been a unanimous definition of the concept. Based on the literature reading experience, five keywords, namely Internet philanthropy, Internet charity, online philanthropy, online charity, and micro philanthropy, were employed for document retrieval to incorporate existing research results on Internet philanthropy as extensively as possible. Regarding the publications in Chinese journals, as of July 20th, 2020, a total of 509 articles were retrieved by keyword and 1,215 articles by subject in the CNKI database of journals. To ensure a better recall ratio, this article adopted retrieval results by subject. The subject-based search for the above-mentioned five keywords returned 328 results on Internet philanthropy, 77 for Internet charity, 214 for online philanthropy, 107 for online charity, and 571 for micro philanthropy, among which some results overlapped.

[①] Chen Yue et al. (2015). Methodological Function of CiteSpace Knowledge Graph. *Studies in Science of Science*, Issue 2, pp. 242-252.

To ensure the academic nature of the research, the subject-based search results were manually processed before being entered into the CiteSpace. First, news reports, conference notices, commentaries, letters of thanks, and other non-academic articles were deleted from search results, such as a slew of such articles carried by journals like "China Internet" and "China Social Organization". Second, the search results that are actually irrelevant to Internet philanthropy were deleted. For instance, some documents (especially on the ideological and political research in universities) defined micro philanthropy as "micro-behaviors for public welfare", rather than philanthropy based on Weibo (a Twitter-like platform), WeChat, or other Internet platforms[1]. Some documents used expressions such as "nonprofit online courses on Chinese language and literature", "nonprofit live-streaming lectures", and "nonprofit online training of fundamental theories". These documents irrelevant to the research in this article were all deleted from the search results. In this way, a total of 487 valid documents were obtained, showing the following trend of change over the years from 2006 to 2020 (Figure 1).
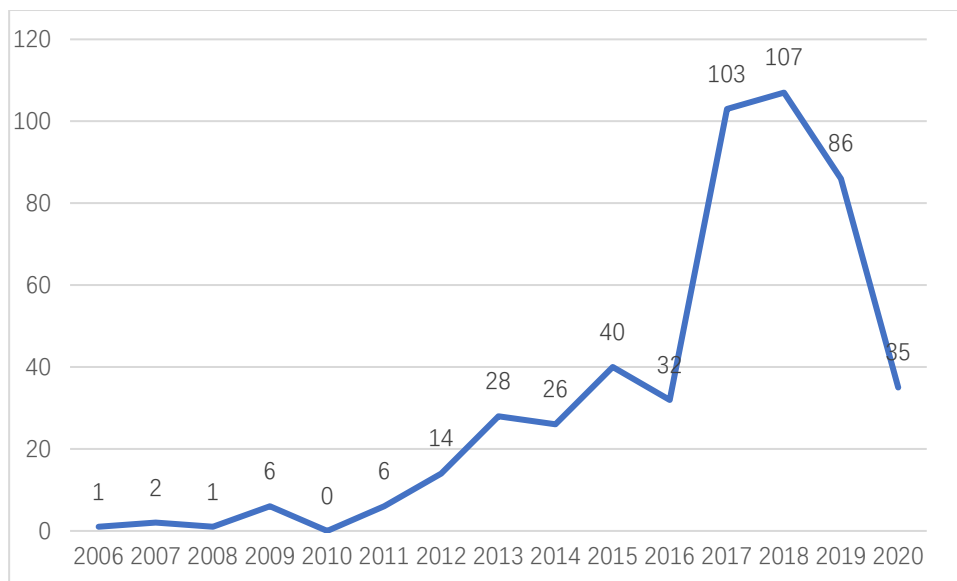
Figure 1: Number of papers on Internet philanthropy in Chinese journals (2006-2020)[2]

Detailed analysis of changes over the years led to the following findings.

First, judging from the changes in the number of researches, Internet philanthropy has attracted increasing academic attention, reflecting the development of the social field and the accumulating process of corresponding knowledge. The first academic paper on online public-service advertising appeared in 2006, followed by a notable increase in the number of such papers in 2012 and 2017.

Second, judging from the journals of the published papers, this article came to the following statistical results (see Figure 2) based on the classification of journals from CSSCI, CSSCI (Extended Edition), and others. Specifically, 11% (56) of the valid documents were published in the CSSCI journals, and 6% (or 27) in the CSSCI (Extended Edition) journals, adding up to 17% (or 83) of the total. The remaining 83% (or 404) of the valid documents were published in other journals.

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[1] Xu Ying (2019). Review and Reflection on the Relevant Theories of the Research on the Credibility of Micro Philanthropy in the New Era. *Journal of Social Sciences of Hunan Normal University, Issue 3,* pp.54-61.
[2] The data for 2020 is as of July 20.
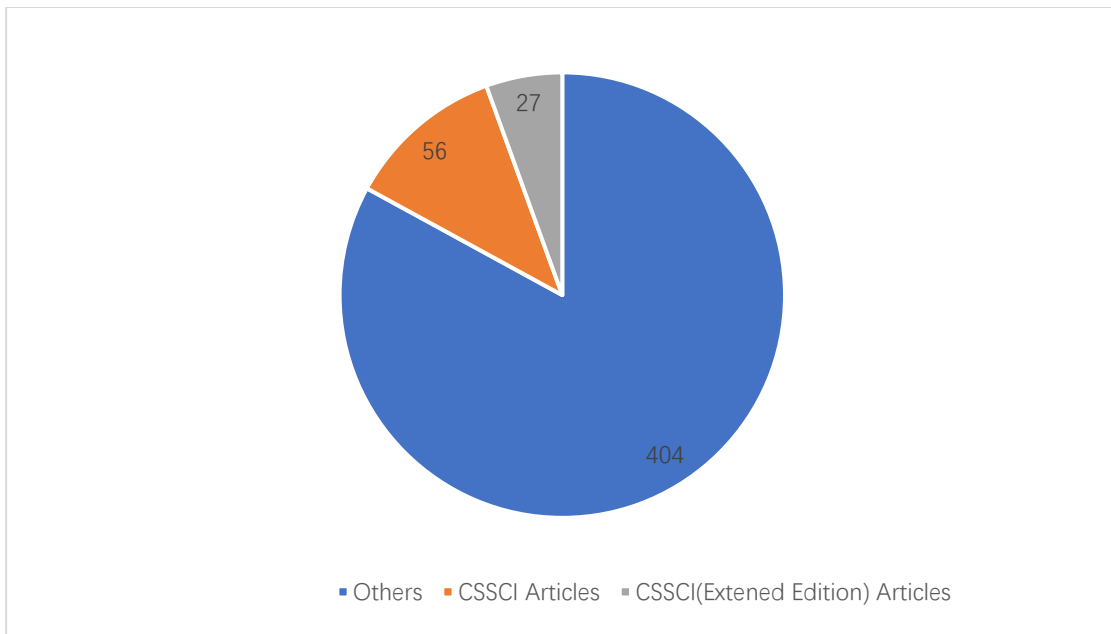
Figure 2: Journals of published papers on Internet philanthropy (2006-2020)

Third, judging from the changes in research topics, the development of research on Internet philanthropy has undergone three stages. For a start, in its infancy from 2006 to 2010, the research focused on online public-service advertising and the shift of philanthropic activities from media to the Internet. Next, during the stage of diversified development from 2011 to 2016, the research began to focus on diversified topics, featuring the mushrooming sub-fields, such as micro philanthropy, nonprofit organizations, and events of public opinion. Some researchers adopted standardized methodology in social science and conducted the earliest empirical analysis of the Internet philanthropy. For example, Song Daolei et al.[1] refer to Internet philanthropy (or online charity) as one of the three major research topics on philanthropy in China, followed by a brief introduction on the relevant research which is the earliest literature review in this regard. Finally, during the stage of development in full swing since 2017, the research has produced a significantly growing number of results and went further in depth in some fields. In particular, following the promulgation of the Charity Law of the People's Republic of China, the legal regulation of Internet philanthropy has come to the fore of the public discussion.

Furthermore, this research employed the CiteSpace software to sort out the keywords of published Chinese papers and their relationships, in a bid to map the knowledge graph in this field. Keywords encapsulate the research topic in papers. The nodes in the graph represent the keywords that appear in the research. The increasing size of the font is associated with a higher frequency of the keyword. The lines connecting the nodes represent the co-occurrence relationship of keywords. The thicker the line, the higher the frequency of co-occurrence of different keywords, which could be considered as a sub-field with most research attention. With the help of keyword analysis via CiteSpace, this article generates a keyword network knowledge graph. Assuming the Selection Criteria as g-index (k=25), LRF=2.0, LBY=8, and e=2.0, Figure 3 is generated.

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[1] Song Daolei & Hao Yuqing (2014). The Shift of Research Focus from Traditional Philanthropy to Online Philanthropy—A Summary of Research of Philanthropy in China. *Social Sciences, Issue 2,* pp.28-38.
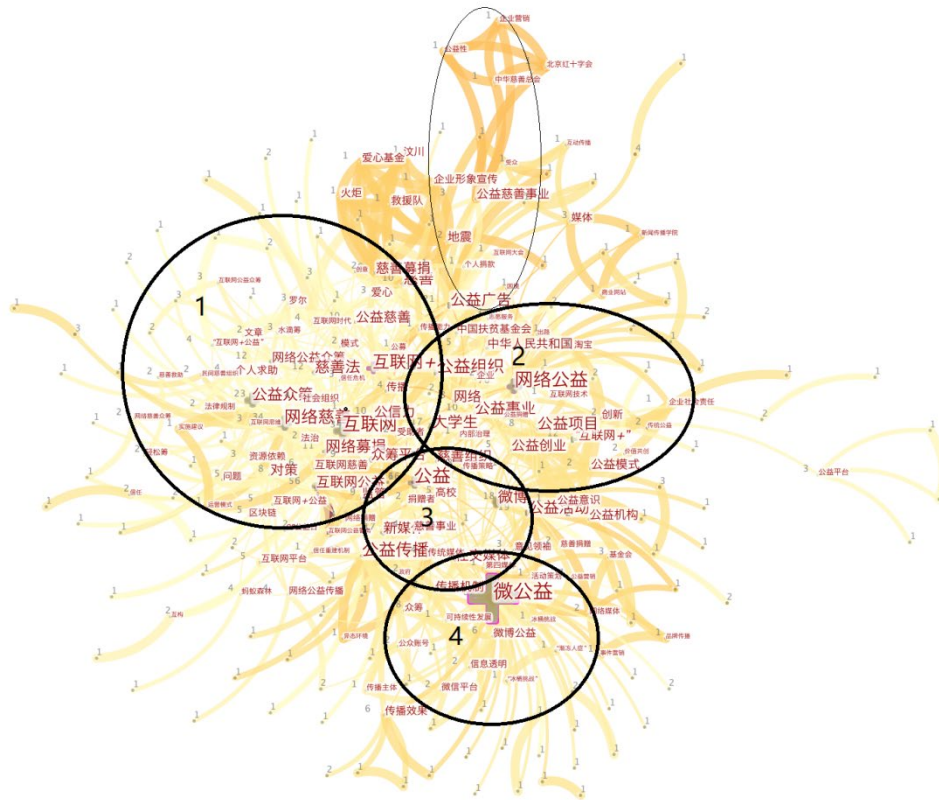
Figure 3: Knowledge graph and cluster analysis of research on Internet philanthropy (2006-2020)

Building on the analysis of the keyword graph, we identified four topics with relatively concentrated research. The first topic is crowd-funding and donation, involving such keywords as nonprofit crowd-funding, online crowd-funding, online philanthropic crowd-funding, crowd-funding platforms, online donation, charitable donation, personal request for assistance, donor, recipient, and charity law. A second topic concerns nonprofit organizations & the public, covering such keywords as philanthropic programs, philanthropic activities, college students, public welfare charities, and voluntary services. Among them, "online philanthropy" and "online charity" are in different hotspot areas in the knowledge graph. The latter is more similar to philanthropy in the traditional sense, while the former is closer to college students and nonprofit entrepreneurship, indicating the tendency of concept use. A third topic relates to philanthropic communication, involving public-service advertising, public opinion, publicity and mobilization, and so on. Notably, philanthropic communication is highly independent of public-service advertising, public relations (as shown in the thin line above), without a framework for consistent interpretation yet. Among the products of Internet philanthropy, the Ant Forest has attracted the most attention. Philanthropic communication is more proximate to micro philanthropy. A final topic is micro philanthropy that's relatively concentrated on Weibo and WeChat, involving platforms and key opinion leaders. The CiteSpace output of high-frequency keywords in the research led to the following findings.

Table 1: High-frequency keywords in the research on Internet philanthropy in China (2006-2020)

Rank	Keywords	Frequency
1	Micro philanthropy	87
2	Online philanthropy	70
3	Philanthropy	66
4	Internet philanthropy	56
5	Internet +	35
6	Philanthropic crowd-funding	35
7	Internet	34
8	Online charity	34
9	Philanthropic communication	27
10	Public-service advertising	21
11	Philanthropic campaign	19
12	Weibo	18
13	New media	17
14	College student	17
15	Nonprofit organization	16
16	Charity law	12
17	Online fundraising	11
18	Credibility	10
19	Charity	10
20	Public welfare undertakings	10

Given that such keywords as online philanthropy, philanthropy, and Internet are about the overall research topic (Internet philanthropy), they don't belong to any specific sub-field, but other keywords were classified into the following research fields (see Table 2).

Table 2: Research fields of high-frequency keywords (2006-2020)

Research field	Keywords	Frequency
Crowd-funding and donation	Philanthropic crowd-funding, charity law, online fundraising	58

Nonprofit organizations & the public	Nonprofit organizations, philanthropic campaign, college students, public welfare undertakings	62
Philanthropic communication	Public-service advertising, philanthropic communication, new media, credibility	76
Micro philanthropy	Micro philanthropy, Weibo	105

Based on targeted literature reading, the main disciplinary background of the four research topics is shown in Table 3. Internet philanthropy involves such disciplines as law, journalism & communication, sociology, psychology, political science, and management, and each discipline boasts its own theoretical resources and problem awareness. In this sense, Internet philanthropy is a crisscross research field. On the positive side, a rich variety of theoretical perspectives and methods are conducive to avoiding involution in such a new and complex filed of Internet philanthropy. On the negative side, the lack of a unified theory makes it impossible for academic dialogue among various disciplines, leading to low-level repetition and limited depth of research.

Table 3: Background of various research fields

No.	Research filed	Major disciplines involved
1	Crowd-funding and donation	Law, Psychology, Management
2	Nonprofit organizations & the public	Sociology, Management
3	Philanthropic communication	Communication
4	Micro philanthropy	Communication, Sociology

In addition to journal papers, there are also books and dissertations on this field. On the websites of the National Library of China and JD.com, the search for "Internet philanthropy", "Internet charity", "online philanthropy", "online charity", and "micro philanthropy" returned 10 results (see Table 4), including four books of literature review, one book on case studies, one on theoretical research, three on empirical analysis, and one reference book. There are 239 academic dissertations, including two doctoral dissertations. Due to space limitations, academic dissertations won't be discussed in this article.

Table 4: Books on the research of Internet philanthropy[①]

Book	Author	Year of publication	Publishing house	Type
Online Charity	Li Jian, et al.	2012	Enterprise Management Publishing House	Literature review
The Impact of Internet on Commonweal	Beijing Office of the Cyberspace Administration of China & Beijing Internet Association	2015	Beijing Daily Press	Literature review
A Chronology of Online Charity in China	Ba-fen-zhai	2015	China Commercial Publishing House	Case study
Internet + Philanthropy: An Era of Civil Philanthropy	Beijing Office of the Cyberspace Administration of China & Beijing Internet Association	2016	Beijing Daily Press	Literature review
Development Report of Internet + Philanthropy Industrial Chain	Zheng Xiaoting	2016	Economic Science Press	Theoretical research
Internet + Public Good: All You Need to Know about Philanthropic New Media	Wang Jin	2016	Publishing House of Electronics Industry	Reference book
Research on the Development of Internet + Micro Philanthropy	Pu Jiping, Zhang Weili, et al.	2016	Democracy and Legal System Publishing House of China	Empirical research
Research on Micro-blog Cultivation Effect of Public-Spirited Activity Information	Liu Jihong	2017	Communication University of China Press	Empirical research
Internet Philanthropy in China	Chen Yidan	2019	China Renmin University Press	Literature review

Research on the Micro Philanthropy's Mechanism and Path of Creating Values for Public Welfare	Qian Ling	2020	China Science and Media Ltd.	Empirical research

In addition, this article made a preliminary introduction to the English research on China's Internet philanthropy. We combed through the papers published by authoritative international journals on the research of philanthropy, including Voluntas and Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly (NVSQ), between 2006 and 2020, and searched the keyword "Internet philanthropy in China" on Google Scholar. The search returned seven papers in English and chapters in two English books. It should be noted that, in a bid to ensure a clear and effective conceptual boundary (the specific definition of Internet philanthropy will be discussed in the following section), this research focuses on philanthropy in a narrow sense, excluding environmental protection campaigns, and thus with fewer results. The English literature was categorized into sub-fields for further discussion as below.

2. Status-quo of research on Internet philanthropy: definition, progress and problems

Based on a summary of the connotations and extension of Internet philanthropy, this section focuses on the research progress in the four sub-fields, namely crowd-funding and donation, nonprofit organizations & the public, philanthropic communication, and micro philanthropy, combined with an analysis of existing problems.

2.1 Definition of Internet philanthropy

According to the definition of the United Nations Development Program[1] (UNDP), Internet philanthropy (or the Internet charity) distinguishes itself from traditional philanthropy in the following aspects (see Table 5).

Table 5 Comparison of Traditional Philanthropy and Internet Philanthropy[2]

	Traditional Philanthropy	Internet Philanthropy
Donors	Older; individuals or foundations	Younger; networked individuals
Donation	Regular grants; large donations	Varied in size and nature; can include non-financial donations; might be event- or project-based

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[1] United Nations Development Program (2016). Internet Philanthropy in China.
[2] Source：United Nations Development Program (2016). Internet Philanthropy in China.

Intermediaries	Non-governmental or nonprofit organizations and foundations	Can bypass foundations or involve private partners
Beneficiaries	Personal cause; groups in need	Varied; can be individuals
Information	Limited; "one-way street"	More transparent; faster; "roundabout"

In existing research, Internet philanthropy is regarded as a public welfare activity that's planned, initiated, organized on the Internet, and carried out on the Internet or in reality[1], or as a philanthropic activity that's deeply integrated with the Internet technology[2]. In this article, Internet philanthropy refers to the voluntarism-based philanthropic activities carried out by the public, nonprofit organizations, or other actors via the Internet.

The Internet relates to all links of philanthropy, including communication, fundraising, organization, and feedback. In the case of Taobao and Weibo, "their true power doesn't arise from the philanthropic campaigns of their own, but from their function as a platform for thousands of people to engage in philanthropy."[3] Compared with traditional media such as television and newspapers, the role of the Internet is quite different. Traditional media merely publish news on philanthropy as a link of the philanthropic industry chain. By contrast, the Internet sets rules for philanthropy and deeply affects the patterns of philanthropic behaviors. It constitutes a production mode of philanthropy or even the "infrastructure" of philanthropy.

The definition of philanthropic activity has its own clear-cut boundaries as well. Internet philanthropy increases public welfare based on independent social decision-making and philanthropic activities. It's a Tocqueville-style public engagement. In this way, it is distinguished from protest practices such as environmental protection campaigns, with the focus on social issues rather than public power. Moreover, Internet philanthropy belongs to civil society in which the state doesn't make direct decisions, but exerts indirect influence through legal constraints and policies. Such non-governmental philanthropy is different from national welfare.

2.2 Crowd-funding and donation

This section introduces the concepts of crowd-funding and donation, discusses the influence of the Internet on crowd-funding and donation, and then analyzes existing problems.

2.2.1. The concepts of crowd-funding and donation

Fundraising from the public is the main goal of nonprofit organizations and individuals through the Internet. The 2008 Wenchuan Earthquake gave birth to the first large-scale online fundraising campaign in China. After 2013, fundraising platforms such as Tencent Gong Yi and Ant Forest boomed. In 2016, the Charity Law of the People's Republic of China was promulgated to provide legal guarantees and regulations[4]. In America, crowdfunding for public welfare is regarded as a part of fundraising. Following the promulgation of the Charity Law, however, the distinction between

[1] Luo Ying et al. (2015). Research on the Innovative Development of China's Internet Philanthropy Platforms. *China Youth Study, Issue 7,* pp.20-24.

[2] Liu Xiuxiu (2018). The Development Ecology of Internet Commonweal and Its Governance. *Journal of Chinese Academy of Governance, Issue 5, pp.*158-163 & 192-193.

[3] Zhu Jiangang (2015). From Planned Charity to Civic Charity—A Review of China's Philanthropy Development in 2013 &Annual Report on China's Philanthropy Development (2014). Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press (China), pp.1-11.

[4] Zhong Zhijin (2015). Crowdfunding for Charity in Social Media: Research on Fundraising Ability and Information Transparency of Micro Philanthropy. *Journalism and Communication, Issue 8,* pp.70-85 and 129-130.

crowd-funding and fundraising was endowed with a legal significance. The initiator of the fundraising should be a charity organization with qualifications for public fundraising to help unspecified objects, falling into the scope of public interest. The initiator of crowdfunding is an individual, with no requirement for qualifications, with the aim of helping specific individuals, falling into the scope of individuals' requests for help. The Charity Law provides no regulations on crowd-funding. Liu Jialin et al. opines that the Charity Law applies to fundraise, while the Contract Law applies to the crowd-funding. [1]

2.2.2. The influence of the Internet on crowd-funding and fundraising

From a technical point of view, as a medium and information tool, the Internet presents characteristics different from those of traditional media like television and newspaper. The Internet features convenient payment, an open platform, and high efficiency of information transmission,[2] providing the philanthropy industry with a direct communication channel for the public. In the Chinese context, the Internet went beyond the previous regional restrictions on fundraising, making it possible to raise funds across the country rather than the limited area of registration[3]. Internet donation prompts a high willingness of individuals to make donations, featuring a small amount and time efficiency[4]. In addition, the technical characteristics of the Internet have also been explored by more micro-dimensional research. For example, setting the "default option" of fundraising at a low amount will increase the willingness to donate, since a high amount would increase a sense of manipulation, thereby reducing willingness for donation.[5]

Liu Ru and Fang Xiaohuan[6] also found that the effect of fundraising on WeChat is positively correlated with the target amount and donation amount, affected by intermediary factors of fundraising proportion and the number of donors. According to Zhong Zhijin, the fundraising rate at Sina Weibo for educational assistance was higher than that for environmental protection and medical assistance, the rate of fundraising projects initiated by foundations and NGOs was higher than that by government, corporate and media, and the number of reposts was positively correlated with the target amount and fundraising rate.[7] Ying Qian[8] found that the initiator's good reputation can increase the fundraising rate, but this finding was questioned by another study. Statistical analysis on Tencent Gong Yi showed that the nature of the project initiator (such as governmental- and private- charity organizations) has no significant effect on the donors' behaviors and that donors don't care much about the project transparency.[9] These different findings may stem from two reasons. One is the use of different research methods and materials, while the other is the different communication mechanisms of Weibo and WeChat.

2.2.3. Problems in crowd-funding and fund-raising and solutions

The Internet platform of fundraising information is dogged by problems such as loopholes in legal supervision, insufficient standards for crowd-funding, non-standard operation, and dishonesty

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[1] Liu Jialin & Ma Weidong (2018). On Philanthropic Fundraising and Personal Request for Help in the "Internet +" Era. *Social Sciences Review, Issue 8,* pp.99-101.

[2] Wang Shaohui et al. (2015). Research on the Operational Mechanism of Charity Donations Based on Mobile Internet—Case Study of the Fundraising Campaign for "Saving Premature Infant Weighing 750g" in Hubei Province. *E-Government, Issue 3,* pp.26-32 and 81-88.

[3] Jin Jinping (2017). Legal Regulations on Online Fundraising in Post-Charity Law Era. *Fudan Journal (Social Sciences Edition), Issue 4,* pp.162-172.

[4] Shao Peizhang & Zhang Mengwei (2019). Will People Do More Charity Online? —An Empirical Research of "Internet + Charity" Mode's Effect on People's Charity Behaviors. *Collected Essays on Finance and Economics, Issue 6,* pp.94-103.

[5] Fan Yafeng et al. (2019). The Backfire Effect of Default Amounts on Donation Behavior in Online Donation Platform. *Acta Psychologica Sinica, Issue 4, pp.* 415-527.

[6] Liu Ru & Fang Xiaohuan (2016). Research on Philanthropic Communication Effect of WeChat Platform in the Context of "Micro Philanthropy". *West China Broadcasting TV, Issue 19,* pp. 30 & 34.

[7] Zhong Zhijin (2015). Crowdfunding for Charity in Social Media: Research on Fundraising Ability and Information Transparency of Micro Philanthropy. *Journalism and Communication, Issue 8,* pp.70-85 and 129-130.

[8] Qian，Ying & Lin，Jiang (2017), "Antecedents of Project Success in Donation-based Crowdfunding-based on Tencent LeJuan Platform in China", *CloudCom 2018.*

[9] Lu Yi et al. (2015). Analysis of the Influencing Factors of Micro Philanthropy—Case Study of Tencent Charity. *Market Weekly (Theoretical Research), Issue 10, pp.*38-39.

in charitable donations.[①] The Charity Law allows the publication of online fundraising information through two channels. One is the Internet fundraising information platform designated by the Ministry of Civil Affairs, and the other is the website of crowd-funding organizations. In addition, the Charity Law doesn't provide regulations on crowd-funding, making the public opinion and news media, rather than public powers, mainly responsible for the supervision of crowdfunding platforms. As a result, the legal responsibilities, rights, and obligations of various stakeholders are not clearly defined, creating loopholes for replacing philanthropic fund-raising with crowd-funding to escape legal supervision.[②] In China, the crowd-funding projects are mainly carried out on commercial platforms, such as Internet companies and e-commerce platforms.[③] Currently, there are neither legal requirements nor industry self-discipline mechanisms for the operation and risk control of these crowd-funding platforms.[④] In the context of information asymmetry, crowd-funding platforms tend to collude with fundraisers, leading to problems such as false crowd-funding and excessive crowd-funding.[⑤] From the perspective of public security departments in charge of investigating and handling the cases of crowd-funding fraud, there exist difficulties for conviction, territorial jurisdiction, and evidence collection and fixation.[⑥] From the social perspective, there is a lack of evaluation mechanism for the crowd-funding effect and of requirements for platform access, industrial self-discipline, and information disclosure.[⑦]

How to manage such chaos in the Internet fundraising and crowd-funding? It would require the efforts of various entities, including governments, platforms, and industries. Some scholars called for tighter government supervision[⑧]. Some opined that government doesn't need to rush to intervene in newborn things. [⑨] Some proposed a shift from prudential institutional supervision to behavioral supervision.[⑩] Others advised to lower the bar for crowd-raising approval, follow the market-oriented approach to reduce administrative intervention, adopt the minimum principle, and leave it to a third-party appraisal agency to formulate standards, so as to promote industry autonomy.[11] Legal measures are essential as well. Based on the analysis of criminal fund-raising behaviors in Internet philanthropy from 2006 to 2015, Liu Pujun found that the number of crimes and amount of money involved increased notably after 2008. The fixed-term imprisonment was the main punishment, along with fine penalties.[12]

[①] Yang Weiwei (2019). Seven-Dimensional Collaborative Governance: Promoting the Normative Construction of the Internet Public Fundraising Information Platform in China—Based on the Analysis of the First Batch of 11 Public Fundraising Information Platforms. *Theory Monthly, Issue 6, pp.*145- 154.

[②] Yao Jufen (2019). The Legal Dilemma of Online Philanthropic Crowdfunding and Solutions: From the Perspective of the Charity Law of People's Republic of China. *Legal System and Society, Issue 15, pp.*33-34 and 57.

[③] Zhang Binglu (2018). Research on the Construction of Internet Ecological Pattern in Philanthropic Crowdfunding in China—Benchmarking Analysis Based on 36 Internet Crowdfunding Platforms. *Modern Business, Issue 2,* pp.231-234.

[④] Ke Xiang (2017). An Analysis on Donation-based Crowdfunding with the Background of Charity Law: Current Situations, Challenges, and Responses. *Journal of Guizhou University of Finance and Economics, Issue 6,* pp.57-64.

[⑤] Guo Shuang & Sun Yingjun (2017). Research on the Internet Finance's Role to Promote Behavior Regulation—Case Study of Philanthropic Crowdfunding Platforms. *E-Commerce, Issue 7,* pp. 55-57.

[⑥] Fan Yu & Shan Xiaoxiao (2019). Difficulties in the Investigation of Online Philanthropic Crowdfunding Fraud Cases and Solutions. *Legal and Economy, Issue 3,* pp. 114-116 and 121.

[⑦] Kuang Yalin (2018). How to Evaluate the Participation of Personal Assistance in Online Public Welfare Crowdfunding? —— On the Way to Eliminate the Identity Crisis. *Journal of Huazhong Agricultural University (Social Sciences Edition), Issue 6,* pp.138-145, 164.

[⑧] Fu Rong (2017). Research on the Rule of Law and Supervision of Online Philanthropic Communication. *View on Publishing, Issue 14, pp.*37-39; Zhou Chan et al. (2017). The Realistic Dilemma and Breakthrough Directions of Regulating Online Philanthropy—Case Study of Luo Er Incident. *Press Outpost, Issue 1,* pp.45-47.

[⑨] Ke Xiang (2016). Analysis of the Operation and Risk-control Mechanism of Internet Philanthropic Crowd-funding Platforms in China. *Hainan Finance, Issue 11,* pp.64-68, 83.

[⑩] Ke Xiang (2017). An Analysis on Donation-based Crowdfunding with the Background of Charity Law: Current Situations, Challenges, and Responses. *Journal of Guizhou University of Finance and Economics, Issue 6,* pp.57-64; Guo Shuang & Sun Yingjun (2017). Research on the Internet Finance's Role to Promote Behavior Regulation—Case Study of Philanthropic Crowdfunding Platforms. *E-Commerce, Issue 7,* pp. 55-57.

[11] Yang Weiwei (2019). Seven-Dimensional Collaborative Governance: Promoting the Normative Construction of the Internet Public Fundraising Information Platform in China—Based on the Analysis of the First Batch of 11 Public Fundraising Information Platforms. *Theory Monthly, Issue 6, pp.*145- 154.

[12] Liu Pujun (2018). The Development of Crimes in the Field of Charity and Criminal Law Responses——Reflection on 10 Years' Criminal Cases in Charity. *Journal of Northeastern University (Social Science), Issue 1*, pp.79-87.

Both Jin Jinping[1] and Yang Weiwei[2] mentioned the supervisory responsibilities of the platforms. Although online donations go directly to the account of the crowd-funding organization, the Internet platform is by no means a neutral technical tool. Regarding the "Charity Law" and relevant regulations, Jin Jinping pointed out that the platform should assume the responsibilities for examining and verifying the qualification and information authenticity of the fund-raising nonprofit organizations, providing free services, assisting with investigation, and saving data. This article believes that the Internet fundraising platform is mainly owned by commercial companies, and the platform's prominent responsibility for supervising the Internet philanthropy is a manifestation of the deep involvement of market forces (platform owners) in public governance.[3]

2.3 Nonprofit organization & the public

The public and nonprofit organizations are the main participants in Internet philanthropy. This section focuses on three topics, namely the relationship between nonprofit organizations and the Internet, the relationship between the public and the Internet, and the impact of the Internet on the philanthropy industry.

2.3.1. Relationship between nonprofit organizations and Internet

There are two types of relationships between nonprofit organizations and the Internet. One is that the nonprofit organization uses the Internet as an instrument. The other is that the entire organization relies on the Internet to survive. From the perspective of instrumental use of the Internet, good internal governance, instead of capital strength or technical talents, is a prerequisite for safeguarding the Internet's communication function.[4] Another study also believes that the size of an organization plays a more decisive role in its communication capabilities than its capital prowess and that the capabilities of grassroots nonprofit organizations in China are generally low.[5] Social organizations vary significantly from nonprofit organizations in terms of using the Internet for resource acquisition, knowledge and information management, data analysis, and collaboration. Insufficient use of Internet technology in the field of philanthropy stems from poor specialization.[6]

For better use of the Internet, nonprofit organizations have explored some organizational and strategic innovations. For example, Shilehui, a charity foundation in Jinhua of Zhejiang province, created positions for paid social work on its Internet donation platform, which can be regarded as the initial form of charity fundraisers. The professionalization of fundraising is conducive to the standardized and scientific development of fundraising. This is an attempt of organizational innovation.[7] Wang Jin explained to public welfare practitioners how to use social media for philanthropic marketing and use new media for crowd-funding and data visualization.[8] Tian Luo's research[9] on grassroots nonprofit organizations (www.1kg.org and www.gesanghua.org) found that

[1] Jin Jinping (2017). Legal Regulations on Online Fundraising in Post-Charity Law Era. *Fudan Journal (Social Sciences Edition), Issue 4,* pp.162-172.

[2] Yang Weiwei (2019). Seven-Dimensional Collaborative Governance: Promoting the Normative Construction of the Internet Public Fundraising Information Platform in China—Based on the Analysis of the First Batch of 11 Public Fundraising Information Platforms. *Theory Monthly, Issue 6, pp.*145- 154.

[3] Jin Jinping (2017). Legal Regulations on Online Fundraising in Post-Charity Law Era. *Fudan Journal (Social Sciences Edition), Issue 4,* pp.162-172.

[4] Lin Minhua (2014). An Empirical Study on the Internet Communication Capability of Nonprofit Organizations—Case Study of Local Nonprofit Organizations in Guangzhou. *Youth Studies, Issue 1,* pp.31-39.

[5] Ma Guixia, et al. (2015). Empirical Analysis on the Evaluation Index System of Internet Communication Capability of Grassroots Nonprofit Organizations. *China Youth Study, Issue 9,* pp.47-53.

[6] Wang Zhenyao (2017). Exploring the Balanced Development of Large-scale and Specialized Philanthropy in China in the "Internet +" Era. *People's Tribune, Issue 6,* pp.64.

[7] Zhao Ting & Xu Jialiang (2015). Online Philanthropy and Professionalization of Fundraising—Case Study of Shilehui in Jinhua. *Administrative Tribune, Issue 5,* pp.72-76.

[8] Wang Jin & Zhou Rongting (2016). Internet + Public Good: All You Need to Know about Philanthropic New Media. Beijing: Publishing House of Electronics Industry.

[9] Luo, T.（2012）, "Grassroots mobilization of internet NGOs in China: the cases of www.1kg.org and www.geshanghua.org.", 12 (2012) In Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development (ICTD '12), pp. 289-296.

its Internet mobilization strategy is constantly adjusted under the impact of environmental factors such as political permits and corporate relationships. This is an attempt of strategic innovation.

The Internet promotes the development of nonprofit organizations and constitutes a driving force for collective action. Its role is not limited to an auxiliary tool in social mobilization.[1] Some organizations no longer use the Internet merely as a tool but rely on the Internet for fundraising, organization, communication, and even survival. They could be dubbed the Internet nonprofit organizations. On the one hand, such organizations are beset by problems like poor specialization, lack of talents,[2] and non-standard organizational structure, thereby facing a hidden danger of credibility crisis[3]. On the other hand, such organizations have their own merits, such as a high level of compassion and dedication, strong cohesion, great ability to inspire people, and exceptional ability of collective action.[4] Therefore, the Internet nonprofit organizations adopted a combination of multiple strategies, including the IT-based strategy, ethical strategy, legalization strategy, market-oriented strategy, and social networking strategy to mobilize resources[5].

2.3.2. The relationship between the public and the Internet

From the perspective of the public, Internet philanthropy is a collective action that's different from the previous confrontational collective actions against the government, manifesting more constructive characteristics.[6] Ordinary citizens obtained more information power in this process, which is a constructive power embedded in a network of relationships[7]. Yu Haiqing[8] found that WeChat donation of steps is a "market-oriented, consumer-centric" individualistic participation. Public welfare undertakings are employed as a platform for citizens to cultivate and achieve neo-liberalism, which diverts citizens' political criticism and dampens citizens' enthusiasm to participate in offline charity activities.

Among the public, college students have been studied more often.[9] There are also studies on the philanthropic activities of specific individuals, noting that Jack Ma's philanthropic decision-making is "strategic but authentic".[10] The research of Huiquan Zhou et al.[11] on grassroots charity participants concluded that the Internet provides a space for the expression of views and communication. Grassroots participants tend to regard philanthropy as small acts of kindness and happiness. They disapprove of standardization and specialization, and try to distinguish them from institutions and companies. Grassroots participants keep their distance from state power, but their participation is often directly affected by popular social concepts that are different from the efficiency, professionalism, and accountability as emphasized in neo-liberalism. From the perspective of individual subjects, the new medium represented by the Internet serves more as a

[1] Fan Hongmin (2012). Internet and Grassroots Internet Philanthropy Campaign. *Journal of Zhengzhou University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), Issue 6,* pp. 10-12.

[2] Xie Zhiju, et al. (2020). On the Development of Online Youth Nonprofit Organizations: Comparative Study of Organizations B and W in Guangzhou. *Lingnan Journal, Issue 3,* pp.55-56.

[3] Guo Jia et al. (2012). The Problem of Cyber-Grassroots Organizations' Sustainable Development: The Case Study of "Gesanghua" Trust Crisis. *China Public Administration, Issue 11,* pp.64-67.

[4] Shen Yibing (2017). Online Nonprofit Organizations, Collective Actions, and Social Stability—Based on the Survey of the Forum of Young Volunteers in Nanjing X Community. *China Youth Study, Issue 11,* pp.49-53 and 75.

[5] Wang Yusheng, et al. (2014). Analysis of Resource Mobilization Strategies of Online Nonprofit Organizations—Case Study of Member Organizations of Guangxi Charity Alliance. *Academic Forum, Issue 8,* pp.119-125.

[6] Fan Hongmin (2012). Internet and Grassroots Internet Philanthropy Campaign. *Journal of Zhengzhou University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), Issue 6,* pp.10-12

[7] Song Chenting (2015). The Construction of Information Power in Micro Philanthropy 2.0—Case Study of Tianjin Blast Incident. *Fujian Tribune (The Humanities & Social Sciences), Issue 12,* pp.81-87.

[8] Yu, Haiqing (2017), "Philanthropy on the move: Mobile communication and neoliberal citizenship in China", 2 (1) *Communication and the Public*, pp.35-49.

[9] Li Hongli et al. (2019). A Study on the Willingness to Participate in Fingertip Giving and Its Influencing Factors—Case Study of College Students in Guangzhou. *Survey of Education, Issue 10,* pp.22-24; Sun Xiaoxue et al. (2019). An Observation of the Status Quo of College Students' Participation in Online Charity. *Labor Security World, Issue 23,* pp.78; Chen Weiping & Zheng Chunling (2020). Practical Research on Improving the Trust and Participation in Internet Philanthropy among College Students. *Education Modernization, Issue 16,* 114.

[10] Jakob, B. E., & Stehr, C. (2015), "The caring crocodile: Jack Ma's philanthropy in China", In *Sustainable development and CSR in China*, Springer, Cham, pp. 119-133.

[11] Zhou, Huiquan & Han, Eileen Le (2019), "Striving to be pure: Constructing the idea of grassroots philanthropy in Chinese cyberspace", 30(4) *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, pp. 709-723.

power than a tool. Internet philanthropy cares about the nature of life and should be studied from the perspectives of life and life communication. It's necessary to understand Internet philanthropy based on mental perception and experience, daily life, practice, and actions.[1] From this perspective, philanthropy needs to achieve "public knowledge of information" rather than "information release" on the Internet, with a view toward openness and transparency in dynamic relationships[2].

2.3.3. The impact of the Internet on philanthropy industry

The impact of the Internet on the philanthropy industry is reflected in the transformation of the industrial chain, transparency, and popularization. In terms of the industrial chain, Zheng Xiaoting[3] employed the perspective of industrial economics, compared the all-encompassing industrial chain of the traditional nonprofit foundations with the new industrial chain of Internet philanthropy, and concluded that the foundation no longer enjoys a monopoly under the new-type division of labor. Liu Xiuxiu[4] conducted an analysis based on the theory of technology-organization mutual construction, leading to the conclusion that there is a boundary in the mutual construction between official nonprofit organizations and the Internet. Organizations could use the Internet to carry out reforms in areas that involve no governmental role, such as personnel reform and credibility building. The Internet has lowered the social credibility of official charitable organizations, while imposing higher requirements for the institutionalization of non-governmental charitable organizations. The "99 Giving Day" campaign represents the cross-border cooperation between the government, enterprises, and social organizations, under which the common concept is the basis of cooperation and mutual dependence of resources is the driving force for cooperation.[5]

In terms of transparency, blockchain features distributed accounting, decentralization, and asymmetric encryption, which will reconstruct the trust mechanism, help solve the problems regarding information disclosure and transparency, and change the information disclosure mechanism, donation tracking mechanism, the government's information supervision mechanism, and the audit mechanism of charitable organizations.[6] Moreover, live-streaming could improve the transparency in philanthropy and nurture a philanthropic culture involving all people.[7]

In terms of popularization, Internet philanthropy targets at the general public.[8] It aims at the "charity for all", thereby facilitating the development of online civil society.[9] However, it's also believed that algorithmic logic and platform technology are transforming the compassionate culture into a utilitarian show of love, and transforming benevolent communities into consumer communities. The Internet philanthropy has been enveloped by a certain "technical myth".[10]

2.4 Philanthropic communication

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[1] Shi Zengzhi (2015). Life Communication: Salvation and Innovation in Practice—Case Study of Shenzhen Project Care. *China Social Organization, Issue 7,* pp.46-47.

[2] Song Qi (2018). Principle of "Informed Consent" for Internet Philanthropy from the Perspective of Life Communication. *Youth Journalist, Issue 34,* pp.50-51.

[3] Zheng Xiaoting (2016). Development Report of Internet + Philanthropy Industrial Chain. Beijing: Economic Science Press.

[4] Liu Xiuxiu (2017). The Inter-constructive Influence of the Internet on Government-run Charitable Organizations and Their Boundaries. *Journal of Chinese Academy of Governance, Issue 4,* pp.67-72 and 146; Liu Xiuxiu (2014). Governmental or Non-governmental: The Changing Situation of China's Philanthropy in the Network Age. *The Ideological Front, Issue 6,* pp.79-83.

[5] Wang Aihua (2019). Cross-sectional Cooperation of Public Welfare Based on the Internet Platform: Process, Mechanism and Risks—Case Study of Tencent "99 Giving Day" Campaign. *Public Administration and Policy Review, Issue 1,* pp.70-79.

[6] Zhang Nan & Wang Ming (2018). Charity 4.0: The Blockchain Era of China's Philanthropy. *The China Nonprofit Review, Issue 2,* pp.79-94.

[7] Ma Li (2017). *Analysis of the Mode of Live-Streaming Philanthropy and its Social Value. Media, Issue 9*, pp.75-77.

[8] Feng Yelu (2018). Exploring the Fundraising Model of "Internet + Philanthropy"—Case Study of the Internet Public Fundraising Information Platforms of 13 Nonprofit Organizations. *Journal of Western, Issue 12,* pp. 20-24.

[9] 毕素华(2013)：《网络民权社会与公共慈善精神的培育》，《理论探讨》，第 6 期，第 168-172 页。Bi Suhua (2013). Online Civil Society and the Cultivation of Public Charity Spirit. *Theoretical Investigation, Issue 6,* 168-172.

[10] Ye Xiaojun (2018). Chinese Charity under the Aura of New Technology Myth. *BCR, Issue 10,* pp.110-118.

Philanthropic communication involves multiple dimensions, and the conceptual boundaries are relatively vague. In this article, philanthropic communication is roughly divided into communication in advertising, public relations, fundraising, and public opinion. This involves actors such as public institutions, companies, nonprofit organizations, and the public. Studies have also shown that traditional media also play an active part in philanthropic communication on the Internet.[1]

2.4.1. Philanthropic communication in advertising

Public-service advertising aims to mobilize and publicize the concept of public welfare and promote charitable activities. Early literature pointed out that Internet public-service advertising showed the following characteristics: interactivity, wide coverage, multimedia, low cost, and measurable effects, all contributing to great communication effects.[2] However, the effect evaluation in follow-up studies negated this kind of technical optimism to a certain extent. Research on the Himalayas app suggested that despite a large gap with traditional broadcasting in terms of media attributes, audience, and communication mechanisms, the digital audio platforms have great limits in the coverage and influence of advertising.[3] Research on Youku showed that the users' spontaneous activities could undermine the impact of philanthropic communication. The users' participation in charity after watching the advertisement is lagging, limited, and rebellious.[4] There's also a view that the effect of public-service advertising is related to the types of advertisement, with humorous type more populous among the audience.[5]

2.4.2. Philanthropic communication in public relations

Philanthropy also constitutes a part of corporate public relations. Philanthropic communication manifests personalized, public, and diversified features, suitable for demonstrating corporate social responsibility.[6] The research of Gao Qiuyue et al.[7] on the effect of philanthropic communication by Ant Forest showed that the cognitive effect of green financial philanthropy was slightly better than that of carbon account, and that the breadth (contact effect) was better than the depth of communication (communication effect and action effect). Ant Forest promoted the shift of corporate public relations from one-way to two-way interaction.[8]

2.4.3. Philanthropic communication in fundraising

Communication for the purpose of fundraising gave birth to philanthropic-event-based marketing on social media. After 2010, event-based marketing led by key opinion leaders with Weibo as the main carrier went viral. In the event-based marketing campaigns, such as "Ice Bucket Challenge" and "Free Lunch", the participation of celebrities significantly expanded the coverage of communication.[9] The fundraisers used a variety of communication strategies, such as online and offline activities, vertical publicity and operation platforms, and thank-you mechanisms, yielding

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[1] Wu Dao'e (2016). The Transformation Path of Philanthropic Communication in Traditional Media. *Southeast Communication, Issue 8,* pp.89-90.

[2] Tang Jin (2006). Discussion on the Development Trend of Online Public Service Advertising in China. *Press Circles, Issue 3,* pp.96-97; Wei Jiaxiao (2012). Research on Interactive Online Public Service Advertisements. *Journalism Knowledge, Issue 11*, pp.61-63.

[3] Chu Guangzhi & He Jingwen (2019). Public Service Advertising on Digital Audio Platform: A Case of Ximalaya FM. *Modern Communication (Journal of Communication University of China), Issue 6,* 119-123 and 130.

[4] Ni Ning & Lei Lei (2013). Public Participation in Internet Public Service Advertising (PSA): A Case Study of Youku's PSA Video. *Chinese Journal of Journalism & Communication, Issue 4,* pp.78-88.

[5] Yang Xin & Wang Yi (2018). The Status Quo of Internet + Public Service Advertisement Development in Liaoning Province. *SP, Issue 5,* pp.245.

[6] Zhou Ru'nan & Chen Min (2016). New Trends in Public Welfare Communication in the Internet Era. *The Press, Issue 15,* pp.50-51.

[7] Gao Qiuyue et al. (2019). Analysis of the Philanthropic Communication Effect of Green Finance under the "Internet +" model—Case Study of Ant Forest. *Modern Marketing (Information), Issue 06, pp.* 30-33.

[8] Liu Yin (2020). A Brief Analysis of Corporate Micro-philanthropy Marketing from the Perspective of Public Relations. *Developing, Issue 3,* pp.82-83.

[9] Zhang Yining & Jing Ming (2014). Reflections on Communication of the "ALS Ice Bucket Challenge". *Journalism Lover, Issue 10,* pp.9-12.

great effect.[1]   The celebrity effect is not limited to fundraising. Elaine & Xu [2] analyzed Li Yuchun's online forums and found that the "celebrity-fans" social network not only established a virtual community of participation, but also encouraged fans' voluntary participation. Most young users follow key opinion leaders to participate in Internet philanthropy for identity recognition.[3]

Communication for the purpose of fundraising is also closely associated with the content of the communication. The philanthropic participation of young white-collar workers has no significant correlation with age, gender, and after-tax income, but positively correlated with the perceived user-friendliness, appeal, and credibility of content, and satisfaction with the WeChat charity.[4]   The combination of explanatory and active frameworks in the fundraising text can best stimulate the willingness to donate.[5]   Appropriate use of pictures increases the fundraising rate. Excessive text descriptions and overly complex fundraising purposes lower the fundraising rate.[6]   The content of crowd-funding is different from that of fundraising. While forwarding crowd-funding information for help with critical illness, the information is regarded as a kind of negative and low-grade information. A perceived negative evaluation is the main obstacle to forwarding. The forwarding behavior is mainly self-interested and the participants decide whether to forward or not based on the rules of favor exchange.[7]

2.4.4. Philanthropic communication in public opinion

Among the philanthropic topics that triggered heated debates on Internet, the incident of Luo Er has been in the spotlight of attention and research. The "Luo Er incident" reflects the effective use of the Internet by advantageous individuals, while the diversion, socialization, and dispersion of discourse power in the incident may bring about regulatory backlash.[8]   The implication of "repost = donation" is a kind of inducive sharing, which accelerates the explosive spread of the incident.[9] Some studies opined that the cyber manhunt, rumors about Luo Er's marital infidelity, and the comment that "the Dad should be damned" following the death of his daughter Luo Yixiao, and other comments constituted a type of cyber violence.[10]   The absence of morality and creativity, forced donation, and others impaired the public perception of philanthropy.[11]

The public opinion crisis is closely related to the trust and credibility building of the philanthropy industry. Trust refers to the goodwill assumptions among members of society, while credibility refers to the ability of specific subjects, such as nonprofit organizations or the entire philanthropy industry, to be trusted by the public. Emotional trust and cognitive trust are the

[1] Yang Weilong & He Kangjie (2013). Analysis of Micro-philanthropic Communication Strategies—Case Study of Free Lunch Campaign. *News World, Issue 7,* pp.172-174.
[2] Elaine, J. & Xu, J. (2017), "Celebrity-inspired, fan-driven: doing philanthropy through social media in mainland China",41(2) *Asian Studies Review,* pp. 244-262.
[3] Yang Qian & Ran Hua (2019). Key Opinion Leaders and Internet Philanthropy: A New Model of Philanthropic Communication. *China Publishing Journal, Issue 20,* pp.40-45.
[4] Liu Chenguang (2017). Empirical Research on the Influencing Factors of Young White Collars' Participation in WeChat Charity Activities—Based on a Survey of Young White Collars in Guangzhou. *Southeast Communication, Issue 4,* pp.38-43.
[5] Yang Zhijing (2015). The Influence of Framing Effect and Linguistic Style on Fundraising for Micro Philanthropy. *Psychology: Techniques and Application, Issue 8,* pp.19-24; Li Jing & Yang Xiaodong (2018). Research on the Behavior of Sharing Information on "Crowdfunding for Medical Assistance: Forward or Not?". *Journalism & Communication, Issue 2,* pp.64-79, 127.
[6] Qian，Ying & Lin，Jiang (2017), "Antecedents of Project Success in Donation-based Crowdfunding-based on Tencent LeJuan Platform in China", *CloudCom 2018.*
[7] Li Biao (2017). The Mobilization Strategy and Expression Mechanism of Topics on Social Media Platforms: A Textual Analysis Based on the Titles of Crowdfunding Projects on the Sina Micro-philanthropy Platform. *Contemporary Communication, Issue 6,* 94-96, 112. *Management Review, Issue 1,* pp.268-278.
[8] Han Yunrong & Zhang Huan (2018). Characteristics, Analysis and Prospects of Modern-day Public Opinion on Internet Philanthropy—Case Study of Luo Er Incident. *Modern Communication (Journal of Communication University of China), Issue 4,* pp. 147-152.

[9] Ouyang Guohua & Wang Qin (2017). Emotional Mobilization, Collective Performances and Meaning Construction: An Analysis Framework of the Propagation of Online Charity Event—In the Case of "Luo Yixiao". *Journal of Intelligence, Issue 8,* pp.68-75.
[10] Zhu Ying & Chen Kunming (2017). The Ethical Dilemma of Philanthropic Communication Based on Social Media Platforms. *Today's Mass Media, Issue 3,* pp.28-31.
[11] Liao Jihong (2016). Problems and Solutions in Micro-Philanthropic Communication. *China Radio & TV Academic Journal, Issue 4,* pp.113-114 and 123.

intermediary factors of Internet philanthropy and participative behavior.[①] At the level of trust, the Internet changes the time-space conditions of trust, posing challenges to establishing and maintaining trust. In this context, the model of emotion-motivated trust[②] was proposed, namely empathy—trust—compassion—philanthropic behavior. Empathy and trust serve as the prerequisites for online compassion, while compassion is the driving force of online charity behavior. Once the law of reciprocity and status difference is reversed, the emotions of participants will reverse and the charity behavior will end. The credibility crisis reflects not only technical problems but also a deep-seated value crisis. To safeguard the "value rationality" of philanthropy, it's necessary to find solutions targeted at the philanthropic platform, specific projects, and institutional norms[③], carry out institutional reorganization, and rely on the big data and other Internet technologies to build a "panoptic trust maintenance platform".[④]

2.5 Micro philanthropy

Micro philanthropy is the keyword with the highest frequency in the knowledge graph. This section will focus on philanthropic behaviors on Weibo and WeChat. The concept of micro philanthropy can be traced back to 2009. Sina Weibo opened an official account for micro philanthropy in April 2011 and launched the "micro philanthropy" platform in February 2012. It is now an independent channel, encompassing a variety of functions ranging from the release of philanthropic information to fundraising. It's a philanthropic product equivalent to Tencent Charity and Alipay Charity.

As a platform, the Internet integrates diverse and even opposite communication tenses. The difference between WeChat and Weibo is manifested in more convenient payment and stronger user relationships, creating more diversified means to participate in WeChat micro philanthropy.[⑤] Qian Ling[⑥] defined three dimensions of micro-philanthropy: event characteristics and attributes, social media strategies, and participation probability, leading to the finding that emotional trust and cognitive trust are the intermediary factors between micro-philanthropy and participative behaviors. Based on a comparison of nine persuasive strategies for micro-philanthropic fundraising advertising, Lu Qiongying[⑦] found that emotional strategies increased the number of participants, logical and credible strategies raised the amount of donations. Lu's study enhanced the understanding that the use of different strategies in micro philanthropy could produce varied communication effects. Based on the correspondence theory in communications, Liu Jihong[⑧] proposed that the correspondence effect of Weibo communication is affected by the cumulative amount of information received, the availability of information, and the representativeness of information in a decreasing manner.

There are three mobilization modes for micro philanthropy: intra-group mobilization, cross-group mobilization, and super-group mobilization. Intra-group mobilization centers on the philanthropic group in which a small number of group members lead a majority of the group. The

[①] Qian Ling (2015). Research on the Influence of Micro-Philanthropy Features on Individual Participation in Charity. Doctoral Dissertation of Huazhong University of Science and Technology.

[②] Zhao Wenpin & Xu Jialiang (2019). Institutional Organizations, New Links and Re-embedding: Innovation of Network Charity Trust Formation Mechanism. *Journal of Social Sciences, Issue 6,* pp.87-97; Zhang Jie & Qin Kewen (2017). Research on the New Media's Emotional Motivation Mechanism for Charity Behavior. *Modern Communication (Journal of Communication University of China, Issue 2,* pp.59-62 and 79.

[③] Xu Ying (2019). Review and Reflection on the Relevant Theories of the Research on the Credibility of Micro Philanthropy in the New Era. *Journal of Social Sciences of Hunan Normal University, Issue 3,* pp.54-61.

[④] Zhao Wenpin & Xu Jialiang (2019). Institutional Organizations, New Links and Re-embedding: Innovation of Network Charity Trust Formation Mechanism. *Journal of Social Sciences, Issue 6,* pp.87-97.

[⑤] Fang Xing & Zhang Dandan (2014). WeChat: Another Opportunity for the Development of Micro Philanthropy—Case Study of Tencent's Official WeChat Account "Hi Charity". *Southeast Communication, Issue 8, pp.* 119-121.

[⑥] Qian Ling (2015). Research on the Influence of Micro-Philanthropy Features on Individual Participation in Charity. Doctoral Dissertation of Huazhong University of Science and Technology.

[⑦] Lu Qiongying (2017). Research on the Persuasive Strategies of Micro-philanthropic Fundraising Advertising and the Influence on Individual Participation in Philanthropy. Doctoral Dissertation of Huazhong University of Science and Technology.

[⑧] Liu Jihong (2017). Research on Micro-blog Cultivation Effect of Public-Spirited Activity Information. Beijing: Communication University of China Press.

discourse of cross-group mobilization features the provocation of anger by the attribution framework and the cultivation of trust by the problem-solving framework. Mainly characterized by feelings, the super-group mobilization requires the media attribute agenda.[1] The social media has facilitated the development of philanthropic participation in two logics, namely "group" and "circle", respectively corresponding to the "IT-based" and "socialized" bias in medium usage of public actors. In the logic of "group", the socialized orientation of the organization contradicts with the normalized and specialized development of philanthropy.[2]

The dilemma of micro-philanthropy lies in the lack of social, administrative, political, and legal legitimacy. These dilemmas need to be resolved through the adjustment of state-society relations, the institutionalization of nonprofit organizations, and charity legislation.[3]

3. Conclusion and discussion

3.1 Evaluation of existing research

This paper reviewed the relevant research on "Internet philanthropy in China" by Chinese and foreign scholars from 2006 to 2020. Based on the keyword-based retrieval and analysis with the help of CiteSpace of published works and academic papers, this paper put forward four sub-fields in the research on "Internet philanthropy in China", namely crowd-funding and donation, nonprofit organizations & the public, philanthropic communications, and micro philanthropy. Then, this paper conducted a preliminary analysis of the main scope and topics of research on Internet philanthropy.

Judging from research topics and content, Internet philanthropy as an emerging model of philanthropy has garnered widespread attention from scholars. The analysis of related issues from the perspectives of multiple disciplines will help identify the characteristics, models, and existing problems of Internet philanthropy in China, thereby guiding practice with academic research and promoting further development of Internet philanthropy in China. In the meanwhile, judging from the quantity and quality of research, there are few mature research results. The research in this field started only a few years ago. Despite a variety of perspectives from cross-discipline studies, the research hasn't been profound enough. It's fair to say that the research on Internet philanthropy in China is still in its infancy, requiring further and in-depth analysis in theory, methodology, and perspective, so as to advance in-depth research on Internet philanthropy.

Judging from the number of articles published at home and abroad, there are fewer research results in English. Moreover, the research in English paid less attention to such research topics as confrontational politics and censorship, indicating that the English academic community focuses more on the separation and even confrontation between state and society, rather than coordination. Wang Jing[4] stated in the monograph The Other Digital China: Nonconfrontational Activism on the Social Web published by Harvard University Press that Internet philanthropy is nonconfrontational activism, which is commonplace in China. Wang Jin noted that many Western scholars believe that the Chinese people are facing brainwashing, imprisonment, and fear on the Internet, and resist through public criticism and even street revolutions, which is inconsistent with the actual situation in China. Therefore, Internet philanthropy in China also needs the attention of international academia.

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[1] Shen Yang et al. (2013). Research on the Mobilization Modes of Micro Philanthropy Communication. *Journalism & Communication, Issue 3,* pp.96-111.
[2] Qiu Yunqian (2015). An Empirical Study on the Organizational Mechanism of Internet Philanthropic Campaigns based on "Swarm" and "Clique". *Global Journal of Media Studies, Issue 3,* pp.77-95.
[3] Guo Feng et al. (2011). Legitimacy of China's "Grassroots" NGOs from the Perspective of Online Nonprofit Organizations. Research of Administration of NPOs, Issue 3, pp.167-168.
[4] Wang Jing (2019), *The Other Digital China: Nonconfrontational Activism on the Social Web*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S: Harvard University Press.

3.2 Directions for future research

Based on the above discussion, future research on Internet philanthropy can focus on the following three aspects.

First, apart from the research on Internet philanthropy at the macro and micro levels, it's advisable to analyze and study the Internet at the medium level. Specifically, it means conceptually defining "what's Internet". Portals, social media, and search engines are all on the Internet, but their technical characteristics and influence mechanisms differ considerably. In the future, it is necessary to develop an enriched "medium-concept". In other words, the Internet could be subdivided in a way that goes beyond specific products (like Ant Forest). There have been attempts in this direction. The micro philanthropy research has focused on social media like Weibo and WeChat, featuring more clarified conceptual boundaries and more prominent technical characteristics than the Internet. There has been a considerable amount of literature in this regard. In this direction, the introduction of the "platform" concept may make new contributions.

Second, the research focus could shift from Internet technology to nonprofit organizations and individuals that use technology. In the meanwhile, knowledge in other disciplines such as management, organizational behavior, psychology, and sociology could be applied to explore how the productivity of Internet technology affects production relations, in a bid to take advantage of organizational and individual initiative to stimulate more innovations in philanthropy. A review of the existing literature showed that almost all one-dimensional conclusions have been questioned. The Internet has profoundly changed the landscape of China's charity industry. However, technology cannot automatically affect social practices without being strategically used by the subject (people) under environmental constraints. Is the impact of the Internet on the charity industry positive or negative? Does game-based philanthropy give prominence to the people's initiative or serve as a vehicle for Internet companies to distort philanthropy in pursuit of a large fan base? Breaking away from simple technical determinism and linear causal thinking, and making a more detailed analysis of these issues will promote further progress in the research.

Third, it's advisable to further improve and enrich research methods. Normalized methodology and the application of Internet research tools, such as big data, machine learning, and Python, will be the main directions of future research. Among the mostly used methods in existing studies, there are quantitative paradigms, such as multivariate statistical analysis, social network analysis, and psychological experimentation, as well as qualitative methods, like case studies and discourse analysis. For example, while analyzing the mobilization model of micro philanthropy, Shenyang et al. employed the UNICET software for social network analysis at the intra-group level, and the artificial coding frame analysis at the cross-group level.[1] Fan Yafeng et al. conducted research based on comprehensive laboratory experiments, field experiments, and network experiments. They made descriptive statistics on the results of psychological experiments in the laboratory, conducted field experiments among college MBA students to verify the external validity under real scenarios, and then carried out online experiments with the help of the online survey platform to exclude other contributing factors.[2] Qualitative methods can also be implemented in line with standardized and rigorous methodology. For instance, the research of Li Haiqin et al.[3] on the contributing factors of social recognition of Internet philanthropy was based on grounded theory and interviews. Building on sentence-by-sentence coding, topic-by-topic coding, and main axis coding, a structural framework was built and a theoretical saturation test was conducted. In the future, research on Internet philanthropy could combine quantitative and qualitative methods to establish a knowledge

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[1] Shen Yang et al. (2013). Research on the Mobilization Modes of Micro Philanthropy Communication. *Journalism & Communication, Issue 3,* pp.96-111.
[2] Fan Yafeng et al. (2019). The Backfire Effect of Default Amounts on Donation Behavior in Online Donation Platform. *Acta Psychologica Sinica, Issue 4, pp.* 415-527.
[3] Li Haiqin et al. (2019). Research on Influencing Factors and Generation Mechanisms of Social Identity of Online Philanthropy. *Management Review*, Issue 1，pp.268-278.

production process of "theoretical construction, empirical verification, innovative methods, and material perfection", and proceed in accordance with corresponding norms. After solving the problems of random jumping of logic levels, unstructured collection and processing of materials, and the focus on hotspot issues of public opinion rather than major issues in the industry, academic research can progress along with the Internet philanthropy industry.

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