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Full Research Paper

Understanding Social Media Users' Intentions to Disclose Negative Emotions - Dual Persuasion Paths Perspective

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Abstract: This article aims at investigating the influence mechanism of central route factors which guided by negative emotions and peripheral route factors that reflect social environment on the willingness of social media users to disclose negative emotions. By applying the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), combined with use and satisfaction theory, a theoretical model to investigate social media users' willingness to disclose negative emotions is developed and an empirical analysis is conducted. The findings indicate that disclosure of negative emotions in social media is the result of joint decision-making through dual (personal and social environmental) persuasive paths and is mediated by two psychological needs, in which need for negative emotional expression shows a positive effect while need for impression management exhibits a negative effect. Among the central route factors, the intensity of negative emotions gives positive impact on need for negative emotional expression and negatively affects the need for impression management, in turn promoting negative emotional disclosure intention, while the negative emotion regulation ability has the opposite effect. As the peripheral route factor, social support positively affects the need for negative emotional expression, negatively affects the need for impression management, and finally lead to negative emotional disclosure intention. The influence of emotional support is relatively more significant. Limitations and implications for both research and practice are discussed.

Keywords: negative emotional disclosure, need for negative emotional expression, need for impression management, social support, negative regulation ability

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, social media has all developed rapidly, the total number of global social media users has reached 4.2 billion ^[1]. With the widespread use of social media, self-disclosure on social media has become more and more frequent. As a special form of self-disclosure, emotional disclosure is more concerned with the expression and communication of personal emotional experience. As "Microblog Tucao" has become annual hot word, people tend to disclose their emotions on social media platforms instead of talking to relatives and friends around them. The negative emotional disclosure behavior in social media is considered to be closely related to psychological health problems such as depression and anxiety ^[2]. Understanding the behavioral rules of negative emotional disclosure in social media is helpful to find anxiety, depression and other psychological problems in time by social media. Besides, it also guides us to make use of social media to help people with frequent negative emotions.

Currently, many researchers have studied the behavior of self-disclosure ^[3]. However, emotional disclosure is an irrational behavior as it is under the effect of emotions. So, compared with general self-disclosure behavior, negative emotional disclosure is driven by emotional characteristics, thus existing research findings cannot be directly applied to explain the negative emotional disclosure behavior. Empirical studies on emotional disclosure are still limited. Only a few researchers have studied it but they didn't distinguish the factors of positive and negative emotional disclosure ^{[4][5]}. Thus, the factors that play a leading role or have a key influence on users' negative emotional disclosure in social media have not been explored in depth. In addition, most of the existing studies use a single perspective to conduct researches, either from a individual level ^[6] or a social level ^[5]. The

factors and mechanisms that trigger the negative emotional disclosure are still not clear. The willingness to disclose negative emotions will inevitably be affected by emotional factors at the individual level. And the climate of social media will also assist the formation of the willingness to disclose negative emotions to some extent because in a friendly and warm atmosphere people tend to be more willing to express and communicate. In addition, user's behavior in social media is driven by certain psychological needs^[7], and use and gratification theory may help us to understand these behaviors from the perspective of needs and motivations. Besides, an individual's psychological needs are affected by multiple factors, especially emotion-related factors. Negative emotional disclosure is a behavior under negative emotion state. Currently, no existing studies have conducted study on how emotional states affect users' needs and motivations and thus to promote emotional disclosure behaviors. The needs and motivations in negative emotional states lack of accurate definitions and the paths of how they affect negative emotional disclosure remain unclear. Thus, we adopt Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), use the dual (individual and social environmental) persuasive paths and combined with use and gratification theory to investigate users' negative emotional disclosure in social media.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Negative emotional disclosure in social media

Emotional disclosure behavior was explored originally in psychology. Many studies in psychology focus on the relationship between emotional expression and stress, well-being and interpersonal relationship, and indicate that emotional disclosure behavior is closely related to personal life status and need for interpersonal relationship^{[7][8]}. Negative emotion as it has great significance for mental health, especially attract lots of attention in psychological research area^{[2][7]}.

Some researchers have conducted studies on emotional disclosure behavior in social media. H.Lin et al^[5] discussed the influence of social network characteristics on emotional disclosure behavior through the impact of psychological needs. But they didn't consider the differences of expression needs when people are under different emotion states. Pentina et al^[4] investigated the influence of social support and personality on positive and negative emotional disclosure in Facebook and real life. However, they didn't consider the particular factors in negative emotion situation. Cho et al^[6] found the influence of unexpected negative events, the state of negative emotions and personalities on negative emotional disclosure intention, and pointed out that negative emotional disclosure is a behavior of seeking help. Although these scholars have studied the user's negative emotional disclosure behavior, its influence path is relatively simple, and the path of how personal and social factors affect users' negative emotional disclosure is still unclear. All above, it needs us to further explore the behavioral mechanism of negative emotional disclosure in social media.

2.2 Use and gratification theory

Use and gratification theory explains people's behavior of using media from the perspective of people's psychological motivations and needs^[9]. It was widely applied in the studies of user behavior in web media such as social network and virtual community^[10]. Based on the use and gratification theory, users won't disclose themselves actively in social media unless they are driven by certain needs and motivations, such as social identity, self-expression, entertainment and so on^[10]. The study of H.Lin et al^[5] Indicated that users' emotional disclosure on social network sites is driven by need for emotion expression and need for impression management. Use and gratification theory helps us understand users' behavior in social media from the perspective of personal needs and motivations. In our study, negative emotional disclosure in social media could be understood as the behavior of users in order to satisfy their needs in negative emotional state. According to it, we consider that the related psychological motivations and needs are the precursors of negative emotional disclosure intention.

3. RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) was originally developed to understand the processing of persuasive messages from a social psychology perspective [11]. It states that individual processes information and changes attitude follows two routes, the central route and the peripheral route [11]. Some researches indicate that users' behaviors in virtual communities are influenced by dual routes [11]. The motivation of social media users to disclose negative emotion not only comes from the core factors that directly related to negative emotion, but also is affected by auxiliary environmental factors related to disclosure experience. Therefore, Elaboration Likelihood Model is also suitable for our research scenario.

Based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model, we classify the factors that affect users' disclosure of negative emotions in social media into central route cues and peripheral route cues. Central route cues refer to the negative emotional characteristics on individual level. The peripheral route cues refer to the social factors in social media. Thus, a research model is developed as shown in Figure 1 to investigate the factors which may predict an individual's negative emotional disclosure intention in social media. In this section, the key components of the research model and their interrelationships are addressed.

3.1 Psychological needs

According to use and gratification theory, emotional disclosure is related to two psychological needs: need for emotional expression, and need for impression management [5]. Need for emotional expression refers to the tendency to share emotions with others, while need for impression management refers to the motivation to convey a favorable self-image to others [5]. Emotion disclosures explored in previous literature have not distinguished the directions of emotions, i.e., positive and negative. To fit our research scenario, we define emotional need for expression as the need for negative emotional expression, which refers to the tendency of individuals to pour out negative emotions to others, and this tendency is closely related to the individual's negative emotional state. In addition, impression management needs are expressed as inhibitory needs in negative emotional state.

Under the effect of negative emotion, people tend to have emotion venting and desire an emotional "outlet" [2][7]. This impulse to vent and the desire to confide is the need for negative emotional expression. As use and gratification theory states, the stronger the need is, the stronger the intention of behavior accordingly to satisfy this need will be. Therefore, we have the following hypothesis:

H1: Users' need for negative emotional expression is positively related to their negative emotional disclosure intention in social media.

People are always concerned about impression management when they are in public. Social media is a public platform for self-presentation. Emotional disclosure can be used as a strategy for impression management [5]. Since the public always prefers positive over negative things, sharing positive emotions can lead others to have a good impression of oneself, while sharing negative emotions may harm self-image [5]. For example, who display negative emotion frequently may give others the impression that one is incapable of self-control and emotion regulation. People with high need for impression management are always more concerned about the image they convey to others, hoping to establish a positive impression, but more afraid of being known about something negative of them. Therefore, people with high need for impression management are less willing to disclose negative emotion in social media. We have the hypothesis:

H2: Users' need for impression management is negatively related to their negative emotional disclosure intention in social media.

3.2 Central variables: negative emotional factors at personal level

Factors related to negative emotions at personal level may exert strong impact on their negative emotion disclosure behavior [6]. Descriptions of individuals are often combined with personal experiences and personal

characteristics ^[6]. So, we use the intensity of negative emotions that he/she is experiencing to reflect someone's negative emotional experience and use the negative emotion regulation ability to measure individuals' trait that related to negative emotions. Personal differences under negative emotional states bring about different psychological responses to negative emotions ^[8], which in turn lead to differences of negative emotional disclosure intention in social media.

People's behaviors and psychological responses are related to their emotional state ^[8]. As a typical response to negative emotions, tendency to express negative emotions would be affected by negative emotional state ^[8]. The intensity of negative emotions is often used to reflect someone's negative emotional state at a certain moment ^[12]. The stronger the intensity of negative emotions is, the stronger the need for venting is, because when people are feeling particularly bad, they often need to confide in others for sympathy and support, thus releasing pressure and alleviating negative feelings. Therefore, we propose the hypothesis:

H3a: Intensity of negative emotions is positively related to need for negative emotional expression.

Psychological researches have indicated that self-esteem of individuals with severe negative emotions will decrease. And then it will lead to giving up self-management, and even the trend of self-abandonment ^[2]. For example, individuals with depression always tend to be unconcerned about their appearance, often look like unkempt and haggard. Thus, someone trapped in stronger negative emotions is more likely to get devaluation, and have less motivation to manage self-image. In addition, people become more impulsive when they are caught in strong negative emotions ^[2], so they would be less considerate of the potential effects of negative emotional disclosure, such as possible damage to their image. Therefore, negative emotions can affect someone's need for impression management. We propose the hypothesis:

H3b: Intensity of negative emotions is negatively related to need for impression management.

Emotion regulation ability has been intensively studied in mental health field. In psychology, emotion regulation ability can weaken a series of responses to emotions, such as impulsive tendency, expressing desire and so on ^[8]. According to the definition of emotion regulation ability in psychology ^[13], we define negative emotion regulation ability under our research context as the ability of someone to control and regulate negative emotion in order to alleviate the psychological responses to negative emotions. People with strong ability to regulate negative emotions may adjust the way they think about negative situations to weaken the response of negative emotions like need for negative emotional expression. In addition, such people are always able to stabilize their mentality, consider negative experiences and deal with negative emotions correctly. Thus, they have a high level of life enthusiasm and self-motivation, as well as the awareness and motivation of self-image management. Therefore, we have the following hypotheses:

H4a: negative emotion regulation ability is negatively related to need for negative emotional expression.

H4b: negative emotion regulation ability is positively related to need for impression management.

3.3 Peripheral variables: environmental factors at social level

The social climate in social media platform would affect users' behavior intention to some extent ^[14]. Usually, people disclose their negative emotions for help and support ^[4]. Social support creates a friendly and warm expression atmosphere on social media platform, making people more willing to disclose their negative emotions. Online social support commonly refers to information exchange and emotional interactions within a virtual space ^[14]. Therefore, we regard informational support and emotional support as two dimensions of social support on social media platforms.

Informational support is the type of support that offers people with advice, guidance, or useful information to help them solve problems, generate new ideas, or make good decisions ^[14]. If users can often get effective advice and help through a social media platform, they will be more confident on others' benevolence, integrity, and ability on that platform. Further, they will be more likely to believe that they will get effective help from

others on the platform after disclosing negative emotions. Under this belief, the tendency of users expressing negative emotions will be stronger. In addition, if users can often benefit from others' suggestions and opinions on a platform, they will be more inclined to recognize the value of the platform and believe the platform is helpful for them. It will also promote their needs to express negative emotions on that platform.

Emotional support refers to the provision of empathy, concern, caring, love, understanding, or encouragement given by others, which let the recipient feels he/she is valued ^[14]. It is easy to understand that if users can often get cares and supports from others on a social media platform, they will subconsciously think that other users on the platform are kind and sympathetic, and will understand, sympathize and comfort them after they disclose their negative emotions. Under this subconsciousness, users will more believe that expressing negative emotions is necessary for them.

Individuals with low self-esteem, self-confidence and self-identity are often not satisfied with their self-image, doubt themselves and are afraid of being hated or looked down upon by others. Therefore, they want to make efforts to convey their positive sides to others in the hope of getting recognized and praised ^[3]. Emotional support can enhance individuals' self-esteem, self-confidence and self-identity ^{[3][15]}, thus reduce the need for impression management. In addition, users who lack a sense of belonging on social media platforms are also more concerned about their image and how others think of them ^[3]. People are always franker and more open in a cordial and familiar environment. Social support, both informational support and emotional support, can enhance users' sense of belonging on a social media platform ^[3], thus enhance users' need for negative emotional expression and reduce their need for impression management. All above, we propose the hypotheses:

H5a: Social support (informational support and emotional support) is positively related to need for negative emotion expression.

H5b: Social support (informational support and emotional support) is negatively related to need for impression management.

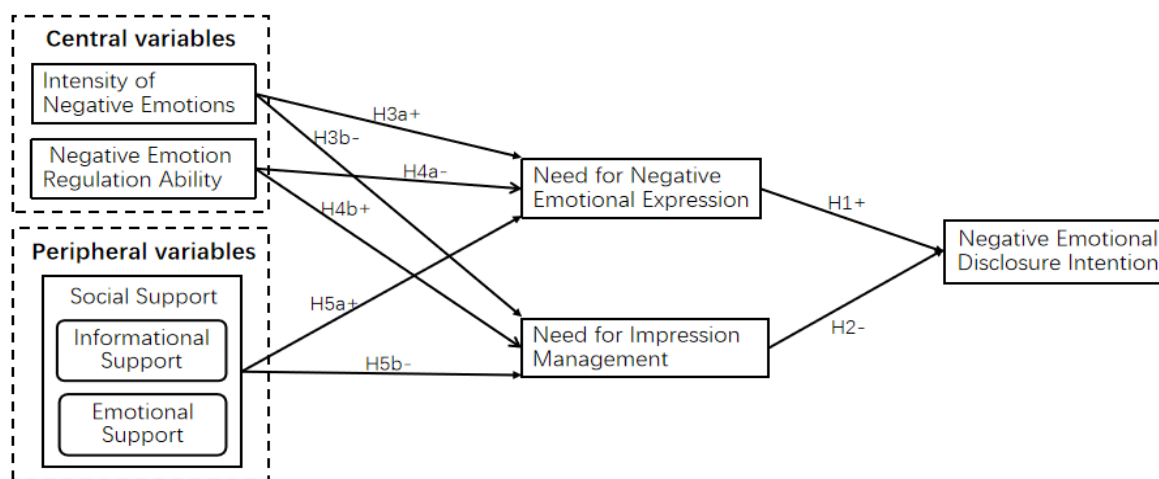


Figure 1. Research model

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Data Collection

In recent years, disclosing emotions through Microblog has become a relatively common phenomenon. Some researches on social media have also shown that people are more likely to disclose negative emotion on Microblog than on WeChat and Qzone ^[16]. The monthly active users and daily active users of Sina Microblog in 2020 reached 511 million and 224 million in China ^[17]. Therefore, we choose Sina Microblog as a representative example for investigating the negative emotional disclosure intention in social media. We first evaluated the

clarity and propriety of the questionnaire using a pilot test. Overall, the questionnaire was regarded as concise and easy to complete. The distribution and collection of questionnaires are conducted on a online platform called “Questionnaire Star”. The invalid questionnaires were filtered out, and the remaining 305 valid questionnaires were filled with personal real feelings. All 305 respondents are Microblog users, among which 144, accounting for 47.2%, often vent their negative emotion through Microblog.

Table 1. Measurement scale

Constructs	Items		Source
Need for negative emotional expression	NEE1	I need to display my negative emotions to other people.	Han Lin et al ^[5]
	NEE2	When I'm experiencing negative emotion, I want to cry in front of other people.	
	NEE3	I can't hide my negative emotion.	
	NEE4	When I'm experiencing strong negative emotion, I need to express them outwardly.	
Need for impression management	NIM1	I want to look like I am positive.	Han Lin et al ^[5]
	NIM2	I want a praise.	
	NIM3	I want to look better than others.	
Intensity of negative emotions	INE1	I feel bothered.	Cho et al ^[6]
	INE2	I feel angry.	
	INE3	I feel irritable.	
	INE4	I feel sad.	
Negative emotion regulation ability	NERA1	When I'm feeling bad, I have no trouble controlling my actions.	Preece et al ^[13]
	NERA2	When I'm feeling bad, I can control my urges to do risky things.	
	NERA3	When I'm feeling bad, I have strategies to help get rid of that feeling.	
	NERA4	I change the way I'm thinking about the situation to feel less negative emotion.	
Informational support	IS1	On the MicroBlog, some people would offer suggestions when I needed help.	Jun Chen ^[14]
	IS2	When I encountered a problem, some people on the MicroBlog would give me information to help me overcome the problem.	
	IS3	When faced with difficulties, some people on the MicroBlog would help me discover the cause and provide me with suggestions.	
Emotional support	ES1	When faced with difficulties, some people on the MicroBlog expressed concern and sympathy in my well-being.	Jun Chen ^[14]
	ES2	When faced with difficulties, some people on the MicroBlog comforted and encouraged me.	
	ES3	When faced with difficulties, some people on the MicroBlog are on my side with me.	
Negative emotional disclosure intention	NED1	I would disclose my negative feelings on MicroBlog.	Han Lin et al ^[5]
	NED2	I would often disclose my negative feelings on MicroBlog.	
	NED3	I will continue to disclose my negative feelings on MicroBlog in the future.	
	NED4	I am willing to disclose my negative feelings on MicroBlog.	

4.2 Measures

All measures used in this study have been validated and used in prior studies. Minor changes in the wordings were made so as to fit the current research context. There are no existing measures for “Need for negative emotional expression” and “Negative emotion regulation ability”. So, in this study, we adapt the measures of “Need for emotional expression” and “Emotion regulation ability” from prior studies, combining with negative emotion situation for them. The specific measures of each variable are shown in Table 1. As this study was conducted in China, the questionnaire was translated into Chinese first, and then a backward translation method was used to ensure the consistency between the Chinese and the English version of the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to recall a recent negative emotional experience and respond based on their feeling at that time. Measurements for all the constructs were phrased on a five-point Likert scales, anchored from “1=strongly disagree” and “5=strongly agree”.

4.3 Demographic analysis

The Demographic Statistics is shown in Table 2. Among the respondents, 46.5% of them were male and 53.5% were female. A large majority of the respondents (85.2%) were aged between 18 and 35. According to the User Development Report in 2020 released by Sina Microblog in March 2021, Microblog users continue to show a younger trend ^[17]. Among them, post-90s and post-00s account for nearly 80%, and more female users than male users. It can be seen that the samples of this study generally conform to the basic characteristics of MicroBlog user groups.

Table 2. Demographic statistics

	Characteristics	number	percent
gender	male	142	46.5%
	female	263	53.5%
age	<18	1	0.3%
	18-25	46	15%
	26-35	214	70.2%
	>36	44	14.5%
Education	Secondary School	9	3%
	Diploma/Higher diploma	272	89.1%
	Graduate/Post graduate	24	7.9%
Profession	Student	20	6.5%
	Member of enterprise	231	75.8%
	Others	54	17.7%

5. RESULTS

5.1 Measurement model

The measurement model was examined in terms of convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity can be assessed by examining the composite reliability(CR) and the average variance extracted(AVE). A composite reliability of 0.70 or above and an average variance extracted of more than 0.50 are deemed acceptable. As shown in Table 3, all measures exceed the recommended thresholds, with the composite reliability ranges from 0.841 to 0.935, and the average variance extracted ranges from 0.640 to 0.791. In addition, the Cronbach Alpha of each measure is above 0.70, indicating that the measurement model has satisfactory internal consistency. Discriminant validity of the reflective constructs was assessed by a criteria: the square root of the average variance extracted for each construct should be greater than the correlations between that construct and all other constructs. Table 4 presents the correlation matrix of the constructs and the square root of the average variance extracted for each construct. The results demonstrate satisfactory discriminant validity of the measurements.

Table 3. Construct reliability and validity

Constructs	AVE	CR	CA
Need for negative emotional expression (NEE)	0.708	0.907	0.863
Need for impression management (NIM)	0.791	0.919	0.867
Intensity of negative emotions (INE)	0.700	0.903	0.857
Negative emotion regulation ability (NERA)	0.652	0.882	0.822
Informational support (IS)	0.640	0.841	0.720
Emotional support (ES)	0.700	0.873	0.782
Negative emotional disclosure intention (NED)	0.783	0.935	0.908

(Note: AVE=Average Variance Extracted; CR=Composite Reliability; CA=Cronbach Alpha)

Table 4. Correlation between constructs

	NEE	NIM	INE	NERA	IS	ES	NED
NEE	0.841						
NIM	-0.561	0.889					
INE	0.439	-0.274	0.837				
NERA	-0.412	0.364	-0.201	0.807			
IS	0.479	-0.294	0.243	-0.042	0.800		
ES	0.600	-0.348	0.183	-0.192	0.534	0.837	
NED	0.633	-0.597	0.318	-0.283	0.413	0.404	0.885

(Note: The bold numbers in the diagonal row are square roots of the average variance extracted.)

5.2 Structural model

Figure 2 presents the overall explanatory power, the estimated path coefficients (all significant paths are indicated with asterisks), and the associated t-value of the paths. Test of significance of all paths were performed using the bootstrap re-sampling procedure. A large proportion of the variance in negative emotional disclosure intention (55.4%) were explained in this model. In addition, this model also accounted for 57.4% of the variance in need for negative emotional expression and 25.5% of the variance in need for impression management.

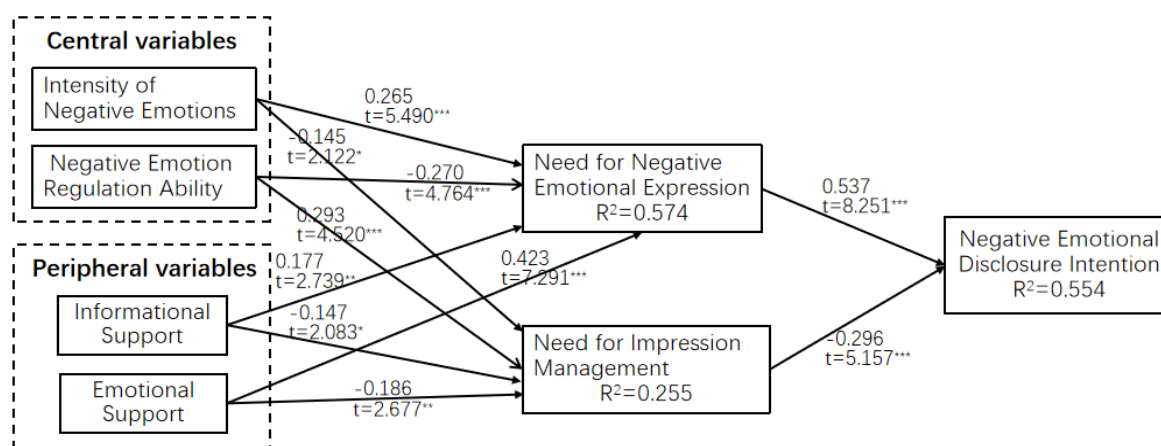


Figure 2. PLS analysis results (Note: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; *p < 0.001; N.S: not significant)**

The results demonstrated that the need for negative emotional expression and need for impression management exerts strong impact on users' negative emotional disclosure intention in social media. The need for negative emotional expression has a significant positive effect on negative emotional disclosure intention with a path coefficient at 0.537, Yet the need for impression management has a significant negative effect on negative emotional disclosure intention with a path coefficient at -0.296, which is consistent with our expectation.

In the central route, as we expected the intensity of a negative emotion exerts strong positive impact on the need for negative emotional expression and negative impact on the need for impression management, with path coefficients at 0.265 and -0.145, respectively. At the same time, negative emotion regulation ability shows its negative influence on the need for negative emotional expression and positive influence on the need for impression management, with path coefficient at -0.270 and 0.293, respectively.

In the peripheral route, two dominant types of social support, informational support and emotional support, all positively affect the need for negative emotional expression with path coefficients at 0.177 and 0.423 respectively, but negatively affect the need for impression management with path coefficients at -0.147 and -0.186 respectively. It can also be seen from the results that the emotional support plays a more significant role in the two psychological needs than informational support.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Discussion of key findings

Understanding the negative emotional disclosure behavior in social media has important guiding significance for social media operation and social mental health construction. This study represents an initial attempt to explore users' negative emotional disclosure behavior from dual persuasion path perspective. A research model built on the Elaboration Likelihood Model and use and gratification theory is empirically tested. The proposed hypotheses are all supported and key findings are as follows.

Users' negative emotional disclosure intention in social media is directly affected by two psychological needs. Need for negative emotional expression plays a facilitating role which is generally consistent with the research of [5]. While different from his findings, need for impression management exerts an inhibitory effect. This result reveals the ambivalence of individuals experiencing negative emotions that they tend to disclose their negative emotions in social media for solace, but also fear that the disclosure may damage their self-image.

Both central factors (the intensity of negative emotions and negative emotion regulation ability) and peripheral factors (social support) exert significant impacts on users' negative emotional disclosure intention through the mediating effect of two psychological needs. In the central route guided by negative emotions, individuals who experience strong negative emotions have strong negative emotional expression needs, but weaker impression management needs, which makes them more willing to disclose negative emotions. This result is consistent with [6]. The results also indicate that individuals with stronger negative emotion regulation ability have weaker need for negative emotional expression and stronger need for impression management, so they are more reluctant to disclose negative emotions. This result states that strong negative emotions can cause changes in people's psychological state, which make people impulsive or trigger depraved tendencies. In the peripheral route guided by social climate, social support has a significant positive effect on their need for negative emotional expression and a significant negative impact on their need for impression management. This result also agrees with the research finding of [4] that social support promotes emotional disclosure and makes a supplementary study on the specific mechanism of this promotion. In addition, we find that compared to informational support, emotional support plays a more significant role in triggering negative emotional disclosure behavior.

6.2 Implications for research

This study may contribute to the existing researches in the following ways. First, distinguish the self-disclosure behavior and build a research model for the context of negative emotional disclosure. Moreover, in order to fit our negative emotional scenario, we define the need for negative emotional expression and negative emotion regulation ability and adapt their related measurements based on the general definition and measurements of the need for emotional expression and emotion regulation ability in prior literature. It will be helpful for future research on negative emotional disclosure behavior. Second, this study investigates the behavioral mechanism specific to negative emotional disclosure in social media, enriching the theoretical system of self-disclosure behavior. In addition, different from previous research findings, we find that intensity of negative emotions and social support influence negative emotional disclosure intention through the mediating role of psychological needs. Third, this study adopts the ELM model as the framework to reveal the influence mechanism of negative emotion subject level and peripheral environment level on social media users' willingness to disclose negative emotions in a "dual path" approach. It helps to understand users' negative emotional disclosure behavior in social media more comprehensively, and makes up for the deficiency of negative emotional disclosure behavior research in social media.

6.3 Implications for practice

The findings of this research are also useful for practice. Firstly, it guides social media vendors to improve

their operating mechanisms, increases user activity, and enhances users' stickiness. Secondly, it helps users to understand the behavior mechanism of negative emotional disclosure, guides users to vent negative emotions in social media properly in order to maintain mental health and increase well-being. Thirdly, it is helpful to better understand the social psychological significance of negative emotional disclosure in social media environment, provide guidance for using social media strategies to find and solve mental health problems. Specific suggestions are as follows.

First, social support can play an important role in facilitating individual's negative emotional disclosure. We argue that social media vendors could extract the characteristics of the content posted by users, and find groups of users with similar characteristics. Then, enhance the content exposure to users with similar experience and consistent values on the principle of not violating users' privacy settings. So that users have more possibilities to get agreement and support. In addition, based on the important role of emotional support, social media vendors should provide users with more means for emotional interaction, such as one-click interaction to express emotional support such as "like" etc, so that users can easily show their emotional understanding and concerns to others. Second, two psychological needs are the main drivers of negative emotional disclosure, need for negative emotional expression plays a facilitating role while need for impression management exerts an inhibitory effect. We suggest that individuals could learn some skills and strategies of to regulate negative emotions, such as changing the way of thinking about problems, to reduce the need for negative emotional expression, then avoid depression. However, if individuals experience severe negative emotions and have no way but disclose outwardly, they could review the social support they have received from social media to improve the self-confidence and self-identity, reducing the need for impression management. In this way, individuals could guide themselves to release negative emotions through social media effectively to avoid depression. Finally, being in a negative emotional state and lack of negative emotion regulation ability is the starting point of individuals' negative emotional disclosure behavior. We suggest that on the one hand, provide supportive and warm environment for them, especially emotional care through social media for them. On the other hand, relevant institutions could organize negative emotion regulation training, which guide individuals to use a variety of strategies to deal with negative emotions properly and maintain a healthy psychological state. Besides, all of us should concern the mental health of people around us through social media, and help those with high frequency of negative emotions by delivering social support in social media.

6.4 Limitations and future research

There are some limitations in this study. First of all, the differences among users' characteristics were not considered, like age, gender and profession etc. In future research, we would consider the moderating effects of demographic characteristics. Besides, the negative emotion regulation ability in this study may also have moderating effects, which deserves further research. Furthermore, previous studies have shown that privacy concerns hinder users' from disclosing information, whether it gives impact on users' negative emotional disclosure and how, is unclear. Thus, we could combine privacy-related factors to better understand the negative emotion disclosure behavior.

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