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Research on Management Standards for Personal Digital Archiving Information in U.S. Universities: Postprint

Authors: Huang Guobin, Yan Xin

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] Through comparative analysis of the content of personal digital archiving information management norms at eight Ivy League universities in the United States, this study aims to understand their content composition and fundamental characteristics, providing reference for the normative construction and practical exploration of personal digital archiving in Chinese universities. Research on personal digital archiving information management norms for personal digital data facilitates the reasonable and lawful collection and utilization of personal digital archiving information, enhances the management level of personal digital archiving information, and ultimately promotes personal digital archiving information as an indispensable precious socio-cultural resource for future digital humanities research.

[Method/Process] Employing case study methodology and comparative analysis, this study investigates and analyzes the personal digital archiving information management norms of eight Ivy League universities in the United States, examining the subject categories, content formats, and management behaviors regarding personal digital archiving information.

[Results/Conclusion] Regarding the types and boundary scope of personal digital archiving information, the eight surveyed universities classify the types of personal digital archiving information based on the privacy levels of personal digital data. On this basis, the formulated management norms ensure the standardized operation, proper management, and reuse of personal digital archiving information.

Full Text

Research on Information Management Policies for Personal Digital Archives in American Universities

Huang Guobin and Yan Xin

School of Government Management, Beijing Normal University, Beijing 100875

Abstract:

[Purpose/Significance] Through comparative analysis of personal digital archiving information management policies across eight Ivy League universities in the United States, this study examines their content composition and fundamental characteristics to provide reference for the normative construction and practical exploration of personal digital archiving in Chinese universities. Investigating personal digital archiving policies centered on personal digital data helps promote the rational and lawful collection and utilization of personal digital archives, enhances management standards for personal digital archiving information, and ultimately facilitates the development of personal digital archives as an indispensable and precious socio-cultural resource for future digital humanities research. **[Method/Process]** This research employs case study and comparative analysis methods, using eight Ivy League universities as examples to investigate and dissect their personal digital archiving information management policies, sorting out the subject categories, content forms, and management behaviors related to personal digital archives in current university policies. **[Result/Conclusion]** Regarding the types and boundaries of personal digital archives, the eight surveyed universities classify personal digital archives based on privacy levels of personal digital data. On this basis, the formulated management policies ensure standardized operations, sound management, and reuse of personal digital archiving information.

Keywords: personal digital data; personal digital archive; information policy

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According to statistics from the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), as of June 2020, the number of internet users in China reached 940 million, with mobile internet users reaching 932 million. In the internet era, especially with the widespread 普及 of smartphones, almost everyone creates various types of digital data daily, either actively or passively. These digital data encompass personal basic information, personal activity information, and personal location information. Particularly regarding personal location data—from relatively fixed residence information to mobile location data generated by various map navigation apps—these involve virtually every aspect of privacy. People often lack full control rights over these digital data, especially archiving rights. Similarly, in today's university campuses where personal digital data creation and usage are so extensive and deeply embedded, both faculty and students must interact with their institutions regarding personal digital data based on their respective identities. This includes the university's need to

archive faculty and student personal digital data for management and service purposes, covering identity information, academic records, health and medical information, and campus transaction records. What legal policies and institutional regulations do universities follow in the collection, organization, storage, and utilization of these “personal digital data” that involve greater scope and higher degrees of privacy for faculty and students? What basic rights do faculty and students possess? How can we ensure the reliability and legality of personal digital archiving behaviors? These questions have begun to attract attention. This study investigates the regulations of representative American universities regarding personal digital archiving information management policies to sort out current institutional responses to personal digital archives at the university level, providing reference for Chinese universities to develop faculty and student personal digital archiving practices.

2. Research Status

Personal Digital Archive (PDA) has emerged as a research hotspot internationally in recent years. PDA research primarily focuses on the collection, preservation, organization, access, dissemination, and use of personal digital archiving information, belonging to the research domain of records management and information management. Currently, there is no unified definition of personal digital archiving in academia. Based on relevant literature definitions, this paper defines personal digital archiving as the creation, access, collection, and use of various digital objects and their collections involving individuals, either for personal purposes or for institutional duty fulfillment.

Searching relevant research results in CNKI and Web of Science databases using “personal digital archive” and “personal digital archive” as keywords, current PDA research can be subdivided into five aspects:

2.1 Library or Archive Services for Personal Digital Archiving Information

Huang Guobin et al. examined the Library of Congress, Campbell County Public Library, the British Library, and the National Library and Archives of Canada as research objects, exploring personal digital archiving and management service models based on differences in user groups, privacy levels, and data type characteristics. In the archives field, E. Scheinberg et al. proposed the concept of “citizen archivist” from the perspective of archivists’ role transformation, introducing how people can use the internet to store and display personal and family archives and guide individuals in conducting personal digital archiving, representing a practical model for information professionals to preserve digital humanities resources.

2.2 College Student Personal Digital Archiving Behaviors

Feng Xiangjun noted that college students’ awareness and behavior regarding personal digital information preservation lag behind, with insufficient understanding of personal digital archiving. These issues require multiple responsible

parties to clarify their respective roles and responsibilities and cooperate in personal digital archiving activities. Duan Xiane conducted a questionnaire survey of master's students at Wuhan University to investigate the formation and distribution of personal digital archives, personal digital archiving awareness, behaviors, challenges, and prospects, summarizing existing problems and proposing solutions from both individual and institutional perspectives. Guo Xuemin found that personal digital archiving behavior has strong correlations with personal factors (age, internet experience, education level) and archiving awareness and capabilities, with archiving awareness and capabilities mediating between personal factors and archiving behavior.

2.3 Domestic and International Personal Digital Archiving Practices

Wang Xincai et al. analyzed foreign practical experience from three aspects: products and services for individuals, research projects exploring how individuals conduct digital archiving, and publicity and guidance from cultural institutions such as libraries and archives for the public. Related academic conferences have strengthened discussions and exchanges on personal digital archiving issues among scholars from different institutions and fields. For example, the Personal Digital Archiving Conference hosted by the Library of Congress has been held for multiple sessions since 2010, discussing responsibility subjects, value of personal digital archiving, storage tools, system construction, personal digital heritage management, and challenges, providing guidance for personal digital archiving behaviors. Kou Jingjing et al. investigated major foreign projects for long-term preservation of image resources, examining progress from four aspects: national distribution, project introduction, standards/guidelines, and technical tools/methods. Wang Haining and J. Gemell explored foreign personal digital archiving theory and practice through analysis of Microsoft Research's MyLifeBits project. Zhou Yaolin et al. analyzed challenges facing personal archiving and elaborated on research progress in foreign personal archiving theory and practice.

2.4 Personal Digital Archiving Information Preservation Strategies and Implementation Mechanisms

Xia Lianchun pointed out that research on personal archives and preservation strategies is relatively well-developed in terms of basic theory and preservation systems, with distinctive features. The commonality in domestic and international research on this theme is the focus on personal digital archives while neglecting traditional personal archives preservation. The Library of Congress provides advice and guidance for public personal digital archiving through building personal digital archiving portals and hosting "Personal Digital Archiving Day" activities.

2.5 Characteristics of Personal Digital Archiving

As an emerging project in the context of personal information digitization, personal digital archiving presents three characteristics: (1) **Personalization**: Duan Xiane noted that individuals differ in attitudes, habits, tools, techniques, and capabilities in personal digital archiving. (2) **Diversity**: According to M.

Krtalic et al.'s survey of devices generating personal digital archives, personal digital archiving information originates from multiple electronic storage devices, distributed widely, with content and format types encompassing various forms. (3) **Randomness:** C.C. Marshall pointed out that randomness in personal digital archiving behavior is increasing in practical applications, implying reduced value of personal digital archiving information.

Current personal digital archiving research primarily focuses on characteristics, domestic and international practice, library services, and college student behaviors. Regarding personal digital archiving norms, there is a lack of top-down theoretical systems and operational guidelines for standardizing and guiding personal digital archiving behaviors. This study systematically analyzes behavioral norms and operational guidelines of relevant subjects in collecting, accessing, and using personal digital archiving information.

3. Research Methods

The Ivy League consists of eight universities: Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Princeton, University of Pennsylvania, Brown, Cornell, and Dartmouth. These universities have long histories and prestigious reputations, with profound influence in the personal digital archiving field. First, in terms of personal digital archiving research projects, the “Born Digital Collections: An Inter-Institutional Model for Stewardship project” was conducted from 2009 to 2011 under the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with collaboration between the University of Virginia Library and Yale University and other top American universities, aiming to establish a framework for stewarding born-digital content. Regarding personal digital archiving information management policies, the eight universities have formulated detailed institutional policies targeting different personal digital archiving information types and operational behaviors, totaling 28 policies. Overall, the eight Ivy League universities have relatively comprehensive personal digital archiving policy systems worth referencing. Conducting research on university-level policies for personal digital archiving information helps understand the perspectives and attitudes of top American universities in this field, providing reference for China’s development.

This research comprehensively applies case study and comparative analysis methods, selecting personal digital archiving information management policies of the eight Ivy League universities as research objects. Considering their high international influence and relatively clear and complete personal digital archiving information management policies, these universities offer good representativeness and reference value. Based on analysis of user types, personal digital archiving information content types, and common operational action types, this study compares personal digital archiving content across the eight universities, summarizes similarities and differences, and identifies basic positions, content systems, and prominent characteristics of Ivy League universities regarding personal digital archiving. By analyzing policies on student personal digital archiving information in famous foreign universities, this research understands the

perspectives and attitudes of top American universities toward personal digital archiving information management. The findings reveal that management policies focus on three aspects: educational information, health information, and copyright information. From the perspective of operational behavior regulations, these align with information management lifecycle theory. Therefore, this study analyzes content characteristics from main stages including collection, access, and use, proposing relevant suggestions for establishing and improving personal digital archiving policy systems in Chinese universities to promote standardized operations, sound management, and reuse of personal digital archiving information.

4. System Composition of Management Policies for Personal Digital Archiving Information in Eight Universities

4.1 Management Policy System Composition

Investigation of personal digital archiving information management policies across the eight Ivy League universities reveals that personal digital archiving information mainly includes personal digital educational archives, personal digital health archives, and personal digital copyright archives. Based on this, the study systematically analyzes content composition and main characteristics of personal digital archiving information management policies from perspectives of collection, access, and use.

Currently, American personal digital archiving information management policies exhibit varying degrees of binding force, primarily taking forms of laws and institutional regulations. Legal policies mainly include the U.S. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), which respectively regulate personal digital educational archives, personal digital health archives, and personal digital copyright archives. Institutional policies refer to university-level management policies formulated by the eight Ivy League universities based on federal and state laws according to their own management needs. Universities publish personal digital archiving information management policy documents through official websites and establish offices including the President's Office, Legal Counsel Office, and Information Management Supervision Office to implement and supervise relevant policies. shows relevant management policies for personal digital archives in the eight Ivy League universities.

4.2 Users of Personal Digital Archiving Information

Users of personal digital archiving information refer to behavioral subjects who directly or indirectly operate personal digital archiving information to complete archiving actions. Through investigation of users across the eight Ivy League universities, common user types are summarized in .

From the perspective of university business management, users can be divided

into students and faculty/staff. Management policies address operational guidelines for personal digital archiving information of graduated students and retired or resigned faculty. University offices include Information Technology Office, Legal Counsel Office, Human Resources Office, Education Office, and President's Office. Supervision departments include Information Security Office and offices responsible for preserving and managing FERPA and HIPAA records.

From the perspective of operating systems, users can be divided into end-users and administrators. The relationship between users and administrators resembles that of front-end and back-end of websites: users are responsible for creating, using, and reusing personal digital archiving information, while administrators are responsible for managing and maintaining the integrity, availability, and security of personal digital data.

4.3 Main Types of Personal Digital Archiving Information

Personal digital archiving information includes various forms of historical records with preservation value for society and individuals, directly created by individuals in political, military, economic, scientific, technical, cultural, religious, and other activities, past and present, in forms such as text, charts, audio, and video. Investigation of personal digital archiving information across the eight Ivy League universities yields common types summarized in .

Based on content type classification, Personally Identifiable Information (PII) refers to personal identity information, and Personal Health Information (PHI) refers to personal health information. Under the U.S. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), personal digital data managed and protected are FERPA data.

Based on openness scope classification, besides Pennsylvania University's definition of confidential digital data, Dartmouth College's DISC management policy also defines digital data security levels: Level 0 data for public disclosure; Level 1 data without confidentiality classification but not intended for public release (general business data accessible to authenticated Dartmouth community members); Level 2 data classified as Level 2 can only be shared with data owners' defined "need-to-know" individuals; Level 3 data are strictly confidential, requiring the highest security level, including FERPA data, PII, PHI, and Payment Card Information (PCI).

5. Content of Management Policies for Personal Digital Archiving Information in Eight Universities

5.1 Focus Areas of Management Policies

Ivy League universities have formulated operational guidelines in their personal digital archiving information management policies. summarizes characteristics of these policies. The investigation reveals that current university policies

mainly regulate three types: personal digital educational archives, personal digital health archives, and personal digital copyright archives. From the perspective of preservation value, educational, health, and copyright protection aspects are the three most valuable and necessary areas of focus. Therefore, this paper primarily organizes and analyzes management policies for these three types.

5.2 Management Policy Content Based on Information Lifecycle Theory

According to information lifecycle theory, necessary operational processes for personal digital archiving information include collection, preservation, access, and use. Through 梳理 of Ivy League university policies, common regulated actions include collection, access, and use. Research on preservation policies will be explored in future studies due to article length constraints. This paper focuses on analyzing collection, access, and use policies to regulate main process stages and lay foundations for improving future personal digital archiving mechanisms.

5.2.1 Collection (1) Personal Digital Educational Archives Collection Management Policies. These policies regulate the collection of personal digital educational archives. FERPA defines educational records as records directly related to students maintained by the university (or parties acting on its behalf), containing personally identifiable information, such as transcripts, papers, exams, and course schedules, as well as financial records, letters, and emails, excluding law enforcement or medical treatment records protected by other laws. Educational records may be stored in any medium. Personal digital educational archives mainly include student course selection records, grade records, and educational activity records. Current U.S. laws governing personal digital educational archives include FERPA and the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HERO). shows relevant collection management policies across the eight universities.

The table reveals that most eight universities' policies aim to manage student educational records and protect student information privacy, collecting personal digital educational archives through academic systems, online submission, and written permission while following laws and institutional policies. Yale, Columbia, Cornell, and Dartmouth primarily base policies on FERPA provisions. Pennsylvania and Cornell provide more detailed descriptions of collection methods.

(2) Personal Digital Health Archives Collection Management Policies. These policies regulate collection of personal digital health archives, including personal health information and medical records. Current U.S. laws include HIPAA and the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). shows relevant collection management policies.

The table shows most policies aim to manage student health records and protect privacy, primarily based on HIPAA provisions. Harvard, Pennsylvania, and

Dartmouth lack explicit policies on collecting personal digital health archives, while Pennsylvania's policies provide detailed collection methods.

(3) Personal Digital Copyright Archives Collection Management Policies. These regulate collection of personal digital copyright archives, referring to digital information of personally copyright-protected materials. Relevant U.S. laws include DMCA and U.S. Copyright Law. shows relevant collection management policies.

The table indicates most policies aim to manage personal digital copyright archives and protect copyright materials and fair use, collecting through compliance with copyright laws, signing contracts, and online submission. Cornell explicitly identifies collection and management subjects, while others provide brief descriptions. Yale, Princeton, and Dartmouth specifically mention protecting archives through contracts and copyright agreements.

5.2.2 Access (1) Personal Digital Educational Archives Access Management Policies. These regulate access to personal digital educational archives. shows relevant access management policies across the eight universities.

Access subjects are students themselves or data personnel who apply for access. Access methods include student account access or authorized permission. All eight universities follow FERPA provisions, resulting in similar regulations on access subjects, content, and methods.

(2) Personal Digital Health Archives Access Management Policies. These regulate access to personal digital health archives. shows relevant access management policies.

During investigation, all eight universities were found to formulate policies primarily based on HIPAA provisions. Harvard and Dartmouth lack explicit policies on accessing personal digital health archives. Pennsylvania's policies are relatively comprehensive, detailing access methods.

(3) Personal Digital Copyright Archives Access Management Policies. These regulate access to personal digital copyright archives. shows relevant access management policies.

Yale lacks explicit policies on accessing personal digital copyright archives. Other universities base policies on DMCA and U.S. Copyright Law, resulting in similar regulations on access subjects, content, and methods.

5.2.3 Use (1) Personal Digital Educational Archives Use Management Policies. These regulate use of personal digital educational archives. shows relevant use management policies.

Current policies primarily aim to use personal educational records for academic research and practical application, collecting, copying, distributing, and using

student personal digital educational archives through written permission while following laws and institutional policies. Columbia, Cornell, and Dartmouth specify academic research and practical application as main purposes. Harvard differs from other universities in usage methods.

(2) Personal Digital Health Archives Use Management Policies. These regulate use of personal digital health archives. shows relevant use management policies.

Current policies primarily aim to use personal health records for academic research and practical application, using personal health archives through authorized written permission while following laws and institutional policies. All universities base policies on HIPAA provisions. Harvard and Dartmouth lack explicit policies on using personal digital health archives. Princeton does not explicitly state usage purposes, while other universities have similar regulations.

(3) Personal Digital Copyright Archives Use Management Policies. These regulate use of personal digital copyright archives. shows relevant use management policies.

Current policies primarily aim to protect personal copyright materials and enable fair use, using personal digital copyright archives through signed agreements and licensed authorization while following laws and institutional policies. Columbia, Brown, and Cornell primarily follow legal provisions with brief policy content. Other universities have similar regulations on usage subjects, content, and methods, particularly emphasizing standardization of personal digital copyright archives use.

6. Characteristics of Personal Digital Archiving Information Management Policies in Eight Universities

Ivy League universities regulate collection, access, and use operations in their personal digital archiving information management policies. Investigation and summary of these policies reveal characteristics shown in . Common users include students, faculty/staff, university offices, and general users. Common information types include copyright-protected materials, student educational records, faculty personal information, personal health information, personal consumption information, personal identity information, email records, and confidential sensitive information.

6.1 Boundaries of Personal Digital Archiving Information

The eight Ivy League universities primarily define boundaries based on content types and privacy levels. Collection, access, and use policies mainly cover three types: personal digital educational archives, personal digital health archives, and personal digital copyright archives, with some policies also mentioning personal digital consumption archives. Most personal digital archives belong to

confidential information requiring strict confidentiality and highest security levels.

6.2 Regulations on Users

Management policies specify users of personal digital archiving information. Common collection subjects are universities or their offices collecting through academic systems, medical reimbursement platforms, and databases. Common access subjects include students, faculty/staff, and university offices. Access to others' information requires access privileges or authorization from archive managers. Cornell's policies on accessing alumni accounts require applicants to submit requests to relevant offices, which serve to preserve, manage, inspect, and maintain personal digital archives. Common use subjects include data owners and applicants, where users besides the owner must be authorized by the owner with written approval or under special legal circumstances.

6.3 Regulations on Operational Purposes

Regarding content types, the eight universities have similar operational purposes for educational and health archives: managing information and protecting personal privacy. For copyright archives, the purpose is to comply with copyright law rights and fairly use copyright-protected resources.

Regarding operation types, collection policies aim to manage archives and protect privacy. Access policies aim to obtain archives for academic research or daily work needs. Use policies aim to reasonably copy, use, distribute, and disseminate archives for academic research and practical application, or to supervise and maintain archives for inspection by legal departments and information owners.

6.4 Regulations on Operational Methods

Different universities provide varying levels of detail on operational methods for different content types. The eight universities provide more detailed descriptions for educational and copyright archives, while health archive descriptions are more brief. Among surveyed universities, policy completeness varies. Harvard and Dartmouth have relatively deficient policies on personal digital health archives.

Regarding operation types, most universities regulate and limit access and use policies, with fewer regulations on collection policies. This indicates Ivy League universities currently focus more on application management of personal digital archives, with collection management policies needing further development. Columbia provides technical explanations for reasonable access and use of student electronic information, specifying in email use policies that terminal access is password-protected and complies with Columbia's information resource access control and logging management policies. Other universities also specify

reasonable access methods and security confidentiality technologies in information technology and security management policies.

7. Implications and Recommendations

Although Chinese universities have relevant regulations on personal digital archiving information, based on Duan Xiane and Xia Lianchun's research on domestic personal digital archiving management practices and investigation of relevant information management policies in representative Chinese universities, compared with foreign management policies, domestic policies exhibit the following issues and suggestions: (1) Chinese universities have information security and network account security regulations with many practical operational norms, but lack systematic personal digital archiving management policy systems. (2) Chinese universities rarely mention issues regarding use, maintenance, and updating of personal digital data. It is recommended to learn from the eight Ivy League universities' policies to classify and regulate specific operational stages. (3) Chinese universities focus more on information and network usage and security issues, with less attention to personal privacy disclosure requirements. As personal digital archiving research deepens, Chinese universities should gradually pay attention to and strengthen personal privacy protection awareness, learning from foreign experiences to develop personal data privacy protection policies tailored to their needs, improving personal digital archiving protection systems from prevention to handling. (4) Chinese universities seldom focus on the concept of personal digital data, lacking classification by privacy level and differentiated treatment. It is recommended to combine personal privacy protection policies, learn from foreign management experiences, classify personal digital archiving information generated by various departments and personnel, and implement hierarchical usage, protection, and management accordingly. (5) Chinese universities' information supervision systems are incomplete, needing establishment of complete systems for monitoring, handling, and feedback on personal digital data.

The current era is one of personal information, where personal digital archiving is an inevitable demand of development. Digital humanities resources include not only historical materials but also digital materials involving personal information. Currently, domestic research has not yet addressed the value of personal digital archiving for digital humanities research, but as the value of personal digital archiving information becomes increasingly prominent, this issue will gradually enter domestic scholars' research 视野. Some personal digital archiving information possesses profound historical and social value and will become an irreplaceable research resource for digital humanities in the future.

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Author Contributions:

Huang Guobin: Topic selection, guidance, and revision;

Yan Xin: Writing and revision.

Huang Guobin Yan Xin

School of Government Management, Beijing Normal University, Beijing 100875

Research on Information Management Policies of Personal Digital Archive in American Universities

Abstract: [Purpose/Significance] This article hopes to understand the content composition and basic characteristics of eight Ivy League universities in the United States in terms of the content of personal digital archiving policies, to provide reference for the normative construction and practical exploration of personal digital archiving in Chinese universities. Investigating personal digital archiving policies centered on personal digital data is conducive to promoting the rational and legal collection and utilization of personal digital archives, improving the management level of personal digital archiving information, and ultimately promoting personal digital archives to become an indispensable precious social and cultural resource for future digital humanities research. [Method/Process] This research adopted case analysis and comparative analysis, taking eight Ivy League universities as examples to investigate and analyze their personal digital archiving information management policies, sorting out the subject categories, content forms, and management behaviors of personal digital archives in current university management policies. [Result/Conclusion] In terms of the types and boundaries of personal digital archives, the surveyed eight universities divide the types of personal digital archives based on the privacy level of personal digital data. On this basis, the personal digital archive management policy formulated by the Ivy League universities ensures its standardized operation, high-quality management and reuse.

Keywords: personal digital data; personal digital archive; information policy

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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