

Research on the Communication Strategy of Chinese Traditional Culture on TikTok Platform in the Context of Globalisation

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Abstract. Taking the TikTok platform as an example, this paper explores the international dissemination of Chinese traditional culture in the context of globalisation. The results of the study show that TikTok provides new opportunities for the dissemination of traditional Chinese culture in terms of diversified content forms, precise algorithmic recommendations and user interactivity, enabling cultural elements to quickly enter the international perspective. However, at the same time, this study also finds that there are three main problems in the dissemination process: first, the content form tends to be superficial, and the deep logic and spiritual connotation of traditional culture is easily weakened; second, the algorithmic mechanism leads to "traffic orientation" and "information cocoon", which is not conducive to the sustainability of in-depth cultural content. Secondly, the algorithmic mechanism leads to "traffic orientation" and "information cocoon", which is not conducive to the sustainable dissemination of in-depth cultural content; and the "cultural trust deficit" occurs in cross-cultural contexts, which affects the acceptance of the audience. To address these problems, the study proposes optimisation paths, including: enriching content expression and exploring cultural connotations; incorporating cultural education and value factors into the recommendation mechanism; and enhancing cross-cultural identity through empathetic communication and international cooperation. Ultimately, this paper emphasises that the value of TikTok in cultural communication lies not only in enhancing visibility, but also in promoting cross-civilisation understanding and resonance, providing a new reference for the international communication and soft power construction of Chinese culture.

Keywords: TikTok, Chinese traditional culture, algorithmic mechanism, cross-cultural communication, cultural soft power

1. Introduction

In today's world, the ongoing process of globalisation has contributed to the transformation of the cultural communication landscape. The rapid development of digital media technology breaks down geographical boundaries and enables traditional Chinese culture to spread globally. As the crystallisation of the wisdom of the Chinese nation, the dissemination of traditional Chinese culture on the international stage is of great significance in enhancing the country's cultural soft power and

improving its international influence. However, globalisation has also brought about exchanges and collisions between different cultures. In the face of the challenges brought by diversification, how Chinese traditional culture can achieve effective international communication through digital media platforms has become a topic worth exploring. In recent years, with the rise of short-video platforms, TikTok, with its global media advantage, has provided a new way for the international dissemination of Chinese culture.

Since its launch overseas in 2017, TikTok has rapidly accumulated a huge user base worldwide and become an important force in the field of international communication. Its unique communication form and algorithmic recommendation mechanism enable cultural content to be presented to global users in a more vivid and intuitive way. Chinese traditional culture is profound and far-reaching, with rich philosophical, artistic and humanistic values. In this context, TikTok has not only become a vehicle for promoting Chinese traditional culture, but also an important platform for cultural exchange and interaction. Through the form of short videos, elements of traditional Chinese culture, such as food, art, opera and Hanfu, have been able to cross the language and cultural barriers, attracting the attention of a large number of overseas users. Taking TikTok as an example, this paper will analyse the strategies adopted by TikTok in the process of spreading Chinese traditional culture, discuss the opportunities and challenges it faces, and put forward corresponding optimisation suggestions. These results will provide important references for the implementation of the strategy of "going out" of Chinese culture, and help to enhance China's cultural soft power and promote cultural export.

2. The current situation of TikTok's dissemination of traditional Chinese cultural content

2.1. Rich and diverse content

The richness and diversity of content on TikTok is mainly due to user-generated content (UGC), which refers to user-initiated creation, editing, uploading, and sharing of content to Internet platforms in a media socialisation environment [1]. It emphasises that users are not only consumers of online information, but also producers and disseminators. On TikTok, users can take the initiative to generate short video content and post it to the platform, a feature that lowers the threshold of cultural production and enables everyone to become a creator of cultural content [2]. Secondly, in terms of the form of content presentation, TikTok is rich in forms, covering a variety of types such as text, pictures, audio and video. TikTok's short video is a relatively new form of content presentation, which is based on the concept of "short, short, and short". With the characteristics of "short, frequent and fast", this form is better adapted to the fast-paced lifestyle of modern people, and users can obtain rich information in a short time [3]. The short video format can quickly attract audience's attention and lower the threshold of traditional culture dissemination through its intuitive and fragmented presentation. TikTok's ability to attract a large number of users is attributed to its powerful algorithmic recommendation system, in addition to its rich content format and dissemination advantages.

2.2. Powerful algorithmic recommendation system

With the help of algorithms, TikTok's functionality has been significantly improved. Firstly, the algorithm improves TikTok's personalised recommendation function. The algorithm provides users with personalised short video content through accurate analysis of their browsing behaviour and interests, thus greatly improving user experience and reliance on the platform. Specifically, the

algorithm uses advanced machine learning and artificial intelligence technologies to deeply analyse users' behavioural data, including interactive data such as the number of times a video has been viewed, liked, shared and commented on, in order to accurately recommend videos that match users' preferences and help users discover quality content in different fields [4]. In addition, the algorithm also optimises TikTok's topic tagging feature. Topic tagging is also one of the core foundations of TikTok features [5]. The algorithm optimises the recommendation process by assigning descriptive labels to new videos through computerised video content analysis, hashtag mentions, post descriptions, sound effects and embedded text in order to match videos with the interests of the user community. In addition to recommending content that users are known to be interested in, TikTok's algorithms also try to recommend areas that are relevant to users' interests but have not yet been explored [6]. This strategy helps users discover new interests and further enhances their reliance on the platform.

2.3. High user interactivity

TikTok users interact with one another through liking, commenting, sharing, and following to form social networks, and this interactivity not only enhances the connection between users, but also promotes the spread of culture. Firstly, the behaviours of liking, commenting, sharing and following are the basic ways in which users interact on social platforms. Liking is an acknowledgement and appreciation of other people's content, commenting allows for the expression of one's own opinions, feelings or questions, sharing enables the dissemination of content of interest to more people, and following is an active choice to receive the dynamics of a specific user or information source. These behaviours foster direct or indirect connections between users [7]. During such interactions, users are likely to experience emotional resonance when discussing or sharing topics or content of mutual interest. This emotional resonance can enhance the sense of belonging and identity among users and make them feel that they are part of a certain group. For example, in some specific cultural or interest areas, users form specific subcultural groups through interaction, and members reinforce each other's identity through interaction [7]. This sense of identity helps to form social cohesion and bring people together under common cultural values.

3. Problems in TikTok's content promoting traditional Chinese culture

3.1. Single form of content and cultural discount

As an algorithm-driven and visually engaging short video platform, TikTok inherently has entertaining and fragmented communication characteristics, which make the presentation of cultural content highly dependent on visual sensory stimulation. This has resulted in the representation of traditional Chinese culture on TikTok mostly focusing on the display of superficial symbols such as food, clothing, and festivals, lacking the excavation of the deeper cultural logic behind them [8]. For example, many content creators attract eyeballs by dancing in Hanbok. Although this form of expression has the advantage of dissemination, the audience often stays in the superficial visual cognition, and it is difficult to further understand the ceremonial culture, institutional spirit, and historical context embedded in Hanbok. This "shallow culture" form of communication can easily lead to the phenomenon of cultural discounts in cross-cultural contexts - that is, cultural meanings are "shrunk" or "deformed" in the process of communication, which makes it difficult for audiences to further understand the ritual culture, institutional spirit and historical context of Hanfu. This form of "shallow culture" communication can easily lead to the phenomenon of cultural

discounting in cross-cultural contexts - that is, cultural meanings are "shrunk" or "distorted" in the process of communication, and it is difficult for overseas audiences to truly accept or understand these contents due to the lack of cultural background knowledge [9]. Overall, although the visualisation and fast-consumption modes of communication have increased the visibility of culture, they have weakened the depth and explanatory power of culture.

3.2. Lack of cultural content under the algorithmic mechanism

TikTok's algorithmic mechanism also affects the depth of cultural content inadvertently, causing cultural communication to fall into the logic of "flow-orientation". The platform's interest-based recommendation mechanism tends to push popular content over and over again, creating an "information cocoon" [10]. This mechanism makes creators increasingly cater to users' tastes in content design, pursuing visual spectacle and entertainment and neglecting the cultural and educational functions of content. In the online environment with scarce attention, in-depth cultural content is often marginalised due to a lack of immediate appeal; many cultural topics that originally held intellectual value are 'simplified' into easy-to-understand entertainment clips [11]. points out that this trend of creating content that appeals to algorithms and user preferences is pushing the dissemination of traditional culture in the direction of "funification" or even "alienation," resulting in a weakening of the complexity and diversity of culture. In the long run, although this strategy can increase the number of broadcasts and interaction rates in the short term, its communication effect is more limited to the sensory level, and it is difficult to truly promote cross-cultural understanding and respect.

3.3. The dilemma of cultural acceptance in intercultural communication

In addition, in the process of cross-cultural communication, Chinese traditional culture faces the realistic dilemma of insufficient audience acceptance, a problem closely related to the international political context and cultural identity. Despite the fact that most traditional Chinese cultural content is apolitical and universal in itself, in the current context of geopolitical tensions, some overseas audiences often associate the cultural content disseminated on TikTok with national ideologies or political intentions. Some Western media even position TikTok as a tool for China's "soft power export" to the outside world, arguing that its cultural dissemination has the intention of implicit propaganda [12]. Under such a discursive framework, even if the communicator's aim is purely cultural exchange, it is easy to be misunderstood as a political act, and then encountered with questioning, resistance and even boycott. This "cultural trust deficit" seriously affects the effectiveness of traditional Chinese culture in the global context. Once cultural content is incorporated into the context of ideological competition, its own aesthetic value and historical significance are easily ignored, thus weakening the authenticity and openness of cross-cultural communication.

4. TikTok's strategy to promote Chinese traditional culture

4.1. Enriching the form of content and mining cultural connotation

The content of Chinese traditional culture on TikTok mostly focuses on shallow symbols, lacks deep cultural logic excavation, and is prone to the phenomenon of cultural discount. Content creators play a decisive role in increasing cultural connotation and enriching content forms. Creators should dig deeper into the deeper cultural logic behind traditional Chinese culture, such as ritual culture,

institutional spirit and historical context [8], and avoid only staying in the shallow symbol display. For example, a thematic video on Hanbok can be produced, which not only shows the style and wearing effect of Hanbok, but also explains in detail its development and changes in different historical periods, the etiquette norms embedded in it, and its connection with the social system at that time, so as to let the audience have a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of Hanbok culture. At the same time, more novel forms of expression can be explored, such as combining traditional culture with modern life through storytelling, scenario reproduction, cultural experience, etc., so as to enhance the interest and attractiveness of the content. In addition, traditional Chinese culture can be fused with other cultural elements to create more attractive and infectious content, such as combining traditional Chinese music with modern pop music to produce musical works with Chinese characteristics, or integrating traditional Chinese cultural elements into modern cultural products such as animation and games to better match the aesthetics and interests of young people.

4.2. Optimise the algorithmic mechanism to enhance the depth of culture

Due to the role of TikTok's algorithm, cultural content not only lacks depth, but also easily forms an "information cocoon" in the user interest-based recommendation mechanism. Algorithm as a tool to push information, TikTok platform can effectively regulate it. Therefore, TikTok platform should optimise the algorithmic mechanism to avoid over-reliance on user interests and reduce the "information cocoon" effect [10]. It can try to introduce diversified recommendation factors, such as cultural value and educational significance, so that users can have access to more in-depth cultural content, provide more exposure opportunities for high-quality traditional culture videos with cultural and educational significance, and guide users to pay attention to and learn from them. At the same time, the platform can encourage creators to produce works with depth and cultural connotations by setting up specific themes or challenges, such as organising the "Chinese traditional festival culture" theme challenge, which guides creators to create from various perspectives, such as the historical origin, customs and cultural connotations of festivals, so as to enhance the cultural value of the content. In addition, the platform can also invite cultural experts and scholars to conduct online or offline training courses for creators, sharing cultural knowledge and creative skills to help creators improve their cultural literacy and creative ability, so that they can better understand and express the connotations of traditional Chinese culture.

4.3. Addressing the dilemma of intercultural communication and enhancing cultural acceptance

In the face of the "cultural trust deficit" of traditional Chinese culture in cross-cultural communication, content creators, the TikTok platform and the government should work together. Firstly, in cross-cultural communication, creators should not only pay attention to the commonalities between cultures when generating content to find an entry point for cultural exchange, but also respect cultural differences to avoid affecting the communication effect due to cultural conflicts. The commonalities between traditional Chinese culture and overseas culture, such as the recognition of values such as family, harmony and nature, can be explored to trigger emotional resonance. At the same time, the TikTok platform can actively carry out cultural exchange activities with other countries and regions to enhance mutual understanding and trust through cooperation projects, cultural exhibitions, academic exchanges, etc. For example, it can cooperate with short-video platforms or cultural organisations in other countries to co-produce and promote high-quality

content about traditional Chinese culture, so as to eliminate misunderstandings about the dissemination of traditional Chinese culture among overseas audiences. In addition, official institutions can enhance overseas audiences' recognition and trust in traditional Chinese culture and reduce the "cultural trust deficit" [12] through various ways, such as inviting overseas celebrities or cultural experts to participate in traditional Chinese culture communication activities, and using their influence and credibility to enhance the acceptance of traditional Chinese culture by overseas audiences. culture by using their influence and credibility to enhance overseas audiences' acceptance of Chinese traditional culture. At the same time, officials should also strengthen international public opinion guidance, actively deal with various challenges in the international public opinion environment, timely respond to and refute false statements and misunderstandings, and safeguard the good image of the dissemination of Chinese traditional culture.

5. Conclusion

At a time when globalisation and digitalisation are deeply intertwined, cultural communication is not only an important bridge for cross-cultural exchanges, but also a key area of competition for national soft power, and the practice of TikTok, as a digital platform in the context of globalisation, in the dissemination of traditional Chinese culture not only provides us with insights into how new media technology shapes cultural identities, but also accumulates valuable experience in the strategy of "going out" of Chinese culture. It also accumulates valuable experience for China's cultural "going out" strategy. The opportunities and challenges revealed in this study suggest that the international dissemination of traditional Chinese culture should not remain a symbolic display, but should make breakthroughs in the depth of content, dissemination mechanisms and cross-cultural resonance. Only on the basis of respecting differences, emphasising empathy, and strengthening international cooperation can traditional Chinese culture truly transform from "visibility" to "comprehensibility" and "recognition". As a result, this will not only help to strengthen the country's cultural soft power and international discourse, but also promote the mutual appreciation of civilisations and the common prosperity of global cultural diversity on a wider scale.

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