

The Dissemination and Inheritance of Martial Arts Culture in the New Media Era

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Abstract: The dissemination of martial arts culture is essential for its preservation and wider appreciation. Because in the 5000 years history of China, martial arts are an indispensable part of Chinese culture with the advent of the new media era, new avenues for martial arts dissemination have emerged. This research delves into the impact of we-media on martial arts through methods such as literature review and interviews, comparing its influence on martial arts. The study of the influence of self-media on martial arts is of significant research importance, as martial arts need to adapt to the rapidly changing modern era, optimize its methods of dissemination, promote its popularity, and facilitate its international development. As the most commonly used new media by modern mainstream people, short video transmits multi-sensory information in the form of picture, text, sound and image, which has become the most acceptable medium. This way makes martial arts more widely spread.

Keywords: martial arts, we-media dissemination, development, influence

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Rationale

Martial arts are one of China's traditional cultural treasures, reflecting over five thousand years of history and civilization. Throughout the history of martial arts, there have been evident changes in their forms and modes of dissemination. Martial arts possess their unique cultural characteristics and evolve alongside the times, adopting new avenues for propagation. The development of new media has significantly impacted the dissemination of martial arts culture, allowing for the creation of fresh, attractive content that can further enrich martial arts culture. In an era where new media is widely accepted, harnessing its advantages rejuvenates traditional martial arts culture. Short videos, a product of new media, have accelerated the spread of martial arts to the masses, breaking away from traditional methods. China vigorously promotes the popularization of martial arts, and incorporating platforms like TikTok into the dissemination of martial arts aids in public understanding and learning of this ancient discipline.

1.2. Research Background

1.2.1. Primary Modes of Martial Arts Dissemination

In ancient China, martial arts were primarily disseminated through oral tradition, with skills being passed down from one generation to the next. While martial arts thrived in civilian society, regional variations emerged due to geographical constraints, leading to distinctive styles such as Southern Fist and Northern Legs, or Eastern Spear and Western Staff. For a long time, the transmission of martial arts was confined to verbal tradition. However, the emergence of cinema in the 1970s introduced a new mode of dissemination, marking a significant shift in martial arts' development. Cinema, as a new technology and medium, provided a more visual and widespread means of communication, significantly impacting audiences. Iconic films like Bruce Lee's martial arts movies and the release of "Shaolin Temple" in Hong Kong in January 1982 ignited a martial arts cultural phenomenon. These films expanded the reach of Chinese martial arts through the medium of movies [1].

1.2.2. Emergence of New Dissemination Methods

With the development of the internet and the rise of we-media, more martial arts enthusiasts share their expertise through various platforms such as WeChat public accounts, Weibo, TikTok, and Kwai. People use these platforms to express martial arts ideologies, share their experiences, upload tutorials, and explain the distinctive characteristics of various martial arts styles. We-media has provided a platform for martial artists worldwide to connect and has introduced martial arts to those previously unfamiliar with it.

2. Literature Review

In the article "Participatory Media Creation in the Emerging Media Era Facilitates Traditional Cultural Development - A Case Study of Li Ziqi's Works," it is mentioned that audiences are no longer passive consumers but actively participate in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of news and information, resulting in more personalized, grassroots-driven, and autonomous content [2]. In the current era dominated by self-media dissemination, martial arts have also seized the opportunity to promote and disseminate martial arts culture through we-media. The dissemination of traditional martial arts through TikTok short videos is vibrant and promising. "Advantages, Issues, and Development Paths of Traditional Martial Arts Dissemination on TikTok in the New Media Era" acknowledges that traditional martial arts TikTok has unique advantages in terms of content creators, content characteristics, channel distribution, and dissemination motivation [3]. The emergence of new media platform provides a new media form for the dissemination of traditional martial arts culture, broadens the channel for the dissemination of traditional martial arts culture, and plays a very important role. Enter "traditional martial arts" in the search bar of the Douyin app, and people can see that under the topic column, the number of plays of topics related to "traditional martial arts" has reached 11.11 billion times. The number of topics related to traditional martial arts with more than 10 million views is as high as 96. According to the data statistics of the authoritative TikTok data analysis platform Cicada Mother, the number of user accounts related to traditional martial arts is as high as 1,271, including amateur martial arts enthusiasts, professional martial arts coaches and other groups. The largest number of fans is tens of millions, of which 200,000 fans are the majority. The emergence of new media platforms led by TikTok app has undoubtedly driven the spread of traditional martial arts and increased the public's attention to traditional martial arts [4].

3. Research Objectives and Methods

3.1. Research Object, Research Methods, Data Analysis

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of TikTok on the development of martial arts. To this end, this study aims to gather information on the dissemination of martial arts through we-media at home and abroad through a thorough review of relevant literature and books. In addition, the study will utilize Internet big data analysis tools, such as 66Rank and Feigua, specifically for TikTok data analysis. These tools will be used to collect data specifically related to martial arts on the TikTok app. Through such analysis, people can understand the status quo of wushu we-media.

3.2. Interviews

Conducting interviews with influential TikTok accounts and bloggers in the field of martial arts to gain insights into their perspectives on martial arts development in self-media (as shown in Table 1).

Table 1: List of interviewed TikTok account bloggers (Alias).

Name	TikTok Account	Main Focus	Total Likes	Followers
Lingyun Wang	Lingyun	Promote traditional martial arts, make more people understand and love Chinese martial arts	2.0 billion	13.19 million
Coach Liu	WushuHome	Promote Chinese martial arts	721.64 million	4.81 million
Wang Qun	JingTian	Promote Chinese Kung Fu, inherit traditional Chinese martial arts culture	332.61 million	4.02 million
Shi Yanzheng	KungFuKid	Promote Shaolin Kung Fu	1.4 billion	8.16 million
Moyin	MoyinXingLuo	Promote Moyin martial arts	265.77 million	2.83 million
Yue Tianxun	SouWu	Interview with martial arts inheritors	54,000	14,000

4. Research Results and Analysis

4.1. Current State of Martial Arts Dissemination on TikTok

TikTok was launched in September 2016 and has since become a representative platform for self-media short videos. As of April 2023, TikTok users in China exceeded 800 million, with TikTok's U.S. user base exceeding 113.3 million, Indonesia having around 109.9 million users, and Brazil and Mexico having 82 million and 57.5 million users, respectively. After a short video is shared by an influencer or content creator, it can gain significant traction, with increases in reports, views, likes, downloads, and more.

Traditional martial arts have entered the public eye through TikTok, and anyone with a smartphone or computer can record and upload videos. These videos can be optimized using various platform technologies, making them particularly appealing to the public. Anyone can search and access relevant web pages, so that they can always see various martial arts news information with vivid images and text [5]. The dissemination of martial arts in the Internet era has reduced the difficulty of dissemination and greatly improved the efficiency of dissemination. The characteristics of low dissemination cost, strong convenience, and fast timeliness have greatly improved the efficiency of online dissemination of martial arts culture [6]. Also, the Internet has a high degree of openness and information sharing [7]. Many TikTok accounts related to martial arts have gained millions of followers, and their videos have received billions of likes.

For example, "Lingyun" with over 13 million followers and 2 billion likes, effectively uses storytelling and martial arts moves to resonate with the audience, leveraging the fact that many people have limited knowledge of martial arts. Traditional martial arts, which were originally used for combat, now serve as a means of physical fitness and cultural inheritance. With the rising popularity of TikTok globally, martial arts will naturally spread internationally through TikTok and its international counterpart, TikTok, playing a crucial role in promoting Chinese martial arts.

4.2. Promoting Rapid and Widespread Martial Arts Dissemination

MoyinXingLuo, a TikTok account with 2.83 million followers, stated "Self-media allows more people to understand the profound nature of martial arts and brings ordinary people back to the dreams of martial heroes." As the Guinness World Record holder for the fastest draw of a sword, he is known worldwide, and such rapid and widespread dissemination was impossible in the traditional media era. Posting cool and challenging martial arts videos can pique the interest of more viewers. Creating tutorial videos can break down complex martial arts moves, facilitating independent learning for those interested. Shooting lecture-style videos can enhance people's understanding of martial arts, enriching the martial arts knowledge of a broad audience. Furthermore, a single post by a good self-media account can garner millions of views, significantly aiding in the dissemination of both the self-media platform and the video content.

4.2.1. Opening New Avenues for Martial Arts Inheritance

The power of new media extends beyond entertainment to encompass education, knowledge, and culture. As a good platform for resource sharing and dissemination, the Internet has achieved the collision and integration of different branches of dissemination content. The effective combination of the martial arts industry and modern technology provides the public with a rich martial arts culture and learning methods [8]. Martial arts-related short videos on TikTok no longer serve solely as leisure entertainment but also provide a platform for martial arts enthusiasts to connect and learn from one another. For example, "Ge Wu Yuan" with 1.72 million followers on TikTok, is known for his videos on the Tongbei Quan practice, which has gained popularity among martial arts enthusiasts. His comments section has become a platform for martial arts enthusiasts to engage in discussions and seek advice. Even UFC's first Asian champion, Zhang Weili, has used TikTok to connect and learn from martial artists like Chen Kuo. The power of new media connects people worldwide, transcending boundaries of nationality, region, language, and time.

4.2.2. Promoting Diversified Martial Arts Development

As a popular sport, martial arts are shifting their focus from combat and competition to serving a variety of functions, such as health and fitness. Martial arts can now be used in rehabilitation therapy, fashion trends, children's physical fitness programs, and film and television productions. Integrating

martial arts into various aspects of life and work, rather than confining it to its traditional role, ensures the true continuation and promotion of martial arts. Moreover, people should innovate characteristic boxing techniques, disseminate them on the platform, strengthen public awareness, and promote the innovation and dissemination of traditional martial arts culture [9]. Chinese martial arts should firmly seize the development opportunities of new media, actively embrace new media, plan according to the situation, respond to the situation, and follow the trend, creating a multi-level, all-round, multidimensional, and three-dimensional new media dissemination matrix to meet the needs of the development and mission of martial arts cultural dissemination [10].

5. Conclusion

Self-media communication plays a vital role in the swift and extensive spread of martial arts, as it actively contributes to the popularization and exchange of martial arts culture. Moreover, it serves as a catalyst for the preservation and advancement of martial arts, while also fostering their diversified growth, thus paving the way for innovative prospects in the future. Through self-media platforms such as social media, blogs, and online forums, martial arts enthusiasts and practitioners can easily share their knowledge, experiences, and techniques with a global audience. This not only enhances the accessibility and visibility of martial arts but also facilitates cross-cultural interactions and collaborations. Furthermore, self-media communication enables the exploration of new training methods, the introduction of modern technologies, and the fusion of different martial arts styles, leading to the evolution and revitalization of this ancient discipline. Ultimately, self-media communication empowers martial arts to transcend geographical boundaries and cultural barriers, ensuring their continued relevance and growth in the modern world.

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