

Research on the Current Situation and Innovative Development Patterns of Traditional Chinese Culture from the Perspective of Social Media

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Abstract:

With the rapid development of social media, the development of the current situation and the innovative development of traditional Chinese Culture have become a common topic among people in all ages. It is significant to make good use of modern technology, and let more and more people expose themselves to traditional Chinese culture through innovative ways. The research is aimed to study how to empower the innovative development of traditional Chinese culture in the age of social media. Through using research methods such as case analysis and text analysis, it is discovered that social media greatly brings traditional Chinese culture back to life, but it may cause negative impacts, for instance, commercial problems as well. Based on the findings of the study, people should realize that it is crucial to combine new technology, such as short videos and digital products, with the core part of traditional Chinese culture. Thus, more people will be attracted by its historical background and cultural values

Keywords: Social media; traditional Chinese culture; innovative development.

1. Introduction

In the age of social media, a certain amount of people believes that the traditional Chinese cultural may no longer survive, due to the rapid development of new technology and the frequent changes of social media. However, the traditional Chinese culture remains a significant part of historical heritage. The research subject is mainly about the innovative methods of the development of traditional Chinese culture.

This research aims to figure out significant and outstanding ways to fulfill the need of innovative development of traditional Chinese culture by analyzing its importance and difficulties it may encounter. Thus, this research will raise people's awareness of exposing themselves to traditional Chinese culture. Various research methods, such as case analysis and text analysis will also be included in this research.

The structure of the research is as follows. First of all, concepts and definitions of social media, traditional Chinese culture, and cultural innovation will be provided. Then, the current situation and development dilemma

of traditional Chinese culture will be analyzed and discussed. Thirdly, the research will focus on the relationship between social media and traditional Chinese culture. Finally, the challenges of social media in the application of cultural innovation and the suggestions of innovative development will be provided.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Concept and Current Situation of Social Media

The term social media first appeared in the late 20th century in Tokyo, Japan [1]. It is used to define the act of communication between individuals through network and digital devices. Previously, it was seen as a one-way communication, transforming news and information from the authority to the audience. However, at present, it is a platform that allows people to compare notes and share their updates with each other, and it functions as one of the major communication tools in daily life.

One of the most significant features of social media is that it has a tremendous user base. According to statistics

from Kepios, until July 2023, the number of social media users has reached approximately 4.87 billion globally [2]. Moreover, the trend of social media users is growing dramatically and continuously.

The large number of social media users leads to the wide spread of emerging technologies, advertisements, news and opinions from anyone and anywhere, which greatly changes the way people communication methods, information dissemination methods and social patterns. The emergence of social media has progressed the development of commercial activities, education, and social movements.

2.2 The Definition of Traditional Chinese Culture and the Research Scope

Traditional Chinese culture, including traditional literature, festivals, and dramas, originated in ancient times, before Emperor Yan, who is known as one of the ancestors of Chinese people. According to the History of Pre-Qin Period, the traditional Chinese culture can be traced back to Chao, Sui, Xi, and Nong, thus it has a history of 5,000 years, which greatly converged the splendid culture and spirits of Chinese civilization [3].

Besides, traditional Chinese culture deeply reflects the distinguishing features of Chinese history and culture through a long-term development. In other words, it has its outstanding characteristics that make it different from any other cultures in the world. Many of the most precious human thoughts are absorbed from traditional Chinese culture, and are applied to various aspects in modern society, such as politics and economy. Thus, traditional Chinese culture plays a significant role in China, and it is gradually spreading worldwide.

Moreover, the traditional Chinese culture can be seen from three perspectives, Confucianism, Taoism and legalism. These three aspects are the basic frame of traditional Chinese culture, which play a fundamental role in Chinese history.

2.3 The Concept of Cultural Innovation

Cultural innovation is the core part of cultural development. It is undeniable that, with the rapid development of technology and social media, culture and innovation are highly related to each other, and they are inseparable. Without innovation, the valuable thoughts in traditional culture will be eventually neglected, for it may not be in line with the needs of human society development. Equally, innovation will lose its meaning without the base of culture. Thus, it will appear to be hollow and unrealistic.

Cultural innovation is highly based on experience and practice. However, it focuses more on the invention of new ideas and new methods, and it advocates the importance of integrated development. In other words, it is time for people to consider how to make good use of the highly developed technologies, and combine it with cultural development, leading the traditional culture to a brighter future.

3. The Current Situation and the Development Dilemma of Traditional Chinese Culture

3.1 Current Situation

There has been an increasing appeal to revitalize the traditional Chinese culture. Much progress is made to improve the situation of traditional Chinese culture. From the perspective of politics, China has made several policies to enhance the situation. In 2017, the State Council put forward a report about the opinion on implementing the project of inheriting and developing traditional Chinese culture. The report emphasizes the significance of the popularization of traditional Chinese culture, such as the protection of intangible cultural heritage. Besides, the elements of traditional Chinese culture are included in various programs, ceremonies and festivals. The Chinese Poetry Conference, one of the most popular television shows in China, has attracted people all over the world to expose themselves to Chinese poets and poetry via the form of competition, which significantly boosts people's enthusiasm in traditional Chinese literature by engaging people in all ages [4]. Furthermore, the traditional Chinese culture is expressing its beauty to the modern world. According to research done by Lanzhou University, with the advocating of The Belt and Road Initiative, among its members, 65 of these countries have set up the Confucius Institute, reaching a total number of 136 academies, thus having a significant impact on the development of traditional Chinese culture [5].

3.2 Significance of Development

In the early 20th century, scholars such as Lu Xun, a famous Chinese writer, argued that it is no longer necessary to devote themselves to the study of traditional Chinese culture [6]. Instead of focusing on the research of traditional culture, which, in their opinion, is out of date and unreliable. They suggested that people should pay more attention to modern technologies.

Nowadays, however, the rapid development economic glo-

balization not only requires people focus on the development of modern technologies, but most importantly, they need to contribute more to the development of traditional culture. The traditional Chinese culture is a core part of Chinese civilization that greatly boosts people's cultural confidence. Traditional Chinese culture enables people to discover the uniqueness that deeply roots behind. Through learning the 24 solar terms, they get to know more about the ancestors' exquisite exploration and practice of the laws of nature. The Chinese education system requires students to study ancient Chinese through reading the Analects, which delicately explains the concept of benevolence and humanity [7]. These studies are not a waste of time, but they provide a precious opportunity to help people, especially youngsters, expose themselves to some of the best human minds in the development of history. Without having a basic understanding of the fundamental rules of nature and etiquette, people may find it tough to explore further, because the development of modern technology and politics is largely based on what the ancestors have left for later generations. People should pay attention to how to make Chinese traditional culture better adapt to the development of modern society, instead of blindly abandoning it.

3.3 Development Dilemma

Some parts of traditional Chinese culture are at risk of being lost in modern society because of different reasons.

One of the biggest challenges is the absence of inheritance subjects. In other words, only a few experts still master the core skills of traditional Chinese culture. Learning these skills not only require oral instruction, but also practice. However, due their elder ages, they are not able to teach youngsters hand by hand. Without much practice, new generations appear to be less familiar with traditional skills and fail to grasp the true meanings of the traditional culture. What's more, apart from time and patience, many of these traditional skills need to be taught and practised in specific places, where learner can have a better understanding of the complicated concepts and skills through observation and investigation. However, schools and cities may fail to meet the requirements because of the narrow space and a lack of time and investments.

Another problem is that young generations are eventually losing interests in traditional Chinese culture. Schools have developed a wide range of courses to help students have a better understanding of traditional Chinese culture. However, these lessons are set to meet the goals of examinations. Without a thorough explanation of the back-

ground and the values behind, students are required to read and recite the contents on a regular basis. These ineffective ways of learning are doing great harm on learners' confidence and curiosity. Thus, they are more likely to be distracted and anxious, for they find themselves unwilling to acquire the knowledge of traditional Chinese culture.

4. The Analysis of the role of Social Media in the Development of Traditional Chinese Culture

4.1 Effects on Communication Path

With social media, horses and letters are eventually replaced by digital services. People no longer have to write letters and put them into a mailbox, costing a great amount of time. Social media provides plenty of digital resources, such as pictures, websites, and videos to provide information of traditional Chinese culture, rather than simply rely on oral conversations and other descriptions that are vague and insufficient. Since it can transfer messages at a high speed, the spreading scope is largely expanded. Unlike the postal transmission system that can only spread among a specific area in China, the social media brings traditional Chinese culture beyond the boundaries of nation and time. In the past, messages were usually passed on from the official. With social media, however, people are provided with larger platforms to exchange their information and share their thoughts on traditional Chinese culture. For example, professors and craftsmen can share their own knowledge and skills of traditional Chinese culture via various forms, such as short videos, pictures, and blogs. People not only receive information from the official, but also a communicator of knowledge. It is the presence of social media that alters the pattern of one-way communication, and, most importantly, allows information to spread in various communication paths.

4.2 Influences on Communication Effect

The convenience of social media has gained popularity from all over the world. According to research done by CNNIC in China, until December 2023, the amount of internet users had already reached approximately 1 billion people. In other words, compared to 2022, an additional 24.8 million social media users were added [8].

The social media enriches the communication paths, and it also has a great impact on communication effect. Tik-Tok, one of the most popular short video platforms, has attracted millions of people. Li Ziqi, a well-known video blogger, is using Tik-Tok to share the daily life of traditional

rural life, festivals, and food culture in China. By illustrating the process of making traditional Chinese desserts, she has attracted over 45 million fans on social media. The combination of visual resources and oral descriptions greatly stimulates people's interests and love of traditional Chinese culture, saving them from the chaos of modern life. Youngsters find it much easier to accept the concepts and values of their own traditional culture through such eye-catching ways of communication.

In the past, world was separated in isolated areas and regions. People from different countries, especially those living in remote areas, seldom knew each other. They spent plenty of time and money traveling to various countries and build connections between people. Nowadays, however, with the help of social media, it's much easier to get to know strangers or even governors in daily life. Hello Talk, a language-learning application developed for teenagers from all over the world to share their thoughts together, helps more and more foreign people understand the traditions and lifestyles of China. Chinese people, especially students, are willing to teach foreigners about the beauty of Chinese character, the complex system of sentences, the meanings and stories behind those characters that seem unfamiliar to them. With the help of teenagers online, foreign people begin to have a comprehensive understanding of traditional language culture in China. Most importantly, they discover an easier way to accept it, and are positive to gain more. They not only acquire knowledge of grammar and characters, but also a culture that deeply roots behind. The power of social media changes the way foreigners view China, and helps traditional Chinese culture go worldwide.

What's more, social media is also forming people's value system. The social media plays a significant role in shaping people's opinions, especially moral concepts such as kindness and sharing, which are an important part of traditional Chinese culture. Some of the innovative ways of spreading traditional Chinese culture are widely reported by journalists. With the promotion of social media, people are easier and quicker to be affected by other ideas and behaviors.

4.3 Case Analysis: The Forbidden City

The Forbidden City, a group of ancient palaces, is located in the centre of axis in Beijing. It was used as a living place provided for the emperors in Ming and Qing dynasty. Therefore, it has a history of over 600 years. Nowadays, it is one of the most famous attractions among China, attracting countless visitors all around the world.

The Forbidden City has made a good use of the wave of social media. Wang Xudong, the director of the Palace Museum, believes that the cultural innovation of the Forbidden City plays a significant role at present, for it brings the ancient culture back to life by using a much more novel and acceptable method [9]. The museum has innovated a wide range of souvenirs in order to attract more people to visit the famous attraction. For instance, one of the most well-known achievements is its social websites. The official has created a wide range of social accounts on Weibo, Tik-Tok and WeChat, posting recent updates of the Forbidden City. In this way, people are allowed to make comments and compare notes with each other. Moreover, on its official website, online exhibitions and a great number of activities are held. By using a combination of motion sensing interaction, 3D modeling and virtual reality, people can visit the Forbidden City online. The Panoramic Palace Museum restores the view of the Forbidden City, providing an immersive experience for all ages. The website can be translated to various languages, such as English, Japanese, and Spanish. Therefore, it not only provides a digital service for Chinese people, but also visitors from all over the world. In this way, people from different backgrounds will find it easier to discover the beauty of traditional Chinese culture via the access of social media.

5. Challenges of Social Media in the Application of Cultural Innovation

5.1 The Problem of Over-marketing

Proper marketing strategies promote the development of cultural innovation, for it increases the sales of the products and earns a good reputation. Social media has brought great convenience to the application of cultural innovation and traditional Chinese culture.

What's the difference between marketing and over-marketing? An outstanding marketing plan should not only consider profits, but also focus on long term development, such as the rights of consumers and the sustainability of the brand. By contrast, over-marketing simply relies on advertising and the competition of prices, and it is usually temporary and one-sided. Consumers may gradually lose their trust toward the brand. In this way, the sales will be much lower than expected, and a great number of resources will be wasted, causing great loss of the business.

If the problem of over-marketing is not managed properly, the promotion may fail to meet its purpose. Cultural innovation is aimed to draw interests to traditional Chinese culture and its values behind. Taking advantages of social

media, some businesses gradually put profits in the first place. While making a tremendous amount of money by collecting likes and compliments on social media, they eventually overlook their original purpose. Thus, cultural innovation has become an useful tool to gain profits. The Palace Museum cooperated with Taobao, one of the largest online shopping platforms, and sold cosmetics. The products were combined with elements of traditional Chinese culture and was extremely popular at that time. However, the products were reported to have a poor quality, some of which were unable to use, leading to unsatisfying feedback. The brand was so eager to meet the needs of public that they focused too much on innovation and marketing, but the product quality was neglected. These poorly manufactured products don't correspond with the value system of traditional Chinese culture, and, most importantly, they fail to meet one of the most significant goals---to draw people's interests in traditional culture.

5.2 The Influence of the Wide Dissemination of Traditional Chinese Culture

The wide spread of traditional Chinese culture has undoubtedly promoted the development of its cultural spirits and value system. It enhances people's sense of national identity and encourages people from various ethnic groups to have a basic view of Chinese history and culture. Traditional Chinese culture is considered as something precious and educative to a large extent, rather than being labeled as something useless or old-fashioned.

However, the wide dissemination of traditional Chinese culture may give rise to various challenges as well. One of the most concerning problems is the misinterpretation of the concepts included in traditional culture. Deng Ruren, a Chinese researcher, discovered that the famous saying that goes "never travel far when parents are around" is greatly misunderstood by youngsters [10]. They see it as an excuse of staying at home without doing anything practical and meaningful. Such phenomena may lead to a false impression of traditional Chinese culture, and this will be no good for the further developing of traditional culture. Moreover, some of these misinterpretations are even used as a marketing tool such as advertisements, for they may be eye-catching and correspond to the name or concept of certain products.

It is necessary for people to realize that the wide spread of traditional Chinese culture and its innovation should be largely based on its accuracy, rather than people's own imagination or comprehension. Moreover, a successful and effective cultural innovation is most likely to be a

combination of tradition and modernity. It is crucial to find a balance between cultural values and commercial activities.

6. Suggestions of Innovative Development of Traditional Chinese Culture Based on Social Media

6.1 Laws and Regulation

A wide range of laws should be set not only to further restrict over-marketing, but they should also play an incentive role. For instance, social media users who actively publish videos or articles that promotes the innovative development of traditional Chinese culture should be encouraged. Additionally, government should raise funds to relevant innovative research projects, in order to let researchers and scholars better focus on their projects. Moreover, to better guarantee the quality of the innovative development, the government should monitor the progress at particular times during the year. This may include the reflection of flaws that were revealed in previous research, or contributing ideas collected from the public.

6.2 Education

It is evident that current methods of teaching traditional Chinese culture should be adjusted. Apart from aiming at a higher academic performance, teachers may have to focus more on motivations. Rather than pouring knowledge into students' mind, teachers and schools may design curriculum that includes more practice. For instance, they can encourage students to post v-logs on social media about making moon cakes together during Mid-Autumn Festival and combine it with the explanations of theories and tales. In this way, students are more likely to find traditional Chinese culture appealing, and learn it by heart, rather than being forced by others. Besides, the love of traditional Chinese culture is also widely spread through social media.

The education of traditional Chinese culture do not have to focus only on students. People of all ages should be included as well. Similar methods could be applied to communities, which will not only strengthen the relationship between neighbors, but also help people have a better understanding of Chinese traditions and its history behind. Most importantly, the whole process is relaxing and fascinating.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the traditional Chinese culture is a precious

part of human mind. The development of social media is double-edged when it comes to the development of traditional Chinese culture. It provides people with more innovative thoughts and allows people all over the world to have a basic look at Chinese culture.

The power of social media is undoubtedly strong. If not being restricted properly, the communication effects can be less satisfying, bringing up various problems such as hypes and over-marketing.

Moreover, this research still has its limitations. For instance, the method of case analysis may give rise to the problem of deviation. Besides, some parts of the research, such as the communication effects, may appear to be general, due to the lack of certain statistics.

Future research should focus more on inventing innovative methods to develop traditional Chinese culture using social media, especially when it comes to international communication. With joint efforts, a bright future of traditional Chinese culture will be around the corner.

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