

Exploring the Influence of Social Media on the Communication of Chinese Folk Culture

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Abstract:

The Chinese Folk Culture contains excellent inventions and traditional habits of ancient China, it needs to be transmitted to young people to remember the history. Nowadays the previous media has switched to the internet and social media. Researching this new type of communication method can explore the new possibility of inheriting Chinese Folk Culture. The article is based on 2 research methods which are literature review and case study, the research will analyze the current literature on Folk culture and social media to find proof of the switching for communication. The case study will pick two specific cases and compare the data and quality. The research found that different social media platforms have different transmitting characteristics. Short video platforms can spread in a wide range but limited contents of culture. Long video platforms like Bilibili are more focused on the details of the Folk Culture. Social media can attract part of young people but still have the shortcoming of a shallow spread.

Keywords: Social media; folk culture; China communication.

1. Introduction

The article is based on researching the influence of social media on the communication of Chinese Folk Culture. As the folk culture needs to be transmitted to people, social media is gradually becoming the main platform that has the element relating to the folk culture, which is transferred from the traditional media. According to this site, the article can explore the spread potential and the future of Chinese Folk Culture, can good culture be known by young people in this way? Social media have the advantages like fast spread speed and range, by publishing large numbers of videos to gain attention rate. The research will specially research the information of social media and traditional folk culture and explore the data details to prove the communication strength.

To analyze the general research situation of media and folk culture, the article uses a literature review to find the progress of current research and find their differences and the same point.

The article also uses a case study that picks a special case of the communication of folk culture. The whole study is based on two cases, comparing their data and characteristics, and their communication tendency.

The research aims to get the general situation of communication of folk culture. Do social media promote the spread of folk culture, what type of folk culture is much

more popular in social media, and what is the trend of the form to transmit the folk culture? The research will also explore if the Folk Culture focuses on the popular element or quality, to justify what is effective communication.

2. Background

For Chinese Folk customs, the general definition is about the research of Chinese ancient society and traditional culture, which has a positive impact on people [1]. In addition, Folk customs also refer to the living culture created, inherited, enjoyed, and inherited by the broad masses of people in a country or a nation. The classification system of folk customs is divided into folk phenomena according to material folk customs, society (organization, festival ceremony, life ritual), folk customs, and spirit (belief, science, language, literature, art, entertainment, and folklore) [2]. As Modern media enter People's Daily life, the traditional way of folk customs inheritance gradually disappears, new inheritance media have replaced the traditional inheritance mode, leading to the development of folk customs towards the direction of mainstream culture and mass culture. When film and TV media preserve and spread folk culture, they break the time and space restrictions of traditional inheritance and have the characteristics of universality and freedom.

Although this method can enable people to understand the information about the national traditional culture, but

most of them lack the life experience of folk customs and only stay at the level of simulated experience browsing. This transmission is only visual which can also be said to be superficial [3]. For the social media of the transmission for Chinese Folk customs, there are several main platforms like TikTok, and Bilibili, as one of the most popular communication media, short video is released and broadcast through mobile phone terminals. At the same time, because of its advantages of fast transmission speed and low cost, people favor it. Some videos relating to folk culture are successful and attract people to watch. For example, Rural people in Chongqing “develop business lines through” Kuai Shou “and” Watermelon Video “and have gained a wide range of users and more abundant market resources. Some high-quality users present rich rural life and folk culture content to the public through the above platform, which can not only enable the platform to gain many users but also provide new opportunities for the development of rural people and villagers [4].

It is an important way to spread folk culture for rural short video users to shoot simply with TikTok and release music to reproduce their daily rural activities. Rural short videos have become an alternative “diary” in the new media era. In addition, the social function of TikTok pushes the daily display of rural areas to a larger network society [5]. It has such an enormous potential to develop and meaningful to search its value for transmitting Folk Culture.

3. Literature Review

For the current development of Folk Culture, Zhao mentioned that the 21st century is a mature period of folk culture, it has made remarkable achievements in theoretical research and social contributions. Intangible cultural heritage protection and other protection projects provide excellent development opportunities for the study of folk culture [6]. With the promotion of network information technology, Bai thought that new media convergence and communication have gradually entered the public’s vision. The different value orientations of the audiences bring the folk culture to the breakthrough of the innovation and development of the new media [7]. Especially in Chinese villages the use of new media is distributed in a big region which effectively transmits the Folk Culture. According to this way Dong mentioned that the dissemination of rural folk culture can enhance the vitality of rural folk culture, protect the diversity and integrity of Chinese traditional culture, realize the development of folk culture by optimizing the communication strategy of folk culture, and also promote the development of rural tourism [8].

There are some sensible reasons that new media can help transmit Folk Culture, According to Wang’s research, new

media increases the transition range of folk culture, so that folk culture is understood by more people; Second, new media greatly enhances the communication effect of folk culture, and has a great impact on the inheritance, education and popularization of folk culture; more importantly, new media communication enriches the content expression of folk culture inheritance, so that the presentation mode of folk culture is no longer single [9].

Among these new media, short media became a very popular transmission method for Folk Culture, In Zhang’s research, he found that the mainstream interface setting of short video is very simple, and the operation of shooting, editing, and uploading has become easy to understand and fast, and the interactive forms are also rich, these characteristics have become an important basis for the rise and development of short video [10]. Huang also explains that Traditional folk singing and dancing performances are rooted in special regional space, including scene layout and musical effect, which all have unique artistic value and charm and are difficult to present with spoken and written descriptions. Video shooting can not only record the overall picture of cultural activities for the first time but also turn the fleeting precious fragments through the whole side [11]. But there is also a problem that the communication of traditional culture is a top-down system. In the process of new media communication, the role of identity and culture cannot be strengthened. Under this communication condition, the demand is more entertaining, which is also the reason for the emergence of “fast food culture” [12].

Mong mentioned that the lack of supervision of some short video platforms has created some cultural short video videos and even shouted to attract attention. Such low-quality works cannot promote local culture but will hurt the spread of folk culture [13]. There is still a big space for culture transmission to be more systemically and effective.

4. Case Study

The whole case study will be divided into two parts, the first is about the spring festival folk culture transmission in TikTok, and the second is about the research for Craftsman culture in Bilibili.

4.1 TikTok: Spring Festival Culture

Numbers can reflect part of the strength of the transmission. For a video which have more than 1 million likes number, there are only 3 videos from 2024 February to August., for videos with more than 0,5 million likes numbers there are 17 videos on the platform, which indicates that the attention rate of folk culture videos is very high, and numbers of the videos is limited.

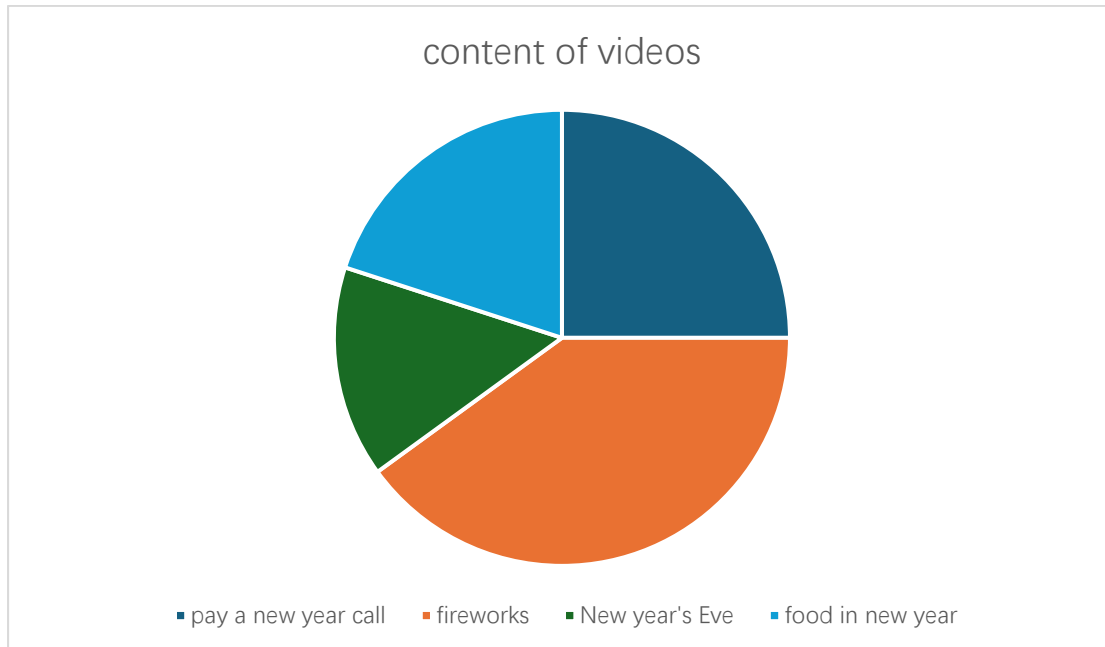


Fig. 1 Content of videos

For the content of videos of Chinese spring festival folk culture, the highest attention rate of video distribution is above. From Figure 1, the fireworks content occupies more than 70 percent, which is the most popular element of the spring festival. And then the story of paying for a new year call accounts for 25%, and videos of New Year's Eve account for 15%, like how people combine to wait for a new year. From this point, the most popular is the interesting activity like fireworks or dining.

For types of the video, there are some types below, short films, about some summary of their own New Year life, showing their traditional activities in the New Year life, setting off firecrackers, and eating delicious food. Mixed clip: use network Material about the Spring Festival made into a propaganda video, play a role in celebration and warming up. And Memories to the video: copywriting recalls the past Spring Festival happened, traditional culture. Typical case one has a video length: length: 5 seconds, and its title is The Spring Festival Memory of 2013. The content shows the folk activity of setting off firecrackers during the Spring Festival. The audiences comment that Netizens tell their stories of the Spring Festival, miss the atmosphere of the past, feel the reduction of the current Spring Festival folk activities, and the feelings of missing home.

For the typical case two videos, have a length of 15 seconds, its Title is: Time to go home, New Year is happy time. The content shows that the author met different relatives when the New Year and the original changes. For the Comment that Netizens talk about their own New Year experience and fun and empathize with the author. The

typical case 3, its video length is 10 seconds.

Its title is: New Year, the sky balloons made me feel shocked. The content shows the New Year's Eve activities in Shijiazhuang City, which is very grand and formal. Comments: Netizens expressed their desire for the Spring Festival, and showed their stories about their New Year's Eve activities.

Representative case: Geng (BiliBili) Makes strange inventions, innovates, and inherits the spirit of craftsmanship.

As a video blogger, Geng's video is extremely popular. He has 7.984 million followers on BiliBili and 55.346 million likes, which is a veritable top-stream blogger. As for Geng's video content, he does not inherit a simple craftsman culture. His invention is innovative and combines traditional technology with the interests of modern people, which not only attracts attention and traffic but also restores people's interest in the folk culture of handmade production.

Production characteristics of Geng's products: after determining a topic, it will add additional content besides the topic, so that the finished products will not only meet the initial needs but also have attached functions to increase the sense of surprise.

The article selects the three videos with the highest broadcast volume Geng to analyze the detailed content and creativity, as well as the audience's evaluation and love of the videos, and also pick the first 50 comments on video distribution.

The first one is the homemade water fight motorcycle, the video received 1.234,000 likes, 164,000 likes, 76,000 retweets, and 17.11 million views. Its Video length is 15

minutes 45 seconds.

Geng made a motorcycle, but added a water gun and water spray function, making the motorcycle become a large

toy. The design of the mecha makes the whole shape very cool, and the audience thinks that this is a cool and practical invention of Geng.

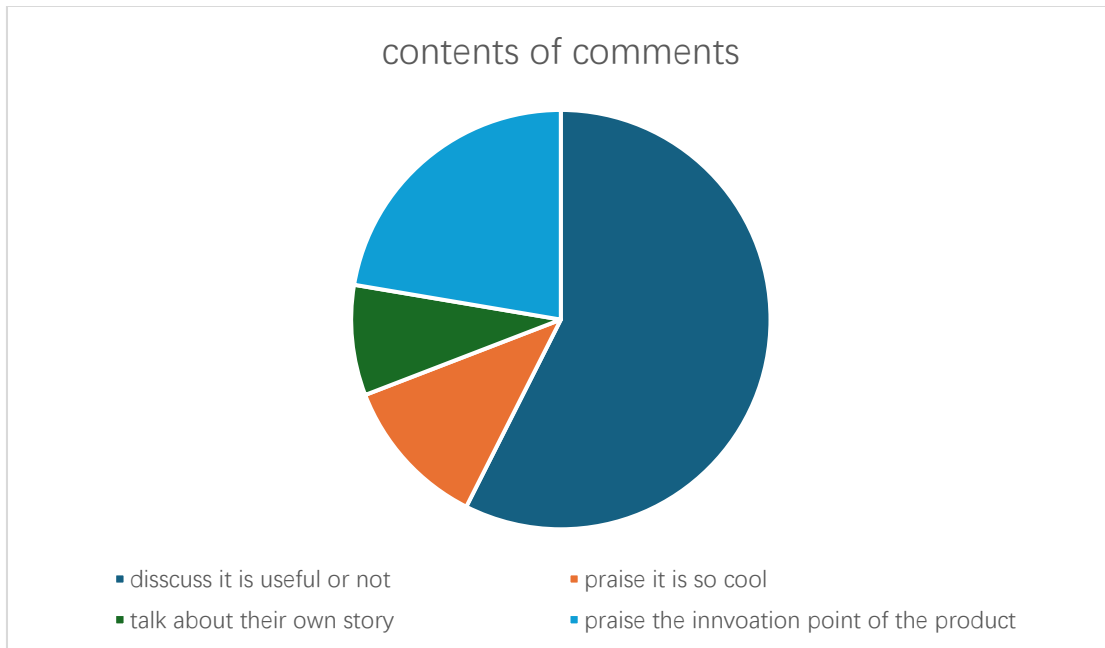


Fig. 2 Contents of comments

For the contents of comments, the discussion of whether it is useful or not accounts for a big part (Fig. 2). In Geng's videos, people always talk about why he wants to invent products that seem useless. And the second highest part is the innovation point, and comments are related to people's own experiences. Sometimes Geng's invention can stimulate people's memory.

The second typical video is a handstand shampoo machine. It has Likes: 747,000, collection: 126,000, forward:

292,000, and playback: 14.504 million. Its Video length is 3 minutes 19 seconds. For innovation point analysis, the handstand shampoo machine, people sitting on the machine is fixed, the whole person vertically down the hair immersed in the water tank to wash the hair, such a way of shampoo is very unusual, anti-human, such an invention was nicknamed as the netizen, Geng also won the nickname of the torture producer. He has attracted great attention for his strange ideas.

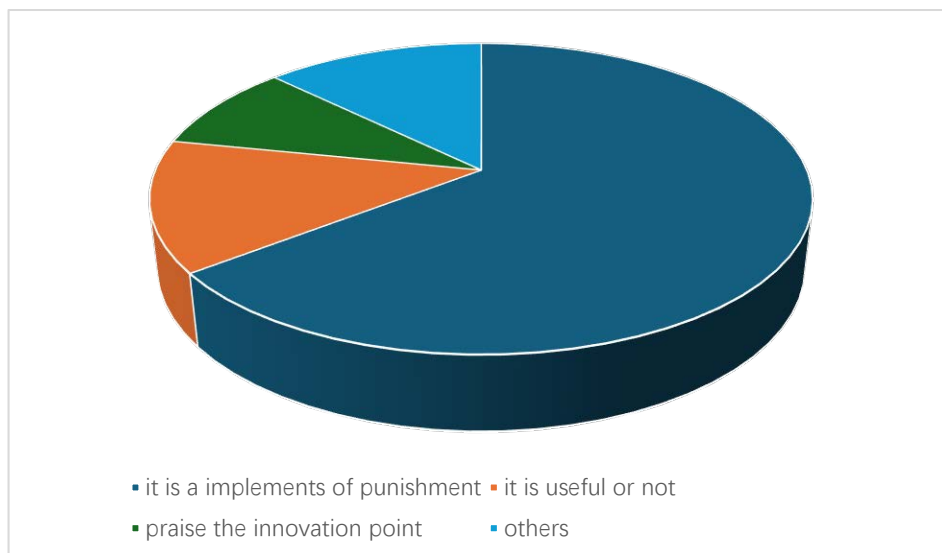


Fig. 3 Contents of comments

Different from the first case, this time the invention is too specific so there are many people think it is an implement of punishment. From Figure 3, can find this part accounts for more than 70 percent. Twenty percent of people discuss whether it is useful or not. And 15 percent of people think it still has a great innovation.

The third case is the piano roast string car. This video has

Likes: 1.169 million, collection: 194,000, and forward: 250,000., its video length is 11 minutes 13 seconds. For Innovation analysis, this is Geng's most romantic invention. A piano car can play the piano while baking a kebab, which is a combination of romance and rural life. The audience all think this is remarkably interesting, it is another bold attempt by Geng, and achieved immense success.

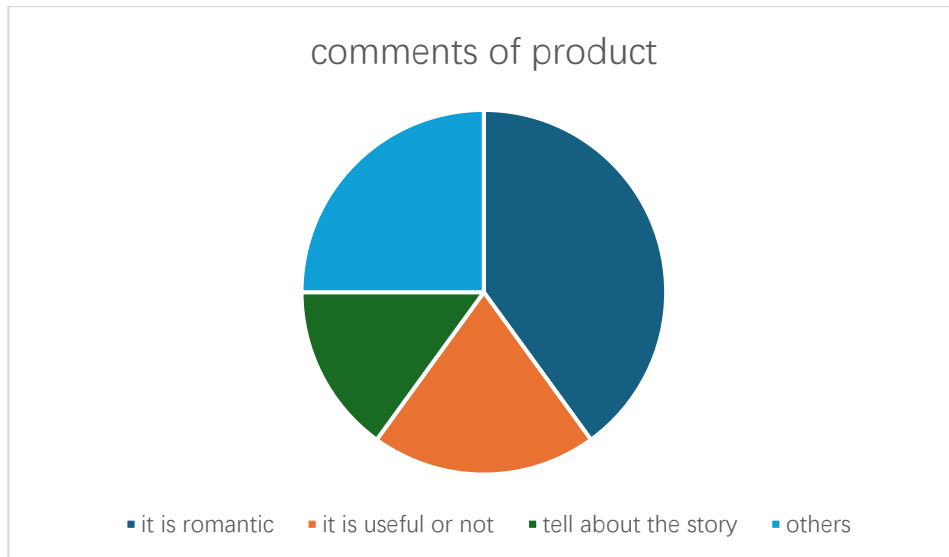


Fig. 4 Comments on product

This video is the most successful video of Geng. From Figure 4, 40 percent of people think it is so romantic, and the invention is awesome. There is still a fixed number of people who discuss whether the invention is useful or not. And 20 percent of people start to tell their own stories in their comments.

5. Discussion

Comparing the two platforms the length of the video is different from Geng's three videos in that its length is an average of 10 minutes, but for TikTok, its video length tends to be less than 1 minute.

The long videos in Bilibili can show more content in detail, for example, Geng's video has the entire process of making a product. The short videos in TikTok combine the most popular elements that relate to the Folk Culture, it is closer to giving audiences a topic and letting them express. In a short conclusion the characteristic of TikTok is that it can transmit a considerable number of videos, not all videos can have a good attention rate but cover an extensive range of transmitting. The video on TikTok is related to the hot topics of Spring Festival elements and relies on the comment area for cultural communication discussion. The dissemination content is simple, while video like Geng on Bilibili completely shows a specific traditional culture, which also gets more attention in the

data, which can spread more information about folk culture.

From the comments of people on social media, the Bilibili has more types of comments that different people have different opinions of the Folk Culture, is it close to life or does it contain some elements of interest? From the case of Geng it proves a good video will reflect people's emotion and their memories of daily life, a lot of people tell about their own stories in the comments.

6. Conclusion

The result of the research is that the Chinese Folk Culture is now facing the problem of transfer the way of traditional communication to new media like digital and social media. In social media the effect of attention rate for Folk Culture is high, the content of videos in social media tends to perform the main and popular elements of Folk Culture, and effectively gain the response from people. Comparing different social media platforms short video platforms like TikTok can gain more attention rate. Long video platforms like Bilibili can deeply transmit more details of Folk Culture to people, which is more effective.

Now videos containing Folk Culture still have the problem of a single content, they should have more creative content like telling a story or talking about the history of this culture, according to the research in Geng's video, the

quality of video is a crucial factor to gain attention rate. This article covers the specific section of digital media and connects it with the communication of Folk Culture. For future research, the experts should more focus on the effective communication of Folk Culture and whether there is any solution to improve the quality of videos on social media to let young people wonder more about traditional culture.

This articles only focus on researching two big social media and picking specific cases, for future research, it is better to cover more details and gain a more academic conclusion. Chinese Folk Culture still has time to spread and promote better.

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