

Research on Hanfu Culture from the Perspective of Communication Sociology

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Abstract: From the perspective of communication sociology, Hanfu culture is not only a revival of clothing culture but also a product of national cultural identity and social group interaction. It carries profound historical heritage and cultural connotations and influences the cognition and behavior of social groups through specific communication channels and methods. With the changes of the times, Hanfu culture faces many challenges and opportunities in the process of communication. This paper aims to deeply explore the current situation, dilemmas, and future development paths of Hanfu culture communication from the perspective of communication sociology, hoping to provide useful references for promoting the healthy communication and sustainable development of Hanfu culture.

Keywords: Communication sociology; Hanfu culture; Communication channels

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1. Introduction

Against the dual background of globalization and the revival of local culture, Hanfu culture, as an important part of Chinese traditional culture, has gradually come into the public's view in recent years and attracted widespread social attention. Hanfu, this kind of clothing that carries thousands of years of history and cultural traditions, not only reflects the aesthetic pursuit and craftsmanship level of ancient China but also has become a cultural bridge connecting the past and the present and communicating at home and abroad. Communication sociology, as an important perspective for studying cultural communication phenomena, provides people with powerful theoretical tools to understand the communication mechanism, influencing factors, and social significance of Hanfu culture^[1]. The communication of Hanfu culture has not been smooth sailing. It faces problems such as limited popularity, excessive commercialization, and homogeneous communication content, which to some extent restrict the healthy communication and sustainable development of Hanfu culture. Therefore, it is of great significance to deeply analyze the current situation, dilemmas, and future development paths of Hanfu culture communication from the perspective of communication sociology for promoting the inheritance and development of Hanfu culture.

2. Current situation of Hanfu culture communication

2.1. Characteristics of Hanfu enthusiasts, “Tongpao”

The term “Tongpao” comes from “The Book of Songs”: “How can it be said that there is no clothes? I will share my robe with you.” The original sentence refers to the situation where soldiers unite as one to fight against the enemy. In modern times, this term has been given a new meaning by Hanfu enthusiasts and has become their common name^[2]. Hanfu enthusiasts call themselves “Tongpao”, which implies that they all love, inherit, and are committed to passing on this ancient and beautiful culture. They show their deep affection and firm belief in Hanfu culture by wearing Hanfu, participating in Hanfu-related activities, and communicating about Hanfu culture. At the same time, “Tongpao” actively promotes Hanfu culture, enabling more people to understand and recognize Hanfu, thus further promoting the communication and development of Hanfu culture.

According to the “2021 Research Report on the Current Situation of China’s Hanfu Industry and Consumer Behavior” released by iiMedia Research, female users account for 64.8% of Hanfu consumers. Most of them have a bachelor’s degree or above, and their age mainly ranges from 19 to 35 years old. More than 80% of consumers have a monthly disposable income of over 5,000 yuan, which provides a broader social foundation and consumer group for the communication of Hanfu culture^[3].

2.2. Communication channels of Hanfu culture

2.2.1. Online communication channels

In the digital age, online communication channels have become an important front for the communication of Hanfu culture. Various social media platforms such as Weibo, Douyin, and Bilibili provide a broad stage for the display and promotion of Hanfu culture. Hanfu enthusiasts attract the attention and love of a large number of fans by posting content such as Hanfu outfits, production tutorials, and activity records on these platforms^[4]. Some professional Hanfu culture websites and forums have also become important places for Hanfu enthusiasts to exchange experiences and share resources. These online communication channels not only expand the influence of Hanfu culture but also bring Hanfu culture closer to the lives of young people, stimulating more young people’s interest and love for Hanfu culture. With the rise of e-commerce platforms, the online sales of Hanfu have also become increasingly popular, further promoting the communication and development of Hanfu culture.

2.2.2. Offline communication channels

Offline communication channels also play an indispensable role in the promotion of Hanfu culture. Various Hanfu cultural activities and exhibitions provide platforms for face-to-face communication and display for Hanfu enthusiasts. From Hanfu cultural festivals and Hanfu gatherings to various Hanfu-themed exhibitions, these activities not only allow Hanfu enthusiasts to wear their favorite Hanfu and show its beauty but also help them deepen their understanding and recognition of Hanfu culture through on-site interaction and communication^[5]. For example, in some non-commercial activities, including Hanfu culture lectures and Hanfu-making workshops, participants can experience the production process of Hanfu firsthand and feel the charm of Hanfu culture. In addition, with the revival of Hanfu culture, more and more merchants and scenic spots have begun to incorporate Hanfu elements, holding Hanfu-themed activities and experience projects, attracting the participation and attention of a large number of tourists^[6]. The rich and diverse offline communication activities not only enrich the forms of Hanfu culture communication but also enable more people to experience and feel the unique charm of Hanfu culture firsthand, further promoting the popularization and development of Hanfu culture.

3. Dilemmas in Hanfu culture communication

3.1. A long and arduous road to popularization

In the Weibo topic “#Should Hanfu Be Popularized#”, data shows that more than 60% of netizens believe that Hanfu should be popularized. They think that as an important part of Chinese traditional culture, the popularization of Hanfu helps to enhance national pride and cultural identity. However, nearly 40% of netizens have reservations. They believe that the popularization of Hanfu faces many challenges, such as inconvenience in wearing, high prices, and low social awareness. These views reflect the complex social environment and audience differences that Hanfu culture faces during the popularization process ^[7]. In addition, the popularization of Hanfu culture is also affected by many factors, such as region, age, and gender. People in different regions, age groups, and genders have different levels of awareness and acceptance of Hanfu culture, which also poses a great challenge to the popularization of Hanfu culture. Therefore, how to innovate the communication methods of Hanfu culture based on respecting traditional culture and improving social awareness and audience participation has become an urgent problem to be solved in the communication and development of Hanfu culture.

3.2. Commercialization: A double-edged sword

On the one hand, commercialization has accelerated the communication of Hanfu culture. Through commercial operations, Hanfu culture can be spread among a wider audience, enabling more people to understand and come into contact with Hanfu. Commercial Hanfu products, such as Hanfu clothing, accessories, and peripheral products, not only meet the needs of Hanfu enthusiasts but also attract the attention of more ordinary consumers. At the same time, commercial Hanfu culture activities, such as Hanfu shows and Hanfu cultural festivals, provide more platforms for the display and promotion of Hanfu culture, making Hanfu culture more deeply rooted in people’s hearts. On the other hand, due to the booming development of Hanfu culture and the surge in the number of Hanfu enthusiasts, more and more merchants have entered the Hanfu field, trying to profit from it. However, the excessive intervention of commercialization may also have a negative impact on Hanfu culture. Some merchants, due to their lack of knowledge about Hanfu, launch many Hanfu products with incorrect shapes and shoddy designs, which not only damages the image of Hanfu culture but also misleads consumers’ understanding of Hanfu culture ^[8]. In addition, excessive commercialization may also lead to the homogenization of Hanfu culture and excessive consumption, making Hanfu culture lose its original unique charm and cultural connotations. Therefore, in the process of Hanfu culture commercialization, how to balance the relationship between commercial interests and cultural inheritance and avoid the excessive commercialization and vulgarization of Hanfu culture is a problem that needs to be paid attention to in the communication and development of Hanfu culture.

3.3. Homogeneous and low-quality communication content

In the “Internet +” era, the communication of Hanfu culture has shown a blowout-style growth trend, but a series of problems, such as the homogenization of communication content and low quality, have gradually emerged. On major social media platforms, although the content related to Hanfu culture is dazzling, it is not difficult to find that many contents are imitative and lack innovation. Some accounts blindly follow the trend to attract traffic, and the content they release often lacks depth and thought, only staying on the surface-form display, which is difficult to truly touch people’s hearts ^[9]. In addition, some content producers do not have a deep understanding of Hanfu culture, resulting in misleading information during the communication process and even distorting the essence of Hanfu culture. These homogeneous and low-quality contents not only cannot effectively promote the

communication of Hanfu culture but may also bring confusion and misunderstandings to the audience and, to some extent, hinder the healthy development of Hanfu culture.

4. Communication paths of Hanfu culture from the perspective of communication sociology

4.1. Strengthening cultural identity and building a Hanfu culture community

From the perspective of communication sociology, the communication path of Hanfu culture should focus on strengthening cultural identity and building a Hanfu culture community. Therefore, the communication of Hanfu culture should not only focus on the display and promotion of the clothing itself but also deeply explore the historical connotations, aesthetic values, and social significance contained in Hanfu culture, guiding the audience to form a correct understanding and profound comprehension of Hanfu culture. To this end, activities such as Hanfu culture lectures and seminars can be held, inviting experts, scholars, and Hanfu enthusiasts to jointly explore the essence of Hanfu culture and the path of its inheritance, enhancing the audience's sense of identity and belonging to Hanfu culture^[10]. On this basis, modern communication means such as social media and online platforms should also be utilized to expand the influence of Hanfu culture, enabling more people to understand and come into contact with this unique cultural phenomenon. In addition, the communication of Hanfu culture should also pay attention to its combination with traditional festivals and cultural activities so that Hanfu culture can be reflected and applied in real life, further deepening people's understanding and recognition of Hanfu culture.

4.2. Strengthening community building and promoting the integration and interaction between online and offline

Strengthening community building is a crucial part of building a Hanfu culture community. To this end, Hanfu culture communities can be established to connect Hanfu enthusiasts closely, forming a warm and harmonious family. In this family, people can freely share their Hanfu outfits, production experiences, and activity feelings, learn from each other, inspire each other, and make progress together^[11]. The community can also become an important platform for organizing offline activities. By holding Hanfu cultural festivals, Hanfu gatherings, and other activities, people have the opportunity to communicate and display face-to-face, deepening mutual understanding and friendship. The integration and interaction between online and offline not only enrich the forms of Hanfu culture communication but also allow the audience to experience and feel the unique charm of Hanfu culture more deeply, further enhancing the audience's sense of identity and belonging to Hanfu culture.

4.3. Making full use of modern scientific and technological means to innovate the communication methods of Hanfu culture

In the digital age, the communication of Hanfu culture can also fully utilize modern scientific and technological means to give wings to the communication of Hanfu culture. For example, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies can be used to create immersive Hanfu culture experience spaces. Users can wear VR devices to experience the prosperity of ancient palaces and the beauty of Hanfu as if they were on the scene; or through AR technology, virtual Hanfu elements can be superimposed in reality, allowing users to experience the wonderful feeling of traveling through time and space^[12]. Such innovative communication methods can not only attract the interest of young people but also present Hanfu culture to the public in a more vivid and intuitive form. In addition, artificial intelligence technology can be used to develop intelligent Hanfu-recommendation systems.

By analyzing information such as users' preferences and body characteristics, the system can customize the most suitable Hanfu styles and matching suggestions for users ^[13]. The personalized service can not only improve the user's shopping experience but also help users better understand and choose Hanfu suitable for them, thus further promoting the communication and development of Hanfu culture.

4.4. Developing Hanfu culture communication platforms based on big data analysis

To further promote the communication of Hanfu culture, big-data technology can be used to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of Hanfu culture communication. By collecting and analyzing relevant data in the process of Hanfu culture communication, such as the discussion heat on social media, user preferences, and activity participation, the author can more accurately grasp the trends and patterns of Hanfu culture communication and provide a scientific basis for formulating effective communication strategies ^[14]. On this basis, a platform specifically for Hanfu culture communication can be developed based on the results of big-data analysis. This platform can integrate various Hanfu culture resources, including the historical background, production techniques, and wearing skills of Hanfu, providing users with one-stop learning and experience services. The platform can also set up interactive sections to encourage users to share their Hanfu outfits, activity experiences, etc., forming a virtuous cycle of user-generated content (UGC), further stimulating users' interest in and love for Hanfu culture ^[15]. Big-data analysis and platform development can more accurately target the audience group of Hanfu culture, provide them with more personalized services and experiences, and thus promote the wide communication and in-depth development of Hanfu culture in contemporary society.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the communication and development of Hanfu culture is a complex and multidimensional process, involving many aspects such as cultural identity, social-group interaction, commercial operation, and the application of modern scientific and technological means. From the perspective of communication sociology, people should not only pay attention to the charm and value of Hanfu culture itself but also deeply explore the social motivations and communication mechanisms behind it. By strengthening cultural identity, building a Hanfu culture community, strengthening community building, promoting the integration and interaction between online and offline, making full use of modern scientific and technological means to innovate communication methods, and developing communication platforms based on big-data analysis, people can further promote the communication and development of Hanfu culture, enabling this unique cultural phenomenon to shine more brightly in contemporary society.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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