

# On Strengthening the Dissemination of Positive Chinese Traditional Culture in Colleges and Universities in the New Media Era

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**Abstract.** General Secretary Xi Jinping once profoundly pointed out that “Positive Chinese traditional culture is the root and soul of the everlasting Chinese nation”.<sup>1</sup> However, the traditional communication mode of positive Chinese traditional culture is facing challenges and limitations in colleges and universities in the new media era. The development of a comprehensive new media platform is an inevitable trend to strengthen the dissemination of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities. The coexistence and collision of traditional media and new media has brought opportunities and challenges to the spread of positive Chinese traditional culture. To attract young audiences, mainly college students, it is necessary to expand the effective communication paths of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities in the new media era by means of content transformation, as well as the online and offline combination from the aspects of communication mode, communication form and communication content.  
[Key words]: New media; Dissemination; Colleges and universities; Positive Chinese traditional culture

## 1 Introduction

Nowadays, people have the most convenient way to get and exchange information. With the rapid development of science and technology and the wide application of new media, the popular media form has transited from traditional media to new media relying on the social network. The Internet is highly sought after by college students with its instant communication mode and rich information resources.

In this context, it is crucial for positive Chinese traditional culture to break through the limitations, embrace the Internet, and to take advantage of the Internet. More specifically, the Internet allows educators to integrate the ideological and political education in colleges and universities with positive Chinese traditional culture and give a full play to the unique value and function of traditional culture in “building morality and cultivating people” in colleges and universities.

This paper will focus on the significance of strengthening the dissemination of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges in new media era, explaining the opportunities and challenges, and trying to find the communication strategies for positive Chinese traditional culture to attract college students.

## 2 The significance of strengthening the dissemination of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities in the new media era

Inheriting the positive Chinese traditional culture, carrying forward and cultivating national spirit, and improving the comprehensive quality of contemporary college students are the best starting point for college students’ cultural quality education. Meanwhile, the inheritance of traditional cultural education and strengthening the cultural quality-oriented education of college students is the call of the times. In new media era, college students spend time on internet and social media more than traditional media. Therefore, colleges and universities should pay more attention on expanding the ways of inheriting positive Chinese traditional culture.

The reasons that colleges and universities need to strengthen the dissemination of positive Chinese traditional culture are the need to cultivate the cultural self-confidence of contemporary college students, the need for effective inheritance of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges, and the need of cultivating qualified college students by utilizing positive Chinese traditional culture.

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## 2.1 The need to cultivate the cultural self-confidence of contemporary college students

Establishing cultural self-confidence is a very important part of the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. Positive Chinese traditional culture can provide rich spiritual nourishment and theoretical basis for strengthening cultural self-confidence. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "Cultural self-confidence is a more basic, broader, and deeper self-confidence. The positive Chinese traditional culture bred in the development of civilization for more than 5,000 years, the revolutionary culture bred in the great struggle between the Party and the people as well as the advanced socialist culture accumulate the deepest spiritual pursuit of the Chinese nation and represent the spiritual symbol of the Chinese nation."<sup>2</sup>

Culture rejuvenates the country, and culture strengthens the nation.<sup>3</sup> Positive Chinese traditional culture is an excellent and empowering culture created by the Chinese nation that was inherited and precipitated for 5,000 years. It abandons the dross in Chinese traditional culture and retains the part that has a positive effect on the development of contemporary society. Contemporary college students are the main force in building a socialist cultural power and will also become the backbone of national development. The cultural self-confidence of college students in the new era inevitably needs the spiritual support of Positive Chinese traditional culture. College students carry the historical responsibility of carrying forward Chinese culture in the new era. It is also an inevitable requirement for strengthening China's cultural soft power and building a socialist cultural power to comprehensively enhance college students' positive Chinese traditional cultural literacy and cultivate their cultural self-confidence.

## 2.2 The need for effective inheritance of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities

The inheritance, development, and revival of positive Chinese traditional culture in the new era cannot be separated from the network communication. Compared with traditional media, new media is an evolution of the traditional media, with a multi-dimensional approach of media integration, which not only conforms the principles of cultural communication but can also adapt to the development trend of new media. Media products use a variety of ways and means to present diverse images with strong platform adaptability and flexible content dissemination methods. It can not only give full play to the original functions of positive Chinese traditional culture and retain the advantages of traditional communication methods, but also better convey the mainstream values of society through a variety of platforms and communication methods.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, the use of new media as the media of positive Chinese traditional culture can also better meet the needs of young people in colleges and universities, so that the positive Chinese traditional culture can hold a dominant position in terms of

communication, influence, and competitiveness. The positive inheritance and development of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities can enhance the cultural consciousness of college students and help to establish "four self-confidences". General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out, "Where would Chinese characteristics be if not for the 5000-year history? Without those Chinese characteristics, how can we have such a successful socialist road with Chinese characteristics today?"<sup>5</sup> The profound cultural accumulation of China's positive traditional culture is the unique cultural soft power of the Chinese nation and a cultural symbol that differs us from other civilizations. It has become an important mission of ideological and political education in colleges and universities in the new era to help college students establish cultural self-confidence. It is self-evident that it is important to strengthen the communication of new media so that college teachers and students can have channels and platforms to better understand positive traditional Chinese culture.

## 2.3 The need of cultivating qualified college students by utilizing positive Chinese traditional culture

In order to cultivate qualified college students, in addition to teaching professional skills to meet the needs of socialist construction, colleges and universities should help college students establish a broad outlook of the world, life, and values, as well as cultivate their patriotism and noble moral sentiments, so as to guide their behaviours. These are inseparable from the study of positive Chinese culture.

"The way of Great Learning lies in the enlightenment of brilliant virtues, the remoulding of people, and the pursuit of ultimate goodness." This famous saying comes from the Confucian classic Great Learning, which is listed as the "top of the four books". It was quoted by General Secretary Xi Jinping in his speech at a symposium for teachers and students at Peking University. General Secretary Xi Jinping also said, "The core value, in fact, is a kind of virtue, which is not only personal virtue, but also a great virtue, that is, the virtue of the country and society. Without virtue, a country cannot thrive, and people cannot stand in society. If a nation and a country do not have common core values, its people will be indifferent and have no sense of belonging, then the nation and the country will not move forward. Such a situation is common in our history and in the world today."<sup>6</sup>

Thus, positive Chinese traditional culture can lead the way for the growth and development of college students. At present, some college students pursue comfort, enjoy what they already have, and tend to go with the flow. The most fundamental reason is the lack of lofty ideals. Confucianism takes "benevolence" as the core and puts morality as the priority of life, while "ritual" is the external code of behavior. By studying positive traditional culture, contemporary college students can continuously improve their cultural taste

and accomplishment, cultivate the excellent quality of modesty, prudence, respect for others and pay attention to teamwork spirit, which is crucial to the improvement of their personal ideological realm that allows them to become qualified college students in the process of socialist modernization.

### **3 The challenges of spreading positive Chinese traditional culture in the communication of colleges and universities in the new media era**

In the new media era, colleges and universities will inevitably encounter problems such as lagging technical means, monotonous form, and boring content in the process of spreading positive Chinese traditional culture, which makes it difficult to attract the active participation of young audience. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis on the current media platform, communication content, communication methods and audience status.

#### **3.1 The problem of communication platform**

For college students, they have a large demand for new media information as they use new media platforms more frequently. According to the 48th Statistical Report on the Development of China's Internet, as of June 2021, the number of online education users in China has reached 325 million. Students are one of the larger groups of Internet users in China, accounting for 32.1%. At the same time, the Internet penetration rate among people with high school degrees and above has reached a high level.

However, the current spread of positive Chinese traditional culture relies too much on traditional media. The traditional cultural programs with high popularity in recent years, such as the Chinese Poetry Conference and its derivative programs, or other programs related to positive Chinese traditional culture, such as The Reader, Words Like Face, and National Treasures, are almost all based on television platforms. Meanwhile, it should also be noted that although traditional media such as TV and newspapers have done a lot of publicity for these programs, it is often not traditional media but new media platforms that make these programs popular. For such well-known traditional Chinese cultural programs as China Poetry Conference, the Reader, and National Treasure, it is not the complete episodes of the program itself that has been widely spread and highly popular among the audiences, but the clips. For example, the "Flying Flower Order" link from the "China Poetry Conference" was made into a short video and quickly spread on the new media platform. The Weibo forwarding volume of relevant videos can reach tens of thousands, and the data of likes, collections, and comments on short video platforms such as Tiktok and Kwai are also high. Thanks to the publicity effect of the new media platform-based fine-cut video, these positive Chinese traditional culture-related programs based on

traditional media have gained more and more attention, realizing the flow of audience groups from the new media platform to the traditional media, and injecting new vitality into the traditional media audiences that are gradually losing in the new media era.

It can be seen from the examples of TV programs that if we want to spread positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities in the new media era, we should first make the content amiable, trustworthy, and usable. However, under the circumstance that college students use new media platforms more than traditional media platforms, what should be broken is the limitation of the platform. Only by allowing college students to have access to the positive traditional Chinese culture on a familiar platform can these cultures appear "friendly" and "trustworthy" enough to learn and "use".

#### **3.2 The problem of communication content**

In the new media era, the creation form, communication mode and even discourse system of publicity are gradually changing. However, many colleges and universities do not have a correct understanding of the differences between new media platforms and traditional media. Most colleges and universities are continuing the propaganda pattern centred on traditional media, and the inherent thinking of "making propaganda by propaganda", which is too written to adapt to the new media platform, has not changed significantly. For college students in the new era, the communication content of Positive Chinese traditional culture should be adjusted accordingly.

At the same time, with the popularization of Chinese traditional culture in the society, a variety of mixed traditional values are presented in front of college students. The amount of information in the network environment is huge and very complex so it is easy for the audience to get lost. Especially for young people who are not mature enough to distinguish whether the information is true or not in a short time, they are easily confused. The diversified presentation of network information leads to unpredictable communication effect, which then results in misunderstanding in positive Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, we should think about how to highlight the correct value orientation in the complex network information and guide the audience to correctly interpret the excellent traditional Chinese culture.

#### **3.3 The problem of communication audiences**

The communication base of positive Chinese traditional culture has always been the traditional media, mainly television, radio, and newspapers. Among the three, television has the most extensive contact with young people in the new era. However, we should also be aware that in China, among the most influential TV media audiences, there is an inevitable age gap.

According to the latest analysis of smart TV users in China in 2021, the group aged 30 to 39 is the main force

of TV users, accounting for 66%, while users aged 20 to 29 account for 25% and users aged 19 and below account for less than 5%. [Latest Analysis Report on China's Smart TV Users in 2021] First of all, it should be noted that primary school and preschool children in general families watch TV much more frequently than junior high school and high school students. Under the pressure of entering a higher school, parents start limiting their children's entertainment time, and the first one to be affected is the TV platform with animation as the main contact in childhood. At university stage, most students choose to live on campus with no cable TV access. When they are in close contact with the TV media again, they come to the adulthood who need to work. Therefore, in the youth stage, most student groups have limited access to traditional media, and positive Chinese traditional cultural programs rooted in traditional media do not have a good communication effect on them.

As a result, some college students have a weak foundation of traditional cultural knowledge. Their cultural heritage is slightly insufficient, and they cannot effectively understand the essence of traditional culture. Thus, they are indifferent to traditional cultural knowledge. Setting up courses related to traditional culture in colleges and universities is certainly a solution, but students sometimes have a strong sense of utilitarianism. Traditional culture courses are easy to become "easy as" that "improve the average score" because of their, thus failing to achieve the desired educational effect.

In addition, college students are still forming their outlook to world, life, and value. However, with the development of science and technology, the popularity of the Internet and the wide use of new media platforms around the world, multiculturalism from all over the world has been brought to college students. In the new media era, the diversity of communication methods, the complexity of information content, and the freedom of the audience make the information on the network mixed. On the Internet, college students are very vulnerable to the influence of Western pluralistic ideas. Extreme Western values such as hedonism, refined egoism, and extreme individualism also deeply endanger the physical and mental health of some college students.

#### **4 Effective communication strategies of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities in the new media era**

To expand the effective communication path of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities in the new media era, we can think from three aspects: the content transformation of positive Chinese traditional culture in the new media platform, the communication form of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities, and the combination of online and offline communication of new media in colleges and universities.

#### **4.1 Targeted and creative transformation of positive Chinese traditional cultural content based on new media**

First of all, the connotation of positive Chinese traditional culture should be deeply explored. In the new media, if a column or topic wants to stand out from the mass information and attract the attention of the audience, especially the young college students, it must have its personalized innovative content. Therefore, it is far from enough to confine the content to the widely known shallow culture. Instead, it is necessary to excavate deep level content, either go into the blind area of the audience's knowledge to make the audience feel refreshed or show familiar content in a new form to attract the interests of audience.<sup>8</sup>

Secondly, adaptive changes should be made. For college students in the new era, the content of the communication of Positive Chinese traditional culture should be adjusted accordingly. On the one hand, we should examine its contemporary value with modern ideas, discard the negative factors and negative energy in traditional culture, and express and spread it in a language close to the reality of modern life. On the other hand, we should take its essence, present it in a language habit close to young people, combine it with the trend of the times, echo with the current hotspots, and make homeopathic science popularization in the aspects that are interesting to and thirst for college students.

#### **4.2 Divergent thinking on communication platform**

The development of the Internet and the emergence of new media put forward urgent requirements for the innovation of traditional media and provided a broader platform and more diverse ways for the dissemination of positive Chinese traditional culture. Compared with traditional media such as newspapers and TV, new media do not have the limitation of space and time, so they can disseminate a large amount of information regarding positive Chinese traditional culture, and delete, modify, and add to it at any time. New media communication based on the Internet has broken through the time and space limitations of traditional media and enhanced the interactivity. The media integration of network communication is to combine the collection, editing and production of newspapers, television stations, radio stations and Internet websites, and make use of their similarity, difference, and complementary characteristics to share resources of information, centralize processing, and then disseminate to the audience through different platforms. There are three main forms of communication of new media platforms for college students as follows.

- Text and picture communication: Currently, the text and picture communication by WeChat and microblog is the most widely accepted communication mode for college students and teachers, and it is also the communication method closest to traditional media. The positive Chinese traditional culture is spread by means of



words and pictures, which can provide the audience with fragmented and vivid communication effects.

- Audio communication: Audio platforms such as Himalaya and Netease Cloud Radio make the communication of positive Chinese traditional culture more convenient. The audiences of audio platforms are not the mainstream, but they have gathered a large number of young people. Through their favorite audio forms, such as audio books and radio dramas, positive Chinese traditional culture can gradually penetrate young audiences' daily lives.

- Video communication: Such platforms include, Tiktok, Kwai, Xiaohongshu and other short video platforms. Short and concise videos are increasingly sought after by college students. Although a single video is not long, the short video platform has a kind of "addiction" attraction, which makes it difficult for the audience to close out the app after opening it, so the amount of information consumed on such platforms is very large. Such a way of communication can make the communication of positive Chinese traditional culture more vivid, and can attract young audiences, mainly college students.

### **4.3 The Diversified Communication Strategy of positive Chinese Traditional Culture for College Students as Audiences**

#### **4.3.1 Strengthen the construction of campus culture with the theme of promoting positive traditional culture.**

By building a new media practice platform, we could hold campus cultural activities and new media online activities with the theme of promoting the positive traditional Chinese culture, and take the content produced by students themselves as the main body of communication to spread to a wider and deeper audience of students. Campus cultural activities are an important carrier of "educating people with culture". The "Ancient Poetry Conference", "Traditional Calligraphy and Painting Competition", "Han Costume Exhibition" and other activities held in campus activities of colleges and universities can stimulate enthusiasm of students to carry forward positive traditional Chinese culture through online and offline participation, new media content compilation, offline display, online selection, and other methods. Student clubs and extra-curricular activities can also involve students in performing traditional Chinese cultural stories through short plays, musicals, and other performances. On the one hand, these performances can be offline practical activities; on the other hand, they can also generate new media materials such as texts, pictures, videos, which can be uploaded to relevant new media platforms in the school after editing, such as the WeChat official account of school, official Weibo account or other short video platforms, so that students can feel the inheritance of traditional culture firsthand. When this mechanism of "audience produced content" is gradually established on campus, it actually integrates the identity of the sender and receiver of the

communication contents. When users of the new media platform are also the main content providers of the platform, it can not only greatly improve the audience's interest in information, but also help the audience expand the breadth and depth of relevant information, thus strengthening the communication effect of positive Chinese traditional culture in colleges and universities.

#### **4.3.2 Big data can be used to effectively and accurately understand and research college students.**

On the one hand, understanding the needs of new media users of college students allows us to produce content of positive Chinese traditional cultural communication that is more in line with user preferences; on the other hand, understanding college students' new media reading habits and reading preferences, and pushing content according to their preferences can achieve point-to-point arrival of new media content, and complete personalized and decentralized dissemination of content. However, at the same time, to avoid the information cocoon effect, quality contents should be widely disseminated and pushed, so that potential audiences can have the opportunity to access relevant information and turn into interested audiences.

## **5 Conclusion**

Positive Chinese traditional culture contains rich human civilization and national wisdom, and its strong vitality makes it persistent and continuous, while possessing great contemporary value and advancing with the times. Learning positive Chinese traditional culture and promoting its dissemination in colleges and universities help establish the cultural self-confidence of college students and have far-reaching significance for cultivating qualified college students in the process of socialist modernization.

Nowadays, the world is experiencing the fourth communication revolution in human history brought about by the development of computer network technology, and the way of information communication in colleges and universities is also facing innovation. If positive traditional Chinese culture wants to keep pace with the information age and go deep into the campus of colleges and universities, it is necessary to rely on the new media platform with a high utilization rate of young media audience, improve the inherent thinking of "making propaganda by propaganda", and innovate the communication contents according to the audience needs of college students and the communication characteristics of new media. We should innovate the content and create vivid and novel works related to positive Chinese traditional culture according to different types of new media platforms, such as graphic science and popularization, short video mini-theater, radio drama audiobooks and so on. At the same time, we should make full use of the advantages of online media and offline activities in colleges and universities to fully interact, strengthen the construction of campus culture,

use big data to make relevant information more accurate, and finally make the positive Chinese traditional culture enter the daily activities of college students in and out of class, so that the spread of positive Chinese traditional culture can be landed on the online and offline platforms of colleges and universities.

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