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## From Ethnic Costumes to Digital Exhibitions: A Study on the Cultural and Educational Functions of Hualao Dai Traditional Costumes on Short Video Platforms

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### Abstract

This study explores the cultural and educational functions of Hualao Dai traditional costumes on short video platforms in the context of today's big data era. As a living carrier of the excellent traditional culture of the Hualao Dai ethnic group, Hualao Dai traditional costumes have undergone many changes in their connotation and inheritance methods in the face of the continuous changes of modern society. This article explores the alternative preservation, dissemination, innovation, and inheritance methods of Hualao Dai traditional costumes through short video platforms, from the analysis of Hualao Dai traditional costume culture to video exhibitions in the digital age, in order to build new vitality for national traditional culture, and emphasizes the cultural power generated by self-media forms in the information society.

**Keywords:** *Hualao Dai traditional costumes, Short video, Cultural and educational functions*

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## 1. Introduction

Hualao Dai is the name given to a branch of the Dai ethnic group living in the Honghe River Basin and the hinterland of the Ailao Mountains in Yunnan Province, named after the colorful waistband worn by women. They are somewhat different from the Dai people in Xishuangbanna and Dehong areas. They do not believe in Buddhism but only in primitive religions. They have no written language, only language, and their cultural customs are passed down orally through rituals and festivals. The Hualao Dai are also divided into branches of "Dai Ya", "Dai Ka" and "Dai Sa", and the composition of costumes varies from branch to branch. After the Hualao Dai ancestors migrated here and created a brilliant costume culture, the Hualao Dai ethnic group has been inheriting its own traditional culture while integrating and developing with the cultures of other

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surrounding ethnic groups. However, with the digital transformation of modern society, the changes in communication methods have made the inheritance of traditional culture no longer limited to oral transmission between people, and the popularity of new media has changed everyone's lifestyle, even in the most "isolated" places.

From the perspective of educational informatization, the ways of human interaction are diversified and the space for interaction is expanded. At present, the world economic pattern and economic growth mode have been completely changed due to the development of information technology. The network economy society is formed because of the information technology revolution. The way of human interaction has been greatly influenced by informatization. The innovation of information technology makes the interaction between people more and more convenient, and the interaction mode based on information technology is more diversified and efficient than the traditional interaction mode (Zhang, 2024). The development of information technology has created many daily life sharing software, such as Douyin, Kuaishou, Xiaohongshu, etc. These social software not only have great freedom, but also have immediacy. Everyone can be the protagonist in life, and the content can be spread thousands of miles away once it is released. Because of this, the short video platform has broken the traditional education model and provided a more personalized and interactive space for the dissemination of traditional culture.

This study takes the Hualao Dai costumes living in the Honghe River Valley of Ailao Mountain as the research object, and excavates the cultural connotation and inheritance methods of Hualao Dai costumes through the perspective of educational anthropology. At the same time, in the face of today's digital transformation era, combined with cultural ecology theory, network society theory, information communication theory, cultural identity theory, communication theory, education function theory, etc., to analyze how ethnic costume culture uses the platform mechanism to integrate and output content in the process of communication to make it burst out new vitality. By combing the characteristics of the combination of the two, clarifying the problems existing in the communication process, and summarizing the improvement suggestions, it can promote the inheritance significance and cultural and educational functions of Hualao Dai costume culture in the current era, and promote the cultural identity of the nation.

## 2. Literature Review

According to the literature search on CNKI, there are 27 academic journals, 11 dissertations, 2 conferences, and 2 newspapers that mention Hualao Dai costume culture. There are 609 academic journals, 227 dissertations, 21 conferences, and 25 newspapers that mention short video culture communication. The search for articles related to short videos and Hualao Dai culture shows that the entry is 0. It can be seen that the research combining Hualao Dai costume culture and short videos is not rich enough, and there is still a large space for exploration in this topic.

People are always the specific objects of traditional culture inheritance. According to the theory of educational anthropology, education is not only the process of knowledge imparting, but also the carrier of cultural transmission. Traditional culture education plays a vital role in shaping students' cultural identity and inheritance awareness (Zhang, 2025). Cultural value identity reflects the cultural group's sense of belonging to its own culture. What enables society to be maintained is each individual's common emotions and beliefs in society, and the core and foundation of social unity is the common values and common moral norms of social members (Qiu, 2023). It can be seen that having a sense of cultural identity is the foundation for a nation to unite and forge ahead. As the center of national culture, Hualao Dai traditional costumes naturally undertake the cultural and educational function of building national cohesion. However, under the cultural changes of the information society, the transmission of cultural identity of the Hualao Dai people cannot be limited to the past traditional forms such as village families, workshop apprentices, school education, government society, and tourism models. In addition to the dissemination methods of film and television shooting, the rise of short video platforms has accelerated the dissemination of Hualao Dai costume culture.

From the perspective of time length, short videos, as a time-domain-limited media form, rely on a multi-modal symbol integration system to not only construct a new model of UGC community communication, but also reshape the paradigm of news communication practice. Its media ontology naturally carries communication genes (Zhang *et al.*, 2014). Short videos can be defined as 5-15 second audiovisual carriers, which realize

instant sharing through the technical combination of shooting, editing, and editing, and jointly construct a new social communication model (Wang and Wei, 2024). At the content level, short videos present fragmented characteristics; the production process reflects the characteristics of low threshold; in terms of creative subjects, it shows a wide range of mass participation; in terms of expression forms, it highlights distinct personalized characteristics; and the communication method shows significant social attributes. This summary fully reveals the core characteristics of short videos as an emerging medium" (Gao, 2018). Short video media such as "Douyin" present many characteristics in the communication process: meeting the needs of the times, rich and diverse content, the prevalence of grassroots culture, the use of intelligent algorithm push, the widespread popularization of self-media, and the realization of localized communication (Shao, 2018). It can be seen that in the information society, short video media, with its own advantages, has entered everyone's daily life, and its existence has become an important way of cultural communication. As an emerging media form, short videos have unique characteristics and advantages, and can fully meet users' needs at different levels such as information acquisition, entertainment, social interaction, and education and learning.

In summary, although the research on the culture of Huayao Dai costumes has become large-scale, and there are many definitions and researches on short video platforms, the research on the cultural education function of Huayao Dai traditional costumes on short video platforms still needs further exploration. This article will combine the current communication status of the two, and under the background of the recent popular topic "Digital Intelligence Era", it will start with the communication of Huayao Dai costume culture on short video platforms, in order to supplement the previous research results.

### 3. Cultural Value and Educational Function of Huayao Dai Costumes

#### 3.1. Cultural Value of Huayao Dai Costumes

Huayao Dai costumes are based on black, and then other colors are superimposed on the skirt and cuffs. Daiya is based on black, with red and green lining it; Daika is also based on black, with purple and red lining it; Daisai is different from the previous two, with red and green as the base and yellow as the lining. But in addition to these basic colors, the ingenious Huayao Dai people will also add other colors to make the clothes look colorful and luxurious. The Huayao Dai women will add any color they can think of to their bodies, making the clothes more "flowery" in the many colors. The basic color scheme of Huayao Dai costumes comes from the surrounding natural environment, which reflects their original natural worship.

A set of luxurious Huayao Dai costumes, hundreds of mysterious and strange symbols, such as snowflake shape, star shape, diamond shape, round shape, square shape, upright and inverted triangle, 卍 shape, well shape, convex shape, concave shape, funnel shape, rice shape, T shape, X shape, = shape, + shape, butterfly shape, coriander shape, octagon shape, four-leaf vegetable shape, chopstick head shape, bamboo fence shape, "↓ shape, and long strip symbols connected by S-shaped curves, etc., are countless. The shapes of the universe, stars, mountains, rivers and trees in the natural world are embroidered on the clothing by the skillful hands of Huayao Dai women. These patterns form the element symbols of Huayao Dai culture, which increases the cultural heritage and depth of the costumes and gives people a certain aesthetic.

In the patterns of Huayao Dai costumes, a large number of stars (silver bubbles) and the theme patterns of four-leaf clover, bamboo leaves, banana leaves and rows of mountains and valleys that can be seen everywhere on the river valley are used. These patterns not only highlight the original natural worship of the Huayao Dai people, but also imply the trajectory of the historical development of the Huayao Dai. Silver bubbles are mainly inlaid on the collar, chest, waist, and the large triangular scarf hanging behind the buttocks, and the silver bubbles are nailed into rows of mountain patterns. According to legend, in the process of the great migration of the ancestors of the Huayao Dai, the stars in the sky illuminated them along the river valleys, passing through one mountain after another, and migrating south along the river valley. Therefore, in order to express their gratitude to the stars, the Huayao Dai people nailed the stars (silver bubbles) in the sky on the clothes of the clan, regarding them as the gods of the Huayao Dai protecting them. The four-leaf clover pattern is to show that "food is the most important thing for the people". During the migration process, the ancestors of the Huayao Dai went south along the river valleys all the way, and they ate the four-leaf clover on the river valley along the way. Every time they settled down, they had to pick four-leaf clover to fill their hunger. Therefore, the

Huayao Dai people drink water and think of the source. Until today, four-leaf clover is not only still a dish for the Dai people to entertain relatives and friends, but also retains its shape on the costumes. What is more worth mentioning is the rows of mountains and valleys, which vividly and concretely depict the life history and the course of wind and rain of the ancestors of the Huayao Dai, showing the grand epic of wading through mountains and rivers and wandering in other lands. These patterns are regarded as the symbol of Huayao Dai totem worship and ethnic identity and are passed down from generation to generation.

In addition to the clothes themselves, Huayao Dai costumes also have a large number of accessories. A complete set of Dai costumes must have a bamboo hat (chicken mushroom hat), a small back basket behind the waist, large silver earrings, ten silver rings, several silver bracelets on both hands, and leggings. Only when all of these are worn on the body is it a complete set of Huayao Dai "Xiao Bu Shao" (little girl) costumes. The chicken mushroom hat is used to half-cover the pretty faces of the Huayao Dai girls, and in the past it was also used to shield the hot sun when doing farm work; the small back basket behind the waist not only has a decorative function, but also has the practical function of storing small items, such as change, mobile phones, keys, etc.; bracelets, earrings and rings are completely symbols of luxury. The more wealthy families wear more bracelets and rings, and the more beautiful the girls who wear them; leggings are worn to prevent the girls' slender legs from being bitten by mosquitoes, and they also have the effect of resisting wind and cold after old age, and they also have a certain aesthetic effect after the overall match.

These mountains, valleys, patterns and symbols run through the Huayao Dai's skirts, sleeves, belts, headdresses, collars, and headscarves, which are quite eye-catching. Suddenly looking back at the ancient sites of the ancestors, these scattered and self-contained costume patterns are not only a testimony to the tragic migration of the ancestors of the Huayao Dai, but also a living textbook of the Huayao Dai costume culture.

### **3.2. Cultural Education Function of Huayao Dai Costumes**

#### *3.2.1. "Harmony in Diversity" in Intercultural Contexts*

"Huayao Dai" is the name given to this branch of the Dai ethnic group by local residents. They call themselves "Dai Ya," "Dai Sa," and "Dai Ka." Dai Ya means Dai people who were left behind during the migration process, Dai Sa means Dai people who live by the sandy beaches of the river, and Dai Ka means Dai people who evolved from other ethnic groups. From the Chinese translation of the Dai language, we can see that this branch of the Huayao Dai has both indigenous characteristics, migratory characteristics, and integration characteristics. Therefore, even though they belong to the same branch, their costumes are still different and unique. Wrapping the waist with colored ribbons to form a unique "Huayao" shape is a common feature of the three types of clothing, but due to the different textures of the fabrics used, decorative patterns, and colors, they present different styles of "Huayao."

From the perspective of clothing characteristics, Huayao Dai clothing has commonalities with other ethnic groups in terms of texture, style, color, pattern, and craftsmanship. In terms of texture, Dai Ya and Dai Ka both use cotton thread woven fabrics, which is no different from other surrounding ethnic groups. The silk texture of Dai Sa shows the typical influence of Han immigrants. In terms of style, while retaining the typical Dai tube skirt characteristics, it also boldly integrates and innovates with other ethnic groups. For example, the small and tight sleeves of the clothes are similar to the Ailao Mountain-type Yi people in the surrounding area. The patterns embroidered are mostly geometric figures and the natural animals, plants, and landscapes that can be seen everywhere, which are similar to the embroidery decorations of the surrounding Yi, Hani, and Lahu ethnic groups. However, it has its own unique features in color matching and style. Black is the keynote of Huayao Dai clothing. On the basis of black as the keynote, it is matched with red tassel headdresses, waist ribbons, and lower skirts, supplemented by small areas of yellow, purple, and green inlays, and silver-white ornaments on the forehead, chest, and back, forming a harmonious whole with black, red, and white as the main colors, especially the bold use of large areas of red, giving people a strong visual impact. In addition, the yellow, green, and blue lace strips decorated in parallel with red on the skirt and cuffs make the heavy world dominated by black suddenly become a colorful world. The colors of these decorations, such as red, yellow, purple, green, and blue, make people feel and associate with the sky, sun, rosy clouds, land, plants, and even blood in nature, and also make people think about the Ailao Mountains, Honghe Valley, streams, terraces, and rivers where the Huayao Dai live. Huayao Dai clothing is a walking art history, and Huayao Dai women

personally demonstrate the unique charm of their ethnic group, and also demonstrate the harmony and coexistence in the Huayao Dai clothing culture.

From the perspective of cultural anthropology, cultural relativists believe that there is no distinction between good and bad in culture, and all cultures are equal. They oppose ethnic centralists who divide cultures into grades and oppose using the criteria of right and wrong to judge the cultures of various countries (Zhang, 2022). Cultural relativists believe that ethnic culture is a social system formed by the ethnic group in a specific natural and cultural environment. Cultural values are relative, and there is no one-size-fits-all standard (Zhang, 2022). In the principles of cultural exchange among ethnic groups, the "each appreciates its own beauty, appreciates the beauty of others, shares the beauty together, and the world is in harmony" advocated by anthropologist Fei Xiaotong provides a reference for various ethnic groups or groups to establish concepts of cultural equality, cultural self-confidence, cultural interaction, and cultural harmony (Wang, 2022). The clothing culture of the Huayao Dai not only retains the migratory history and primitive worship of their ancestors, but also integrates and develops with the surrounding ethnic cultures. There has never been a concept of who is superior or inferior. What is displayed more in their clothing is a kind of cultural beauty and harmonious beauty. This makes the Huayao Dai people cherish their own culture while also respecting other cultures.

### 3.2.2. *Conscious Inheritance of Culture*

The concept of cultural self-awareness was systematically proposed by Mr. Fei Xiaotong, a famous Chinese sociologist and anthropologist. At the report meeting on key disciplines of Peking University on January 4, 1997, Mr. Fei gave a specific and incisive explanation of the meaning of cultural self-awareness: "Cultural self-awareness refers to the 'self-knowledge' of people living in a certain culture about their culture, understanding its origin, formation process, and the role it plays in life, that is, understanding its meaning and the influence and development direction of other cultures, without any meaning of 'cultural regression'. It does not mean 'returning', but at the same time, it does not advocate 'Westernization' or 'complete otherization'. Self-knowledge is to strengthen the autonomous ability of cultural development and obtain the autonomous position of cultural choice to adapt to the new environment" (Cai, 2017). The cultural self-awareness education of the Huayao Dai people is reflected in the inheritance and development of clothing and festivals by their own ethnic group. While inheriting the excellent culture of their own ethnic group, the Huayao Dai people also constantly absorb and learn from the excellent cultures of other ethnic groups and adopt an inclusive and accepting attitude towards other cultures. For example, the composition of clothing is always realized step by step in the process of constantly reflecting on self-culture and learning from the clothing composition of other ethnic groups, reflecting on the adaptability of self-clothing culture to the aesthetic needs of people in the new era, and learning from the design and decoration parts of the Hani, Lahu, Yi, and even Han ethnic groups. The Huayao Dai have a traditional festival called "Huajie Festival." In the past, it was a traditional festival for young men and women to court each other. On this day, all the surrounding ethnic groups dressed up to attend. Everyone sang and danced together during the day, and at night, young men and women went into the betel nut forest to shine flashlights and sing ditties. Now it is mainly sponsored by the government. The Huayao Dai will wear clothes to "parade" (referring to walking around the city in their own ethnic clothes), and other ethnic groups still dress up to join the parade. During the day, people of all ethnic groups still gather together to have fun, and at night, everyone goes back to their own homes, and young men and women no longer court each other in the betel nut forest as they did in the past. It can be seen that the Huayao Dai ethnic group has always maintained a compatible and inclusive attitude towards foreign cultures. They enjoy themselves with other ethnic groups, and can coexist harmoniously with other ethnic groups on their own ethnic festivals. Not only that, they also celebrate the Spring Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival that the Han people often celebrate. The customs are somewhat different from the Han people, but the form is also a symbol of family reunion. The Huayao Dai ethnic group is subtly carrying out cultural self-awareness education in the joy of the festival, and is constantly balancing and developing between other cultures and self-culture. This includes a simple understanding of "each appreciates its own beauty, appreciates the beauty of others, shares the beauty together, and the world is in harmony" between other cultures and their own culture.

## 4. Short Video Platform: A New Space for Cultural Exhibition

With the advent of the era of big data, human society has been more closely connected than ever before. In this

transformation process, short videos have rapidly occupied a place in the field of information dissemination with their unique communication advantages. Short videos generated by technology have been integrated into the lives of every modern person extremely quickly. In the context of the information explosion era, people's time is highly fragmented, and the acquisition and consumption of information also tends to be rapid and intuitive. Short videos, with their short and concise form, cater to this demand, and can provide the audience with a wealth of information and a strong visual impact in a short period of time (Meng, 2025). Harold Lasswell's communication theory mentions that the channels and media of communication have an important impact on information dissemination.<sup>1</sup> As a modern form of communication, short videos not only provide a fast channel for information dissemination, but also have a wide audience and interactivity, which plays an important role in the dissemination of ethnic culture.

Julian Steward's cultural ecology theory believes that the development of culture is affected by its external environment.<sup>2</sup> In the digital age, short video platforms have become an important ecological environment for cultural dissemination and development. Under the new wave of modern life, the traditional forms of inheritance of Huayao Dai costumes have been difficult to keep up with the pace of the times. The elderly in the villages still insist on wearing costumes as daily wear. Young people go out of the province to work for life and economy, leaving their homes, and students in school also mainly wear modern clothes in their daily study life. At this time, the rise of short video platforms has broadened the new space for the exhibition of clothing culture. Under the premise of protecting traditional culture, the government will shoot a large number of promotional films and documentaries. These videos not only preserve the authenticity of traditional culture well, but also allow the Huayao Dai clothing culture to be quickly disseminated through the form of short video platforms. Individuals also share their daily life with the help of short video tools such as Douyin and Kuaishou, and interact with each other. The content forms of short videos include a variety of things, such as diet, clothing, dance, songs, etc., which can be disseminated in a timely manner. Documentary short videos not only conform to the trend of the times, but also have a strong influence, and have become an important force in cultural education.<sup>3</sup>

## 5. Dissemination Path and Cultural Reconstruction of Huayao Dai Costumes on Short Video Platforms

### 5.1. Dissemination Path

Manuel Castells' network society theory emphasizes that the networked society brings new ways of information flow, and short video platforms are an important part of it. The dissemination path of short videos can reshape the dissemination pattern of national culture. The "China Online Audio-Visual Development Research Report (2025)" shows that as of December 2024, the number of short video users in China is 1.04 billion, and the average daily use of short video applications is 156 minutes, ranking first among Internet applications (Chen, 2025). Since Douyin was launched in 2016, China's short video platform has experienced a professional and commercial development path from user-generated content to platform-led. In 2018, the number of daily active users of Douyin exceeded 200 million, marking the entry of short video platforms into the nationalization stage, and major short video platforms have successively completed the transformation from niche interest communities to mass communication platforms (Li and Pu, 2025). It can be seen that short video platforms have become indispensable social tools in life. Searching for the term "Huayao Dai" on Douyin, the video types cover a wide variety. Most personal accounts mainly show Dai dance in traditional costumes, as well as simple teaching of Dai language and simple science popularization of Dai folk songs. Official accounts include documentary propaganda films and intangible cultural heritage propaganda. Without exception, there are cultural science popularization about the Huayao Dai ethnic group and the pride of being a member of the ethnic group in the cultural display under the comments of the account. In the past, people could only pass down the clothing culture through word of mouth from generation

<sup>1</sup> Lasswell H.D. (1948). *The Structure and Function of Communication in Society* The Communication of Ideas. 37(1), 136-139.

<sup>2</sup> Julian H. Steward. (1976). *Theory of Culture Change: The Methodology of Multi-Linear Evolution*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana.

<sup>3</sup> Julian H. Steward. (1976). *Theory of Culture Change: The Methodology of Multi-Linear Evolution*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana.

to generation, and spread it through weddings, funerals, folk festivals, primitive customs, food culture and other behaviors. Although these dissemination methods can completely preserve the characteristics of Huayao Dai costumes, with the intervention of short video platforms, short video platforms have transformed the dissemination form of traditional culture with its characteristics of fast dissemination speed, wide coverage and strong penetration, making it suitable for the living needs of contemporary people.<sup>4</sup>

## 5.2. Cultural Reconstruction

Homi K. Bhabha's post-colonial identity construction theory emphasizes the continuous reconstruction of culture in the context of globalization. The dissemination of Dai costumes on short video platforms can be regarded as a process of cultural identity reconstruction. Short videos enrich the content creation of the platform, and the platform plays an increasingly prominent role in the dissemination of Huayao Dai costume culture. It is not only an information release channel, but also a gathering place for cultural reconstruction, national cultural reproduction and the integration of national emotions. In the past, the inheritance of Huayao Dai costume culture was limited to the interaction and transmission of the ethnic group in the region. The connotation represented by the costumes was only known to the ethnic group. For other ethnic groups, it played a beautiful ornamental role. However, with the help of short video platforms, the cultural connotation of Huayao Dai costumes has been greatly enriched. People can see the improvement and innovation of traditional costumes, the dance and music of the Huayao Dai ethnic group, the daily life of the local ethnic group, and the exhibition mode of cultural customs by watching short videos. All of this undoubtedly promotes the construction of Huayao Dai costume culture. In today's rapid evolution of data technology, digital communication has become the new normal. People build relationships and share emotions in virtual spaces. This seemingly cold digital communication can inspire warm and touching power (Shang *et al.*, 2024).<sup>5</sup>

## 6. Practical Analysis of the Educational Function of Huayao Dai Costume Short Videos

### 6.1. Cultivating a Sense of National Cultural Identity

According to Edward Said's theory of "cultural identity", it can be summarized that ethnic costumes are not only clothing, but more of a reflection of cultural awareness, and it also reflects the cultural identity and self-awareness of the nation. Through the display of Dai costumes on short video platforms, it can help people establish a sense of identity with the national culture. By using the dissemination advantages of short video platforms, opening different online channels, both the operation of the local government's official platform to promote the local national culture and display the Huayao Dai costume culture and related traditional customs, and the operation of personal private accounts to publish daily local life, music and dance, etc., while strengthening the identity psychology of the Huayao Dai ethnic group, it also broadens the cultural exchange of costumes. Moreover, the local government often promotes and plays recorded national cultural propaganda videos. As long as you search for relevant terms of Huayao Dai on short videos, the platform will automatically push them to individuals, which lays the foundation for the dynamic dissemination of Huayao Dai costume culture. Moreover, before the arrival of large-scale traditional folk festivals, local government departments will implement a series of measures to create momentum for the activities and attract tourists from home and abroad to experience the real ethnic customs. These methods undoubtedly increase the sense of national cultural identity and pride, and also strengthen the mutual exchange between cultures. Cultural identity is the cohesion of the formation, existence and development of a nation. In the formation and development of a nation, cultural identity is the most core and stable factor. Other parts of a national culture may change, but the national cultural identity can exist for a long time (Fu *et al.*, 1995). It can be said that the dissemination of Huayao Dai costume culture on short video platforms helps to cultivate the cultural identity of the Huayao Dai ethnic group, and also stimulates the local government and ethnic group's sense of responsibility for the protection and inheritance of traditional culture.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Manuel Castells. (1996). *The Rise of the Network Society: Economy, Society and Culture*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

<sup>5</sup> Bhabha, Homi K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. 70, Routledge, London and New York.

<sup>6</sup> Said, Edward W. (1979). *Orientalism*. Vintage Books, New York.

## 6.2. Knowledge Inheritance of Traditional Culture

John Dewey's theory of educational function proposes that the goal of education is not only knowledge imparting, but also the social cultivation of individuals. Education should be combined with real life, and education not only occurs in schools, but also in social life. To make national culture always maintain its fresh vitality, it is necessary to cultivate outstanding talents in national culture. The cultivation form is not single and isolated, but must be comprehensive and interconnected, so that learners can be subtly influenced at all times. The Dai costume display on short video platforms not only conveys the cultural information of the costumes, but also subtly cultivates the audience's sense of national cultural identity. Short video platforms are another medium for contemporary young people to receive education in addition to traditional social education and school education. Short videos break the limitations of time, space, age, region, etc. As long as you have a mobile phone to search for relevant terms, you can be influenced by knowledge intentionally or unintentionally. For example, the propaganda film of intangible cultural heritage inheritors shot by the government's official account has carried out an in-depth explanation of the meaning represented by the traditional Huayao Dai costume symbols, which breaks the time and space limitations of the traditional master-apprentice teaching method, so that everyone who watches the video can learn the symbolic connotation of Huayao Dai costumes, and the concise content of the short video also enables people to concentrate on the specific content in the two or three minutes of receiving information. Under the impact of today's social economy and cultural forms, there are also few people in the traditional Huayao Dai indigenous group who wear traditional costumes. The knowledge inheritance of traditional culture is particularly important. With the help of the characteristics of short video platforms, it not only broadens the breadth of knowledge dissemination, but also inherits the knowledge structure of the ethnic group itself.<sup>7</sup>

## 7. Challenges and Prospects of Educational Function: National Culture Education in Short Video Platforms

### 7.1. Uneven Quality of National Cultural Content

Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding theory suggests that media communication is a complex cyclical process in which the production and interpretation of meaning depend on two relatively independent links: encoding and decoding. This means that the audience's interpretation of information may not match the communicator's intention. Therefore, various different understandings and interpretations will arise during the encoding and decoding of information. People in the online world differ in terms of cultural knowledge level, value judgment ability, ideological and moral quality, and political beliefs. Inevitably, collisions and conflicts will occur in the process of cultural exchange, which will objectively lead to the blurring and weakening of the cultural values of all ethnic groups, and may even bring about a certain degree of rational thinking disorder (Zhang and Li, 2021).<sup>8</sup>

Looking at the videos related to Huayao Dai culture on short video platforms, it can be found that: First, the video content tends to be superficial, focusing excessively on the visual appreciation of clothing while neglecting the exploration of cultural depth, making it difficult for the essence of clothing culture to reach the audience, resulting in shallow educational significance and superficial knowledge. Second, the phenomenon of video homogenization is serious, and cross-platform content presents a high degree of similarity. For example, the dissemination of Huayao Dai costumes generally lacks differentiated narrative perspectives, mostly staying on the entertainment surface of dancing, singing a song, or fashion shows. Third, the accuracy of clothing content is questionable. Some creators lack professional literacy and aim to attract attention, arbitrarily tampering with clothing wearing without respecting traditional clothing culture, causing knowledge misreading and public cognitive bias. These are all cultural misunderstandings that exist in the process of information decoding to varying degrees, which will undoubtedly challenge the cultural education function on short video platforms.

<sup>7</sup> Dewey, John. (1916). *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. The Free Press, New York.

<sup>8</sup> Hall, Stuart. (1980). Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse. in *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-79*, Stuart Hall, Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Lowe and Paul Willis (Eds.), 128-38, Hutchinson, London.

## 7.2. Slightly Shallow Innovation in Ethnic Cultural Content

The adaptation of creative content to digital technology is insufficient. In addition to the official accounts of the government, the content of many private video accounts still stays on traditional graphic display and daily video recording, without complete storylines and in-depth cultural analysis, which fails to effectively explore the educational meaning of Huayao Dai ethnic culture, and the educational function is weakened. Viewers laugh it off, and creators fail to form a positive interaction with them, which invisibly weakens the dissemination effectiveness and audience participation of ethnic culture.

## 7.3. Insufficient vitality in the operation of ethnic cultural content

Herbert Simon's information overload theory proposes that "in an information-rich world, the wealth of information means a dearth of something else: a scarcity of whatever it is that information consumes. What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention....."<sup>9</sup> Information overload can lead to a decrease in the audience's acceptance ability and affect the educational effect. Information overload theory believes that after information collection exceeds a certain amount, continuing to increase information decision quality will decrease (Wu, 2007). Short video content can be updated with tens of thousands of items every day, and how to screen out truly valuable content is a considerable challenge for operators. Moreover, in content production, since everyone can open a private account, the relevant clothing culture content lacks effective planning and integration, and the overall presentation is chaotic and difficult to form a specific knowledge system of Huayao Dai clothing culture. The phenomenon of information overload in short video platforms in cultural communication may lead to misreading or simplification of Huayao Dai clothing culture.

Secondly, there is no regularity in content updates. The update cycle of most private accounts is unstable, mainly based on fragmented output. Some accounts have update intervals as long as several months, and the video time ranges from a few seconds to a few minutes. This also makes it difficult for people to accept continuous knowledge and cultural edification. They may be interested in the content theme this time, but the lack of updates for a long time will lead to user loss and failure to obtain a stable audience group. Third, the professionalization of the operation team is insufficient. Private accounts are operated by themselves, and most of them lack professional multimedia and digital technology knowledge. Official accounts are operated independently by cultural institutions or non-heritage inheritors. Their daily work is more complicated, and they lack professional knowledge reserves, and the quality of account content varies. This inefficient operation mode slows down the dissemination speed of the account, weakens the dissemination effect, and thus the user retention rate and interaction frequency will continue to decline. The consequence is that Huayao Dai clothing culture is always difficult to truly get out of the local cultural circle and has not formed a benign development of open communication.

## 8. Conclusion and Prospect: New Opportunities for Ethnic Cultural Education in the Digital Age

### 8.1. Research Conclusion

This article systematically examines the cultural value and educational function of Huayao Dai costumes in the context of the digital age, explores its exhibition path on short video platforms, empirically analyzes the dissemination practice of Huayao Dai costume culture short videos on short video platforms, and reveals the internal mechanism of ethnic cultural education. The study also found that the current short video platform dissemination has problems such as uneven quality of ethnic cultural content, slightly shallow innovation of ethnic cultural content, and insufficient vitality in the operation of ethnic cultural content.

David Harvey<sup>10</sup> proposed the concept of "time-space compression": pointing out that new technologies constantly eliminate space with time, eliminate geographical barriers, and accelerate the pace of production and consumption, thereby creating the sense of acceleration and globalization that we experience culturally

<sup>9</sup> Simon, Herbert A. (1971). Designing Organizations for an Information-Rich World. in *Computers, Communication, and the Public Interest*, Martin Greenberger (Ed.), 37-72, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>10</sup> Harvey, David. (1989). *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Blackwell, Oxford.

and economically. His theory of digital capitalism emphasizes that digital transformation has brought new opportunities for culture and education, especially in the inheritance of ethnic culture. Short video platforms provide unique dissemination space and potential. In the past, Huayao Dai used traditional methods such as weddings and funerals, traditional festivals, and custom activities to inherit and educate traditional ethnic costume culture. These methods not only have the function of knowledge transfer to people, but also strengthen the cultural identity of the nation. However, with the advent of the digital transformation era, the inheritance of traditional costume culture will inevitably change in accordance with the times.

When participating in festival celebrations or sacrificial activities, whether government officials or individuals, they will publish relevant activity content on short video platforms. For example, in the large traditional Flower Street Festival, most Huayao Dai people still wear their ethnic costumes to parade and have fun in the streets. Short video platforms can not only broadcast the grand occasion of the festival live, but also record the exhibition of costume culture; for example, the drama promotional films for intangible cultural heritage not only promote the dissemination and exchange of culture, but also subtly strengthen the sense of responsibility for inheritance among the younger generation. Although technology is a double-edged sword, and there will inevitably be some rough and shoddy content in the cultural exchange and exhibition, it is undeniable that costume culture and short videos promote each other and develop together in practice. On the one hand, short videos carry the dissemination of Huayao Dai costumes, becoming an important carrier and support for national cultural education, supplementing the blank spots in social education and school education, and improving the effectiveness of online education; on the other hand, national culture can effectively promote the protection and inheritance of national culture by using short video platforms for dissemination. British scholar Terence Hawkes believes that "The most important role of people in the world is communication" (Hawkes, 1987). Only through continuous dissemination and exchange, and the dissemination of high-quality boutique cultural content, can national culture maintain its vitality, and cultural heritage can have successors.

## 8.2. Research Limitations and Prospects

1. **The Research has the Following Limitations:** First, the research samples are diverse in branches. The Huayao Dai are mainly concentrated in Xinping Yi and Dai Autonomous County and Yuanjiang Hani, Yi and Dai Autonomous County, Yuxi City, Yunnan Province. Although the total population is about 70,000 to 80,000, there are many branches, and the clothing styles of different branches are not completely the same, resulting in insufficient comprehensive case analysis and difficulty in covering the clothing of the entire Huayao Dai ethnic group; second, the acceptance differences, communication barriers and coping strategies of short video platforms for different branches and different age groups of Huayao Dai people have not been fully discussed.
2. **Prospects:** First, we must expand the scope of field investigation, focusing on the differences and homogeneity of costume culture among different branches, analyzing their cultural value and inheritance status on short video platforms, and improving the diversity and representativeness of cultural samples; second, we must build a short video platform analysis framework, based on empirical research, quantify the influence coefficient, and analyze from the dimensions of content output, content classification, content audience, and dissemination area; third, we must establish a technical tracking mechanism to continuously monitor the content changes and user stickiness of short video platforms, and explore innovative paths such as in-depth dissemination and continuous optimization.

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