



Theoretical Model of Innovative Communication of China's Yellow River Culture and Suggestions for Yellow River Cultural Tourism from the Perspective of Social Media

— An Exploratory Analysis Based on Grounded Theory

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Abstract. The Yellow River culture is an important part of Chinese civilization, the root and soul of the Chinese nation, and its innovative core is the transformation of cultural "resources" into cultural "capital", and the "cultural tourism integration" model becomes an important opportunity for this transformation. Its innovative core is the transformation of cultural "resources" to cultural "capital", and the "cultural tourism integration" model has become an important opportunity for this transformation. This paper adopts the method of rooting theory to study the communication status of Yellow River culture. We coded 62 data of innovative expressions of Yellow River culture, extracted 63 initial concepts from 758 initial statements, abstracted 18 conceptual categories, and summarized 6 core concepts. A theoretical model of innovative communication of Yellow River culture is constructed. The research results show that communication dilemma, value judgment, content production, media elements, audience perspective, and strategy path are the important factors affecting the innovative communication of Yellow River culture. Based on this, this paper proposes the strategy of "culture and tourism +", aiming at creating the internationalized name card of "China Yellow River".

Keywords: Yellow River cultural tourism, innovative expression, social mediation, grounded theory, model construction.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

The increasingly powerful influence of mediation in the new era

According to the latest report released by the global media monitoring agency Meltwater and the social media WeareSocial, the global population is about 8 billion, and the global active user of social media has exceeded 5 billion¹. According to the domes-

tic QuestMobile data, by 2023, the active user scale of TikTok, Weibo, Little Red Book-little, Bilibili and AAUTO Quicker has reached 1.088 billion². The support of new media has shaped the new communication environment, and the mediation society is opening up. For cultural economy, media is not only a tool, but also evolved into a new mode of production and dependence. The "mediation" can push the influence of cultural tourism to a place that can not be reached in any period.

New changes in the communication of Yellow River cultural tourism brand

Seoul held a special session for South Korea in China's 2023 Yellow River-themed tourism overseas promotion season. In China, Henan, as one of the important sources of traditional Chinese culture, has international accounts on platforms such as Facebook, with more than 1 million fans³, laying a solid foundation for the overseas tourism market. Building cultural tourism brands under the trend of industrial convergence is an important way to promote the development of cultural tourism industry. Communication channels have become more diversified under the perspective of new media. Microblog, WeChat, TikTok, AAUTO Quicker and so on have played an accelerating role in media change. New technologies such as 5G, AR, VR, big data, artificial intelligence and so on have also promoted the reshaping of communication formats. With the help of new media platforms, Yellow River cultural tourism can not only dig deep into the cultural resources of the Yellow River, but also promote the dissemination of Yellow River culture on the world stage.

The internationalization strategy background of Yellow River cultural tourism

At the end of the last century, European and American countries started from a cultural perspective to realize the protection and management of river resources, and at the same time pay attention to the study of the relationship between river culture and people's livelihood, spiritual sustenance, cultural needs and regions⁴. The implementation of the Wind River Water Regulations in the United States also confirms its emphasis on river protection, emphasizing the cultural value and economic value of rivers⁵. In 2021, the Outline of the Plan for Ecological Protection and High-quality Development of the Yellow River Basin issued by the State Council proposed to promote the integrated development of culture and tourism.

1.2 Research Status

At present, the form of Yellow River culture communication is mainly one-way communication led by relevant government departments, lack of bottom-up perspective of the public; the mode of communication is lagging behind, although there are new forms, but they are not systematic; the content of communication is relatively simple, and there is no cultural symbol with brand characteristics. In the existing research, in terms of cultural and tourism integration, in view of the distribution of cultural and tourism resources in the Yellow River Basin of Shanxi, the research group of Shanxi Academy of Social Sciences proposed the path of the integration of cultural and tourism development of the Yellow River, with the cultural and tourism resources such as the landscape

along the Yellow River in Shanxi, local folk customs, opera singing and dancing as the carrier, establish the Yellow River cultural and tourism IP through festivals, and develop the important strategy of Shanxi Yellow River cultural and tourism. Han Ruobing and Huang Xiaoting proposed the "daily life" mode of the integration of cultural and tourism development in the Yellow River Basin, which integrates the Yellow River culture into the dining, accommodation, shopping and entertainment scenes, reconstructs the daily life of tourists in the Yellow River cultural tourism belt, and deepens the national identity in habits.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study hopes to build a theoretical model of the innovative communication of the Yellow River culture in contemporary China, explore the development vitality and effective ways of the cultural tourism of the Yellow River from the perspective of social media, promote the innovative communication of the Yellow River culture and the image of the Yellow River, and contribute to the development of the international industrial system of the cultural tourism of the Yellow River.

1.4 Research significance

At the cultural level, it is beneficial for more audiences to understand the rich connotation of the Yellow River culture and promote the international communication of the Yellow River culture. At the economic level, under the background of the national efforts to develop the tertiary industry, the image of the Yellow River is a key factor in determining whether the tourism resources of the Yellow River have popularity and reputation. Through the construction of the model and the analysis of the research background, this study puts forward targeted countermeasures to help the development of the cultural tourism of the Yellow River.

2 RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Research method

Grounded theory was proposed by American scholars Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss et al. It is a qualitative research method to build a theoretical framework based on empirical data⁶. The innovative expression forms of the Yellow River culture in contemporary China are becoming more and more diversified. Therefore, the grounded theory is needed to gradually code the samples and complete the construction of the theoretical model.

2.2 Sample selection and data collection

The samples of this paper include 30 articles from the CNKI, 21 media reports and 11 interview data. In the literature screening, the HowNet was used as the literature search

database, and "Yellow River culture communication" was used as the key word. The literature retrieved was screened according to the theme, title and abstract. In the media reporting screening, the netizen click rate, innovative expression and platform influence were used as indicators, combined with the author's interview experience and well-known interview cases, as the selected samples. As show in Fig. 1.



Fig. 1. Word cloud map of the influencing factors of innovative dissemination of the Yellow River culture

3 CODING ANALYSIS OF DATA

3.1 Open coding

In order to reduce subjective influence, the original text was used as a tag for semantic coding when the original data was imported into NVivo20 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Example of preliminary conceptualization process of materials

Original article materials	Concept of initialization	category
The content and procedures of folk customs are gradually disappearing, and many young people are ignorant of them. Some even consider not participating, not facing, and not being immersed in such folk activities as a necessary and fashionable expression of development.	The cultural consciousness of young people is gradually losing	Current situation of cultural dissemination

In this study, 26 literatures, 16 media reports and 7 interview materials were randomly selected from 62 original materials, and a total of 49 materials were read sentence by sentence (the remaining part was used for theoretical saturation test). The sentences were abstracted, encoded and named, and 758 original records were sorted out for conceptual classification. After integration and screening, 63 initial concepts (a1-a63) were obtained.

Table 2. Examples of Categorization (63 initial concepts)

category	Initial concept	Example of raw materials
	a1 Cultural marginalization	Many skills are forgotten, excluded, and marginalized by people.
b1 Communication Status	a2 Low degree of technological integration	There are few innovative achievements, and the new digital cultural and creative industry needs to be stimulated.
	a3 Disjointed from modernity	The differences with modern lifestyles pose developmental challenges for culture.
	a4 Cultural conscious loss	Young people don't even know when they ask, and they don't even participate in folk activities.
	a5 no successor	Young people don't like learning and find it troublesome, they all want to eat a bowl of easy food.
	a6 The limitations of media	The dissemination form of traditional media is relatively single and cannot fully showcase cultural charm.
	a7 The dispersion of dissemination	Regional and segmented dissemination leads to local centrism tendencies such as homogeneous competition.
b2 Causes of Difficulties	a8 Fragmentation of information	The phenomenon of fragmentation is prominent in the dissemination of Yellow River culture.
	a9 generation difference	Young people feel that this activity is unappealing and unappealing.
	a10 Foreign cultural shock	The infiltration of foreign ideas causes folk culture to lose its own style.
	a11 The disintegration of traditional society	The traditional social structure has disintegrated, and folk cultural traditions and daily life have rapidly disappeared.
	a12 Difficulty in data collection	Writing "Mother River" is a big project, and collecting materials is very difficult.
	a13 Patriotic sentiment	The values of loyalty, kindness, righteousness, and patriotism are integrated into it.
b3 Value diversity	a14 National Character	Promote young people's respect for family ethics and identification with national culture.
	a15 Homesickness and homesickness	Seeing the local accent, touching the local sentiment, and relieving homesickness.
...

	a58 Cultural resource guarantee system	Before cultural dissemination, it is necessary to establish a comprehensive cultural security system.
b16 top-level design	a59 Building a database of communication talents	By creating an excellent talent pool, creative talents are included in the talent pool.
	a60 Cultivate communication leadership group	The cultural communication leadership group is responsible for formulating the Yellow River cultural communication plan.
b17 Cross regional collaborative communication	a61 Demonstration role of special areas	Highlighting the exemplary and leading role of the Yellow River's "Ji" bend and the "Golden Triangle" region.
	a62 Cross provincial cultural community	Chain cultural and tourism resources from various regions along the route to achieve resource integration.
b18 Official website operation	a63 Set up official website columns	The official website of the People's Government of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region has set up a section on "Specialty Folk Customs".

Then, according to the category relationship between the initial concepts, they were merged, and the category to which they belonged was determined based on the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Finally, the 63 initial concepts were summarized into 18 categories (b1-b18) of open coding examples (see Table 2).

3.2 Spindle coding

The potential logical links between categories can be found through the spindle coding, and a total of 6 main categories were summarized (see Table 3).

Table 3. The main category formed by spindle encoding

Main category	Corresponding category	Category connotation
c1 Summary of Communication Dilemmas	b1 Communication Status	The current situation of the dissemination of Yellow River culture is not optimistic.
	b2 Causes of Difficulties	The impact of foreign cultures and intergenerational differences are the causes of communication difficulties.
c2 Communication value judgment	b3 Value diversity	The Yellow River culture awakens the national memory of the masses with patriotism.
	b4 Internationalization of communication	To resonate with overseas audiences with a shared global value system.
c3 Production of Communication Content	b5 Resource digitization	Digitize the recording of cultural resources to facilitate digital promotion.
	b6 Production of content	Enable participants to actively become producers of content.

c4 Elements of Communication Media	b7 Integrated Media Narrative	Collaborative narrative between traditional media and new media platforms to achieve overall effects.
	b8 Communication carrier	Carrying the connotation of Yellow River culture through aesthetic and spatial carriers.
	b9 Presentation of audience needs	Deeply explore user needs and form a hierarchical product.
c5 Communication audience perspective	b10 Media narrative methods	Adopting multiple narrative methods to create a relaxed narrative style.
	b11 Promoting participation through interaction	Use topic heat and incentive mechanisms to attract audience participation.
	b12 The combination of senses	Using various sensory forms such as audio-visual to immerse the audience in an immersive experience.
	b13 Consumption promotes cultural assetization	The consumption process of users is the process of cultural reproduction.
c6 Communication strategy path	b14 IPization of Yellow River Culture	Extract the iconic symbols of the Yellow River culture and develop visual IPs.
	b15 Modern expression of traditional culture	The possibility of applying traditional culture in modern society.
	b16 top-level design	The top-level design is crucial for planning and leading the development of communication work.
	b17 Cross regional collaborative communication	Realize the integration of resources in various provinces along the Yellow River and form a collaborative force for dissemination.
	b18 Official website operation	Establish an official promotional website and improve official accounts such as WeChat and Weibo.

3.3 Selective coding

After selective coding, a "story line" is sorted out. First of all, the contradiction between the current propagation predicament of the Yellow River culture and its diversified propagation value has become the stimulus factor driving the innovative expression of the Yellow River culture. Secondly, the production of content is the basis of propagation. In addition, the media elements are the channels of propagation. Finally, with the help of propagation strategies, the cultural content production is fed back, providing a continuous driving force for innovative expression.

3.4 Theoretical saturation test

The remaining 13 original materials are coded and analyzed in the same process, and no new category and important relationship are produced, which indicates that the theoretical model has reached the saturation state. See Fig. 2.

4 EXPLANATION OF THE THEORETICAL MODEL OF PROPAGATION

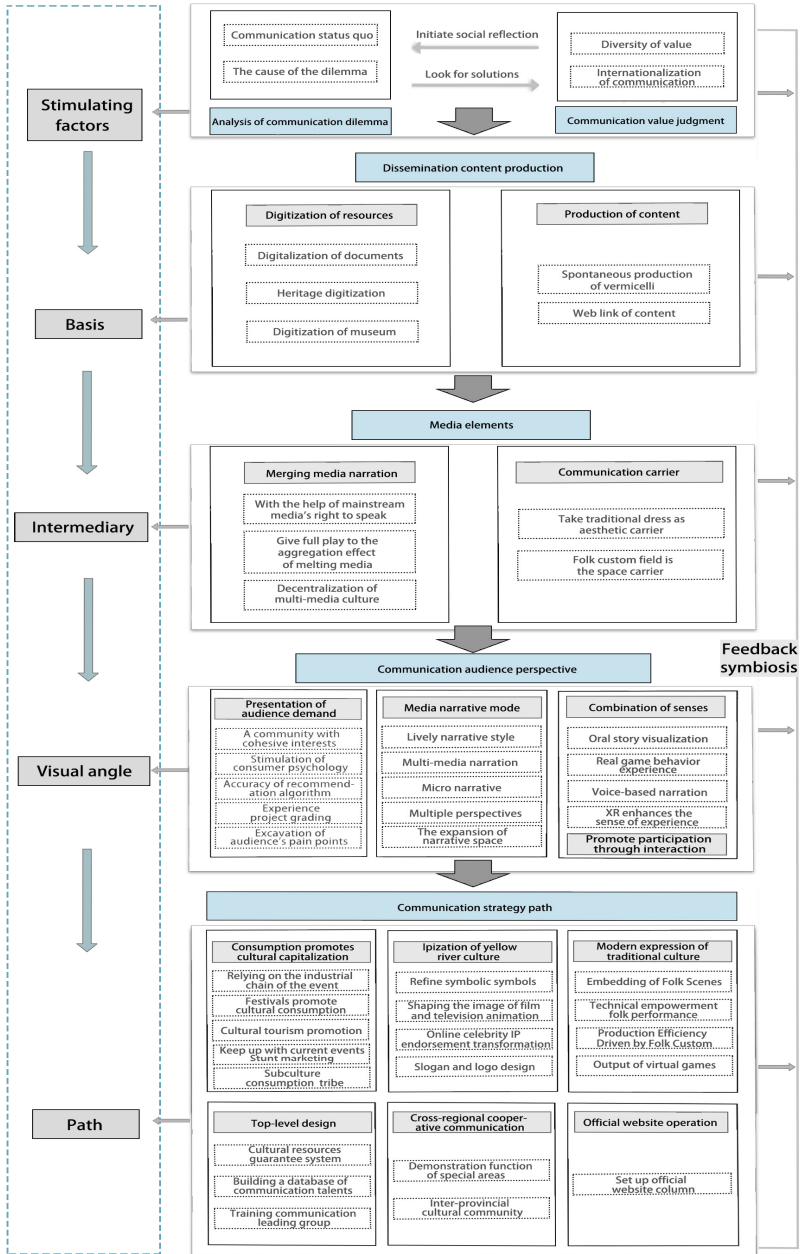


Fig. 2. Innovation Communication Theory Model

4.1 Motivation of propagation: predicament and value judgment

After five thousand years of development, the Yellow River civilization has a very important position in Chinese civilization. However, the Yellow River culture is gradually exiting modern life and facing the dilemma of inheritance and generation. The contradiction between the propagation predicament of the Yellow River culture and the diversified propagation value has become the stimulus factor driving the innovative expression of the Yellow River folk culture.

4.2 The basis of propagation: high-quality content production

High-quality content and creation are the basis of propagation. The former needs to digitize the relevant literature and heritage of the Yellow River culture and transform it into digital resources that can be promoted by network media, which determines the resource threshold of cultural innovative expression. The latter indicates the connection between the production form of content and the content, which is the basic idea of re-creation of first-hand original data.

4.3 Communication intermediary: diversified media elements

From the perspective of social media, diverse communication forms affect the communication effect. Give full play to the aggregation force of traditional media and new media, supplemented by the aesthetic carrier and space carrier of culture, realize the supplementary narrative of various media, and comprehensively display the charm of Yellow River culture.

4.4 Communication perspective: effective communication based on audience demand

In the communication era, tapping user needs is the key factor that determines the communication effect. Promote participation with interaction, enhance experience with senses, and reduce the "threshold" of accepting culture with diverse narrative methods. Through the form of watching and listening, let the Yellow River culture connect the emotional identification in the context of the community of shared future of mankind.

4.5 Communication strategy: the optimal path of the expression of Yellow River culture

The cultural communication cannot be separated from planning and guidance, top-level design, cross-regional cooperation, and official website operation, which gives direction to the communication. Promote cultural assetization, IPization of Yellow River culture, and modern expression of traditional culture with consumption, which is a micro strategy under macro guidance.

5 RESEARCH PROSPECT AND SUGGESTIONS

The Yellow River, which has nurtured splendid treasures such as Hehuang culture, Heluo culture, Guanzhong culture and Qilu culture, has been the political, economic and cultural center for more than 3,000 years. From the perspective of social media, to build a good national image of "China's Yellow River", the Yellow River culture should be the core and the Yellow River cultural tourism belt should be the axis. The integration of culture and tourism is an effective path for the Yellow River culture to "go out". Therefore, in order to help the international spread of Yellow River culture and promote the construction of Yellow River cultural tourism belt, the author puts forward the following five suggestions of "cultural tourism plus".

5.1 Cultural tourism + digital: building a digital protection system to promote the digital development of Yellow River cultural tourism

The Yellow River cultural tourism should be comprehensively transformed in the digital age (including the mode of transmission and development), and digital empowerment should be realized through big data, cloud computing and other technologies to help the development and application of Yellow River cultural resources. Through "digital empowerment", cultural innovation and the practice of tourism industry can be truly stimulated, and the organic integration of the two can promote the high-quality development of the Yellow River cultural tourism industry. The nine provinces of the Yellow River have museums and other cultural venues and facilities. By using AI and VR means, the interaction between museum collections and memorial books and the digital regeneration of Yellow River culture can be realized. In recent years, the Yellow River culture has repeatedly come out of the circle, which is essentially the embodiment of the Yellow River culture to realize the industrial operation based on digital technology, and promotes the digital operation of the cultural tourism industry.

5.2 Cultural tourism + all-media matrix: build an all-media matrix to realize multi-channel consolidated marketing network

In order to promote the cultural communication of the Yellow River and the development of the cultural tourism industry, the author suggests that the government and relevant social units build an all-media matrix, which will carry out joint communication between traditional media such as television, radio, newspapers and magazines and new media platforms such as two micro and one end, TikTok, Bilibili and Little Red Book-little, and operate the platform according to the characteristics of the audience to form effective interaction with the potential audience. Based on this, the interactive nature of the media should be continuously enhanced, and the interactive behavior should be continuously captured and continuously promoted. In addition, a multi-channel communication system should also be built to achieve standardization and systematization. In terms of international communication, the author suggests promoting the Yellow River culture on international platforms such as Twitter and YouTube, realizing the

linkage of domestic and foreign media platforms, and showing China's demeanor of a cultural power.

5.3 Cultural tourism + information visualization: explore information visualization to increase the international audience of the Yellow River cultural tourism

The opening of the Silk Road has enabled the Yellow River culture and extra-regional culture to exchange and absorb each other, and has enabled the international development of the Yellow River cultural tourism to have historical rationality. However, at present, the international audience knows little about the Yellow River culture. In order to bring international economic benefits from the Yellow River culture, the author suggests creating an international information service-type Yellow River cultural tourism belt, serving the international audience through information visualization, so that the international audience can obtain relevant information in real time, such as cultural and tourism themes, history and service information⁷. Information visualization can not only retain the rigor and artistry of cultural knowledge, but also a tool that can shorten the distance between culture and audience. It can abstract and refine the "Yellow River culture", and show it to international tourists through visual elements such as charts and text after sorting and analysis.

5.4 Cultural tourism + industrial integration: promote the integration of industry, teaching and research, and play a cross-border promoting role of the Yellow River cultural tourism

Industrial integration is an important path and effective support for the inheritance and development of the Yellow River culture. On the one hand, government departments should increase the in-depth mining and integration of the cultural resources of the Yellow River, build and store the Yellow River resource platform and cultural database well, so that the world's tourists can feel the unique cultural connotation of the Yellow River. On the other hand, the government should strengthen cooperation with colleges and universities, cultural stations, museums and other units, and take the Yellow River culture as a platform for classroom practice. The two sides should be inclusive and win-win, and help the cross-border integration of cultural and tourism related industries.

5.5 Cultural tourism + Yellow River IP: building the Yellow River brand IP, helping cultural resources to transform cultural capital

Cross-media transformation is an important technical means to build the Yellow River brand IP. This refers to the repetition in the audience's vision in the form of different media, which is embodied in the transformation of artistic expression forms from traditional culture to film and television, new media (including online dramas, variety shows, online games, animation, virtual reality, etc.). The cultural tourism industry is the concrete expression of the government's transformation of cultural resources into

cultural capital. The nine provinces of the Yellow River (including autonomous regions) can dig deep into the cultural elements with high identification and strong representativeness in local culture and symbolize them to build the brand image of the Yellow River in China.

6 CONCLUSION

This paper adopts the method of grounded theory to gradually code and systematically analyze 30 literatures, 21 media reports and 11 interview materials, and constructs the theoretical model of the innovative communication of the Yellow River culture in contemporary China based on the grounded theory. The five modules in the model are interdependent and mutually influential, which together constitute the logical closed loop of the innovative expression of the Yellow River culture in the context of social media. In the perspective of social media, to build a good national image of "China's Yellow River", we should take cultural resources as the core, take cultural creativity transformation and innovative development concept as the guidance, take digital technology as the enabling scene representation, and promote the construction of the Yellow River cultural tourism belt through the five strategies of "cultural tourism +", help the international spread of the Yellow River culture, and make it gradually become a national cultural and economic brand that leads the international fashion.

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