

A Study on Rural Cultural and Tourism Publicity Strategies from the Perspective of Cross-Cultural Communication: Taking Rural Tourism in Quzhou as an Example

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Abstract: Rural China boasts distinctive natural landscapes and a wealth of historical and folk cultures, being the origin of agricultural civilization and the source of many remarkable traditional Chinese cultures. In the new era, rural areas have undergone revitalization through significant strategic initiatives, becoming a key avenue for the world to gain insight into China. Amid globalization, there is a growing recognition of the importance of external communication; however, challenges remain due to limited efforts and reach in this area. This paper examines the current state of external communication regarding rural culture and tourism through five dimensions: the sources of communication, the content shared, the existing channels of dissemination, the target audiences, and the impact of the communication, utilizing the 5W model of cross-cultural communication. Based on this analysis, the paper suggests targeted strategies for external communication to enhance the effectiveness of outreach plans and improve the quality of external messaging.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural Communication; Rural Tourism; Publicity; Cultural Value; Content of Ecology

1. Introduction

In order to facilitate the global dissemination of exemplary traditional Chinese culture, it is essential to transcend the constraints inherent in cross-cultural communication, with publicity serving as a pivotal mechanism in this process. The report emphasizes the need to expedite the development of China's discourse and narrative frameworks, effectively narrating compelling Chinese stories, amplifying positive Chinese perspectives, and portraying

an image of China that is credible, endearing, and respectable. China's rural regions, enriched by a 5,000-year legacy of agricultural civilization and invigorated by contemporary developments, possess both natural and cultural assets. The promotion of rural cultural tourism is crucial for constructing a genuine, multidimensional, and vibrant representation of China, facilitating the sharing of China's experiences and insights with developing nations and the global community, and offering solutions rooted in Chinese wisdom.

2. Cross-Cultural Communication

2.1 Connotation of Cross-Cultural Communication

Cross-cultural communication (CCC) refers to the interpersonal communication and information dissemination activities between members of society with different cultural backgrounds, and also involves the process of the migration, diffusion and change of various cultural elements in the global society, as well as their impact on different groups, cultures, countries and even human communities [1]. On one hand, CCC fosters global cultural exchanges and contributes to the flourishing of the cultural economy worldwide, celebrating the unique beauty of diverse cultures. Conversely, certain recipient nations may exhibit resistance to foreign cultures during the communication process, presenting challenges for the initiators of cultural exchange, who may grapple with issues of cultural identity and communication imbalances.

In the context of globalization, the interactions among countries are increasingly interconnected, leading to more frequent cross-cultural exchanges. China is proactively promoting its rich cultural heritage on the global stage, necessitating an enhancement of

intercultural communication competencies and a deepening of exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.

2.2 5W Mode of Cross-Cultural Communication

The 5W model, initially proposed by American scholar Harold D. Lasswell, serves as a framework for analyzing human social communication activities. The components of the model—"Who," "in which channel," "to whom," "say what," and "with what effect"—correspond to key elements of communication. "Who" identifies the initiator of CCC; "in which channel" pertains to the tools and methods employed for cultural dissemination; "to whom" refers to the audience receiving the communication; "say what" involves the analysis and integration of the cultural content being shared; and "with what effect" assesses the impact of the communication and the feedback from the audience.

As a significant instrument in communication studies, the 5W model offers valuable insights for the promotion of rural culture and tourism. By optimizing content elements and innovating media formats, communicators can effectively influence and persuade their audiences, thereby achieving favorable publicity outcomes.

3. Value Analysis of Cross-Cultural Communication of Rural Cultural Tourism

3.1 Political Value

Rural tourism publicity has shaped a new rural tourism model for the world, creating a framework for mutually beneficial cooperation and becoming an important window for observing China's modernization. As one of the four ancient civilizations, China has a profound and rich culture that spans over 5,000 years of civilization. In recent years, there has been a wave of negative portrayals of China within the international community, largely due to the limited understanding of China's economy and culture in many Western nations, which has led to the formation of various stereotypes. These misconceptions hinder China's attempts to cultivate a positive national image and develop its own narrative. China's rural regions have developed unique rural development strategies, bolstered by initiatives like rural revitalization and poverty alleviation.

They have capitalized on their distinctive cuisine and regional cultures to create high-quality tourism routes and have established a sustainable rural eco-tourism industry. In the digital era, new productive forces are enhancing rural revitalization and fostering the emergence of digital rural areas. As the world evolves, the globalization framework characterized by urban-centric, consumer-driven, and digital capitalist trends is encountering significant challenges. China's counties and villages offer a valuable approach that not only helps reshape global perceptions of Chinese rural life but also presents a realistic, multi-dimensional view of China. This approach holds significant relevance for addressing development issues faced by the Global South and beyond [2].

3.2 Economic Value

In the post-pandemic period, rural cultural tourism has experienced a resurgence, with its promotion contributing to the growth of the rural economy. A report from the United Nations World Tourism Organization indicates that by the first quarter of 2024, international tourism had rebounded to 97% of pre-pandemic levels. The globalization of rural tourism is on the rise, with Europe's annual tourism industry valued at \$218 billion, of which rural tourism accounts for approximately 5% to 10%. Developed nations like those in Europe, the United States, and Japan have increasingly transformed into multi-functional rural tourism hubs that combine various activities such as leisure, education, and vacationing, yielding greater economic benefits. These countries recognize rural tourism as a catalyst for economic growth and diversification in rural areas. Currently, rural cultural tourism across China is evolving towards a more integrated model that combines tourism, research, and healthcare, with cultural tourism resources being developed more deeply. This evolution has moved from traditional activities like fruit and vegetable picking to immersive experiences and innovative formats that cater to the preferences of the new generation of cultural tourists, resulting in the emergence of numerous cultural and creative intellectual properties.

Rural tourism can not only promote the direct consumption of transportation, accommodation,

catering and other aspects in rural destinations, but also effectively promote the development and integrated development of different forms of local agriculture, handicraft industry, cultural industry and other industries, and also promote the employment of rural population to a certain extent. In the context of digital village construction, the increase in the popularity of rural tourism has injected vitality into digital economic formats such as rural new media industry and e-commerce live broadcasting.[3] The promotion of rural cultural tourism not only boosts local economies and markets cultural products with symbolic significance abroad but also captures the interest of international audiences. New formats, such as live streaming, demonstrate how digital technology can enhance economic opportunities and enrich lives, presenting a vibrant image of a flourishing digital countryside to the world.

3.3 Cultural Value

The promotion of rural cultural tourism serves to enhance cultural confidence, vitality, and motivation, while simultaneously enriching global cultural diversity and showcasing the allure of Chinese culture. The report explicitly articulates the objective of "upholding the culture of tourism and fostering the deep integration and development of culture and tourism," thereby providing a framework and strategic direction for rural tourism in the contemporary era. The countryside has historically nurtured the agricultural civilization of the Chinese populace for millennia, resulting in the emergence of distinctive regional and local cultures. Each element of the rural landscape, from bricks and tiles to flora, embodies historical significance and evokes the collective nostalgia of successive generations. As noted by the esteemed scholar Feng Jicai, "Every ancient village is a heavy book." China's expansive territory is characterized by diverse village styles and local customs, with variations in historical and cultural significance, architectural uniqueness, folk traditions, and culinary heritage. Furthermore, the rural areas of China are repositories of rich intangible cultural heritage, which encapsulates the cumulative achievements of the Chinese nation over generations and reflects the essence of national wisdom. This heritage transcends

mere skills or lifestyles; it embodies the national spirit and emotional depth, constituting a vital component of the esteemed traditional culture of China. In the contemporary era, rural culture evolves in tandem with societal progress, adapting and transforming creatively and innovatively, thereby becoming a significant medium for expressing national spirit and identity.

Moreover, local social relations, characterized by principles such as "harmony between nature and humanity," "sincerity and harmony," and "benevolence and kindness towards neighbors," reflect the cosmological, world, social, and moral perspectives that the Chinese people have cultivated through their long-standing agricultural practices and lifestyles. With mutual assistance and kindness as the spiritual foundation, and local cultural expressions, such as intangible cultural heritage, serving as the framework, there is a concerted effort to integrate contemporary values with reform and innovation. This synergy aims to produce international communication initiatives that resonate with, unite, and uplift communities, thereby becoming a crucial instrument for the external promotion of rural China [4].

3.4 Ecological Value

In the context of industrialization, the global climate has experienced warming trends, accompanied by an increase in extreme weather events. In pursuit of economic development, rural areas in China have consistently adhered to the dual-mountain concept, which posits that "clear waters and green mountains are as valuable as mountains of gold and silver." This commitment has manifested in various initiatives, including collaborative governance of waterways and air quality, innovative ecological protection strategies, and efforts to preserve pristine natural environments. Consequently, the development of rural cultural tourism leverages the natural landscape as a foundation, with the picturesque green mountains and tranquil waters serving as integral components of this endeavor, giving tourists the feeling of being in the scene and promoting the concept of green life, which plays an important role in conveying the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature. The wisdom of ecological civilization in China's

rural areas, such as "harmony between nature and man" and "proper utilization", not only demonstrates the Chinese people's new ecological concept of adapting to nature and living in harmony with nature and their determination to build a community with a shared future for mankind, but also shares their experience in ecological civilization construction with the world.

4. Analysis of 5W Mode of Cross-Cultural Communication in Quzhou Rural Cultural Tourism

4.1 Roles of Communicator

4.1.1 Government organization

Quzhou, an ancient city steeped in southern Confucian traditions, is recognized as the origin of "two sub-cultures" that embody a rich cultural and folk heritage. Presently, Quzhou is home to one item inscribed on the "Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity," twelve items designated as national intangible cultural heritage, and over 400 items categorized as provincial and municipal intangible cultural heritage. In recent years, the Quzhou government has prioritized the preservation, inheritance, and innovation of its cultural assets while actively promoting cultural tourism. On June 11, 2022, four overseas social media accounts, along with two accounts from China.com, simultaneously disseminated four videos that showcased Quzhou's intangible cultural heritage to an international audience. These videos emphasized the city's historical significance, cultural appeal, and inclusive development, garnering widespread acclaim. In July of the same year, China Daily, the national core platform for external publicity in China, extensively featured Nankong Holy Land in Quzhou City, Zhejiang Province. A full-page pictorial report in English was published to illustrate how Quzhou is enhancing its status as a national 5A-level tourist attraction centered on Nankong culture, with this report prominently displayed on the front page of the newspaper.

On October 18, 2024, Quzhou Cultural Tourism launched an initiative titled "Global Free Tour Quzhou," which grants international tourists complimentary access to 14 key scenic locations throughout the city. Data from

Quzhou Cultural Tourism during the National Day celebrations, held from September 20 to October 7, 2024, indicated that a total of 134,569 pieces of public opinion information related to Quzhou's cultural tourism were disseminated across various online platforms. However, it is important to note that much of this promotional activity primarily targets domestic audiences from different regions, resulting in limited visibility for rural cultural tourism initiatives. Additionally, promotional materials related to rural cultural tourism often lack adequate translation services.

4.1.2 College teachers and students

Effective publicity for rural cultural tourism necessitates that communicators possess proficiency in foreign languages, extensive translation experience, and a deep understanding of rural cultural history. They must also exhibit a genuine interest in promoting rural cultural tourism and possess an international perspective that is attuned to the interests of foreign readers. Only through these means can the narratives surrounding "Quzhou rural cultural tourism" be effectively conveyed, thereby enhancing the publicity of rural cultural tourism. For instance, Quzhou College is home to a cadre of educators with robust professional expertise and foreign language qualifications. This year, the institution has welcomed a diverse group of international students, who possess the potential to contribute significantly to the promotion of rural cultural tourism in Quzhou, thereby emerging as a vital force in this endeavor.

4.2 Content of External Publicity and Communication

4.2.1 Village landscape

Natural landscapes constitute a significant aspect of CCC. On September 19, 2024, the Anhui Cultural Travel photo wall account shared an image depicting the Xuancheng tea fields, accompanied by a caption that poetically described the scene: "The stars are scattered like pearls, reflecting on the quiet Luci tea garden, as if covering this Verde world with a mysterious night." By September 30, this post had garnered 136,000 likes. Quzhou is home to numerous distinctive villages and unique natural landscapes, including Jiangwu Village, which is encircled by mountains and characterized by lush

greenery, flowing water, and a rich historical ambiance. Notable features include a prominent cluster of ancient trees at the village's entrance, as well as Huangtang Village, often referred to as the "Shangri-La of western Zhejiang." Additionally, Xiashan ancient village showcases the unique architectural style of Hui culture, with its white walls, tiled roofs, and intricate wood and brick carvings. Other attractions in the region include Jianglang Mountain and Yaowang Mountain. However, it has been observed that there is a scarcity of textual and video materials promoting Quzhou's rural cultural tourism. Searches for "Quzhou cultural tourism publicity" yield minimal results, and certain scenic spots lack bilingual descriptions.

4.2.2 Intangible cultural heritage

Preliminary statistics indicate that TikTok videos related to intangible cultural heritage have amassed over 31 billion views, with projects such as martial arts, acupuncture, bamboo weaving, shadow puppetry, and handmade ceramic techniques attracting significant interest from international audiences. As early as 2021, bamboo weaving technology had reached over 70 million views on TikTok, while a single video showcasing micro-ceramic production exceeded 4 million views. This suggests that intangible cultural heritage possesses a viable market abroad. Quzhou boasts a variety of intangible cultural heritage projects, including bamboo weaving, knitting, white porcelain, colored clay sculpture, Quxiang making, as well as culinary skills such as sugar painting, sesame cake, and Qujiang fried cake. Additionally, folk traditions like the Jiuhua Spring Festival and hand lion dance contribute to the region's cultural richness. Nevertheless, the development of intangible cultural heritage content within Quzhou's rural cultural tourism remains largely untapped.

4.2.3 Special food

Quzhou's culinary offerings are exceptional, featuring a diverse array of snacks and flavors. The food of Quzhou, including dishes such as shiso fried green lion, has been highlighted in the documentary series "A Bite of China 2," and has received endorsements from Olympic champions like Huang Yaqiong and Liu Yuchen. Chen Xiaoqing, the director of "A Bite of China," has remarked, "Food is the home of the world. By awakening people's

understanding of food and empathizing with their emotions, food documentaries can build a bridge of communication and dialogue between people overseas." Chinese cuisine enjoys a global reputation, and food documentaries constitute a significant segment of the international documentary market, attracting considerable interest from overseas audiences.

4.2.4 Humanistic spirit

The villages in Quzhou are characterized not only by their picturesque landscapes but also by their rich cultural heritage. For instance, Yudong Village, recognized as one of "China's top ten painting towns," boasts a population of approximately 300 farmer painters, indicating that one in every three residents engages in this artistic vocation. Additionally, the village of Dachen in Jiangshan, Quzhou, is notable for its folk song "Mother's Bowl of Dachen Noodles," which has been designated as a national gift during the G20 Hangzhou Summit. These traditional songs and customs, which have been preserved over time, embody the humanistic spirit of the Quzhou populace, characterized by positivity, optimism, a love for life, filial piety, and respect for elders, thus serving as a distinctive spiritual emblem within the national culture.

4.3 External Publicity Channels

Currently, the promotion of cultural tourism in Quzhou employs a variety of platforms, including traditional print media such as Quzhou Daily, as well as new media outlets like the Quzhou Cultural Tourism public account and video platforms. Additionally, social media platforms such as XiaoHongshu and Douyin are utilized for promotional purposes. In 2024, the Quzhou government is set to collaborate with Zhejiang Satellite TV to launch a series of "Fun Villages" activities. Traditional media, particularly newspapers, offer advantages such as thorough documentation, ease of repeated reading, and the capacity for in-depth research, while also serving as a long-term data repository. However, their limitations include restricted layout options and slower updates. Conversely, new media platforms, including WeChat public account posts and short videos, are visually engaging and cater to readers' preferences for concise information, thereby enhancing interactivity and providing valuable

data for refining external promotional strategies. Despite the diverse content available for rural cultural tourism promotion in Quzhou, there remains a notable deficiency in awareness and effective practices regarding external publicity, resulting in suboptimal utilization of both online and offline media channels.

4.4 External Publicity and Communication Audiences

With the recent implementation of the 144-hour visa-free transit policy, there has been a surge in foreign tourists engaging in "City Travel," with terms related to "China tourism" trending prominently on TikTok. The experiences shared by these international visitors have further disseminated traditional Chinese culture, increased global visibility, and fostered appreciation for Chinese culture and cuisine among foreign audiences. The target audience for Quzhou's rural cultural tourism promotion primarily includes tourists visiting rural areas, as well as overseas students and scholars from diverse cultural backgrounds. While these individuals exhibit a keen interest in traditional Chinese culture, they often lack effective avenues for understanding it and are eager to gain a more comprehensive perspective on China. Unfortunately, these groups have not received adequate attention in promotional efforts.

4.5 The Effect of External Publicity

The data pertaining to inbound tourism in Quzhou, along with tourist evaluations of the region, serve as indicators of the effectiveness of Quzhou's rural cultural tourism promotion efforts. Tourist feedback is primarily derived from spontaneous short videos, vlogs, and external media interviews. However, the feedback mechanism is relatively simplistic, characterized by a limited sample size and a lack of comprehensive evaluation procedures concerning audience satisfaction, comprehension, and subsequent improvement strategies, which presents significant limitations. Furthermore, the intensity of external promotional activities influences the breadth and depth of the feedback received. Currently, Quzhou's rural cultural tourism promotion faces challenges, including a deficiency in external promotional materials and the absence of a robust and effective

feedback mechanism.

5. Optimizing Strategies for Cross-Cultural Communication of Rural Cultural Tourism Publicity

5.1 Cultivating a Talent Team

To address these issues, government entities could establish a sustainable and effective collaboration framework with local universities and tourism organizations. This initiative could involve the gradual enhancement of English translation materials for rural attractions and cultural sites, the cultivation of translation professionals with an international outlook, and the engagement of foreign language students in translation and interpretation roles at tourist sites through school training and volunteer recruitment. This would contribute to the formation of a specialized external promotion team.

In the context of CCC, foreign visitors to China play a crucial role as builders of the national image and disseminators of Chinese culture from an external perspective. They possess the intersubjective ability to narrate Chinese stories, and their communicative practices offer new avenues for the portrayal of China's image [5]. The government could implement relevant policies and regulations to support "foreign internet celebrities" who generate high-quality content, thereby enhancing the promotional efforts for Quzhou's rural cultural tourism.

5.2 Explore the Content of External Publicity

The promotion of rural cultural tourism should delve into engaging content that encompasses interest, storytelling, and aesthetic value, effectively conveying the "Chinese story." Scenic beauty that embodies local characteristics often resonates with international audiences. Utilizing food as a medium to share and promote the cultural evolution of a nation is a relatively accessible and gentle approach to external publicity [6]. Quzhou's rural cultural tourism promotion can explore its unique cultural attributes through village landscapes, intangible cultural heritage, and distinctive culinary offerings, while also innovating communication strategies.

In the realm of news reporting, television journalists should thoroughly investigate

materials that enhance the quality of external promotion. Concurrently, they can conduct special news reports focused on local cultural and tourism characteristics, thereby uncovering materials that facilitate innovation in external promotion through internal reporting [7].

5.3 Construct the Propagation Matrix

In addition to utilizing traditional print media for external promotion, the deployment of short videos capitalizes on advantages such as rapid dissemination, high acceptance rates, concentrated information delivery, and targeted marketing. This approach includes the publication of rural cultural tourism videos on platforms like TikTok to facilitate CCC. Furthermore, YouTube serves as a platform for interactive posts on international social media channels, aimed at engaging overseas audiences through comments, thereby enhancing user engagement and increasing activity and attention on foreign social media. Relevant technical departments are encouraged to leverage technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and 5G to conduct high-definition digital documentation of cultural artifacts. This initiative should maximize the use of corpus resources and establish online viewing platforms, including bilingual official websites and WeChat public accounts, to cater to the diverse needs of international audiences and stimulate their interest in gaining a deeper understanding of the content [8].

5.4 Grasp Audience Needs

The target audience for Quzhou's rural cultural tourism promotion possesses varied historical and cultural backgrounds, which complicates the translation of Chinese cultural information—such as characters, history, and allusions—within tourism texts. Foreign readers may encounter challenges in comprehending this information. Employing effective translation strategies and techniques can mitigate the misunderstandings arising from cultural disparities, thereby aligning the translations more closely with reader expectations [9]. During the English translation of rural tourism promotional materials, it is imperative to ensure clarity and avoid ambiguity, while also addressing the audience's needs to facilitate their understanding, digestion, absorption, and

dissemination of the information.

While singular online activities may lack a sense of engagement and authenticity, traditional offline events often fall short in terms of extensive outreach and depth of promotion. Therefore, a hybrid approach that integrates online and offline strategies is recommended. This could involve utilizing online public accounts and short videos on digital platforms to provide real-time updates on cultural tourism content, including historical references, narratives, and intangible cultural heritage techniques. Concurrently, offline activities such as tours, lectures, and exhibitions should be organized to enhance visitor experiences and accommodate the diverse preferences of the audience.

5.5 Establish Feedback Mechanism

Additionally, government collaboration with tourist sites and academic institutions is essential to establish a robust feedback mechanism for audience input. This could involve conducting interviews or distributing questionnaires to international audiences to ensure timely collection of their opinions and suggestions. It is also crucial to enhance the professional training and capacity of the translation team, enabling them to better comprehend and convey the significance and value of intangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, a system for the regular updating and iteration of translated materials should be established to ensure alignment with contemporary developments and the evolving needs of the audience [10].

Furthermore, it is imperative for the publicity team to implement a scientifically grounded and effective evaluation framework. This framework should involve quantitative analyses of various metrics, including page views of online public accounts, playback rates of short videos, as well as the number of likes, comments, and offline visitors. Such analyses will facilitate a comprehensive assessment of audience satisfaction and engagement, thereby enabling the optimization of external publicity strategies and enhancing the overall effectiveness of outreach efforts.

6. Conclusion

As the international communication landscape becomes increasingly competitive, promoting rural cultural tourism serves as a vital

mechanism for disseminating exemplary traditional Chinese culture on a global scale, thereby addressing significant challenges in global development. Nonetheless, current efforts in promoting rural cultural tourism exhibit several deficiencies, indicating that substantial progress is required to achieve effective advocacy and CCC in this domain, particularly through the application of the 5W model.

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