

The Value of Games in Cultural Dissemination – Take “Black Myth: Wukong” as an Example

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Abstract:

In the context of globalization, the importance of cultural dissemination should not be underestimated. Countries can establish a more distinctive image on the international stage and improve their international influence by enhancing the understanding and recognition to their own culture among people from different cultural backgrounds through cultural dissemination. In this process, games, as an emerging and dynamic carrier of cultural communication, are gradually showing their unique potential. In this study, we will concentrate on the significance of games to cultural dissemination and take the recent phenomenal game “Black Myth: Wukong” as a typical example for specific analysis. Research demonstrates that “Black Myth: Wukong” is not only closely connected to Chinese culture, but also has achieved remarkable results in spreading Chinese culture. It is an excellent platform to show Chinese culture to the world. Chinese cultural elements have been well represented in the game, which also makes the game more in-depth and distinguish from other ordinary games. The purpose of this study is to explore the value of games in cultural dissemination, and to explore how various cultural carriers can help cultural dissemination.

Keywords: Globalization; culture; Black Myth: Wukong.

1. Introduction

Cultural dissemination is becoming increasingly significant in the context of globalization. Cultural dissemination has grown to be a significant component of a nation’s soft power, which not only enables a nation to show its unique charm and culture but also influences the nation’s international image. A nation’s

international influence can be enhanced, and more people can comprehend and value its culture through the dissemination of a nation’s traditional culture. Cultural dissemination promotes cross-cultural understanding and communication, resulting in innovation and integration. Furthermore, the cultural industry plays an essential role in advancing the nation’s economic development. Through the promotion of

local culture, many nations attract a large number of international tourists, consumers, and investors. Meanwhile, cultural dissemination helps people become more culturally inclusive and improve their self-awareness. People may encounter various cultural elements, and individuals can find their unique selves under the collision of multiple cultures. Therefore, fostering global integration requires effective cultural dissemination.

In this context, Chinese culture has a profound impact on global civilization due to its rich connotations. In recent years, numerous studies on the global spread of Chinese culture have drawn our attention. An interdisciplinary approach reveals the complexity of cultural exchange and highlights the opportunities and challenges of promoting Chinese culture on the global stage, according to Kelly Kar Yue Chan and Chi Sum Garfield Lau, who compare and analyze the internationalization of Chinese culture in recent decades [1]. Jihua Yang and David Ocón studied the “going out” strategy of Chinese culture. Over the past two decades, China has promoted Chinese cultural products and services globally, thus promoting cultural exchanges and enabling the nation to enhance its soft power overseas. They examined the success and shortcomings of the “going out” strategy of Chinese culture and offered a neutral evaluation of all aspects [2]. Sheng Ding and Robert A. Saunders explore the growing cultural power of China and the impact of its increasing promotion of Chinese as a global idiom. China’s soft power is also on the rise through China’s efforts to promote the Chinese language and the growing use of Mandarin as a lingua franca for trade, increasing the resonance of Chinese culture overseas [3]. In the context of digital technology, Yuanchu Dai and Xinyu Cheng examine the dynamics of Chinese culture’s globalization, expose China’s communication system’s flaws, and suggest prospects and future paths for globalization [4]. In the process of Chinese culture going to the world, the traditional way of cultural dissemination has been progressively supplanted by digital, diversified, and contemporary methods. According to Yang Xueping’s research in “Strategies for Utilizing Electronic Games to Spread Excellent Traditional Culture in the Digital Age,” “In the context of the digital age, electronic games serve as a low-cost and accessible online entertainment activity, requiring only a mobile phone or a computer to achieve the purpose of relaxation and entertainment... This provides a broader audience basis for the dissemination of excellent traditional culture” [5]. As a new cultural carrier, electronic games have demonstrated strong spreading power and attractiveness.

This study first investigated the data and response after the launch of “Black Myth: Wukong” to determine that the game is an effective case of cultural dissemination.

The impact of the game’s cultural transmission was then examined through the distribution of 200 questionnaires. Through the statistics and analysis of the research data, the effectiveness of “Black Myth: Wukong” as a carrier of cultural dissemination is obtained, and the implications for the cross-cultural dissemination of other cultural products are obtained. The significance of this study is to analyze the multiple functions of games as a new cultural dissemination carrier, which not only reveals the cultural and social importance of electronic games but also provides profound spirits for the design and communication strategies of cultural products in the future.

2. Question Design

Among the many ways of cultural dissemination, although film and television works and short videos are intuitive, they are one-way transmission, resulting in limited interaction and participation of the audience. Electronic games can serve as a new carrier for cultural dissemination by allowing gamers to actively explore, comprehend, and experience different cultural elements in a highly immersive and interactive environment. Games are a productive context for research not only in terms of what they reveal about cognition (i.e., problem solving and its meaning) and the characteristics and features of successful and sustainable online communities but also in terms of what they can tell us (as both culture and cultural artifact) about life in a world that is increasingly globalized and networked [6]. “Black Myth: Wukong” is a successful example of cultural dissemination when it comes to the usage of games to disseminate culture. Based on the Chinese classic literature “Journey to the West”, “Black Myth: Wukong” is a game that incorporates many traditional Chinese cultural elements and has generated wide attention and discussion internationally. This study aims to explore the role of the game “Black Myth: Wukong” in cultural dissemination. This paper analyzes the effectiveness of the game as a carrier of cultural dissemination through the study of “Black Myth: Wukong”, especially the acceptance and recognition of Chinese cultural elements in the game, and the inspiration for the success of the game in the international market for the cross-cultural dissemination of other cultural products. The research question design will focus on the degree to which the game is relevant to Chinese culture and how the public perceives the ways the game spreads Chinese culture.

We conducted our research on three points through questionnaires. Considering gamers’ awareness and acceptance of Chinese culture, the primary question in the study is “How closely gamers think Black Myth: Wukong is relevant to Chinese culture?” Secondly, Video games can

provide endless hours of entertainment and their interactive nature allows gamers to become part of the story and face complex challenges in order to advance in the game. Thus, the entertainment and interactive value of games is paramount [7]. The design of the question will involve whether the player feels the cultural experience of the game's cultural elements, such as scene design, character development, adaptation, and innovative storyline. At last, it can help to derive some revelations by asking respondents which cultural elements in the game have the stron-

gest perception and appeal. Therefore, the second and third questions in the study are respectively "In what ways do gamers think 'Black Myth: Wukong' has contributed to the spread of Chinese culture?" and "In what ways do gamers think Black Myth: Wukong best reflects the depth of Chinese culture?" We can conclude whether and in what ways Chinese cultural elements are well displayed in the game through the three questions above. The specific questions are as follows in Table 1.

Table 1. Questions

	Questions
1	How closely gamers think Black Myth: Wukong is relevant to Chinese culture?
2	In what ways do gamers think Black Myth: Wukong has contributed to the spread of Chinese culture?
3	In what ways do gamers think Black Myth: Wukong best reflects the depth of Chinese culture?

3. Experiment

We choosed a professional platform named 'SOJUMP' for data collection questionnaire survey and obtained 200

data from September 22 to September 30, 2024. In next, we will analyze the results of the data survey in detail. The results of Question 1 are shown Fig. 1 below.

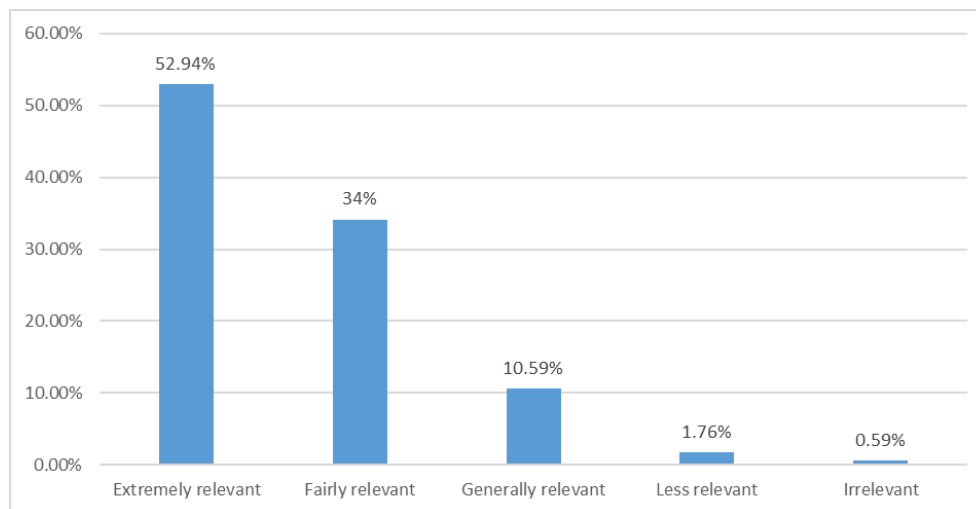


Fig. 1 The result of question 1

The data shows that 52.94% of the respondents believe that "Black Myth: Wukong" is extremely relevant to Chinese culture, and 34.12% of respondents believe that "Black Myth: Wukong" is fairly relevant to Chinese culture. From our perspective, the main reason why most gamers think that "Black Myth: Wukong" is related to Chinese culture is that "Black Myth: Wukong" is based on Journey to the West and presents the breadth and profundity of Chinese culture through exciting battle scenes, various side quests, hidden plots and so on. When producing a game, a contextualizing approach aims at placing the studied phenomenon within its larger setting, and instead

of looking at games or their design "as such," we explore the traditions, conventions, and practices around them and the cultural, social, and historical environments in which they originate [8]. In this way, "Black Myth: Wukong" utilizes modern game production techniques to present the traditional cultural characters and charming stories in Journey to the West to gamers in a vivid form, which not only promotes gamers' understanding of culture, but also injects new vitality into the inheritance of traditional culture. The results of Question 2 are shown Fig. 2 below.

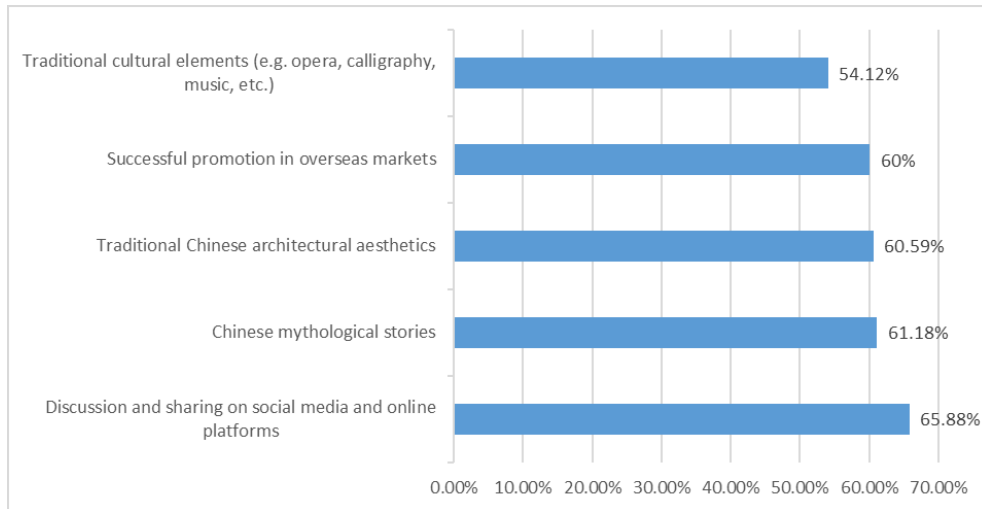


Fig. 2 The result of question 2

The data shows the majority of respondents who believe that “Black Myth: Wukong” is related to Chinese culture also believe that Chinese cultural elements are well represented in the game and that the success of the game depends largely on the attraction of Chinese cultural elements. The traditional Chinese architectural aesthetics, Chinese mythological stories and traditional cultural elements (e.g. opera, calligraphy, music, etc.) in “Black Myth: Wukong” have attracted a large number of gamers. These cultural elements are vividly displayed through the

game’s interactivity and scenography. On the one hand, the game can promote people’s understanding and awareness of Chinese culture, and on the other hand, the traditional aesthetics of Chinese culture can further enhance people’s sense of experience in the game. Therefore, “Black Myth: Wukong” becomes a big hit and gamers from different cultural backgrounds experienced the charm of Chinese culture. The results of Question 3 are shown Fig. 3 below.

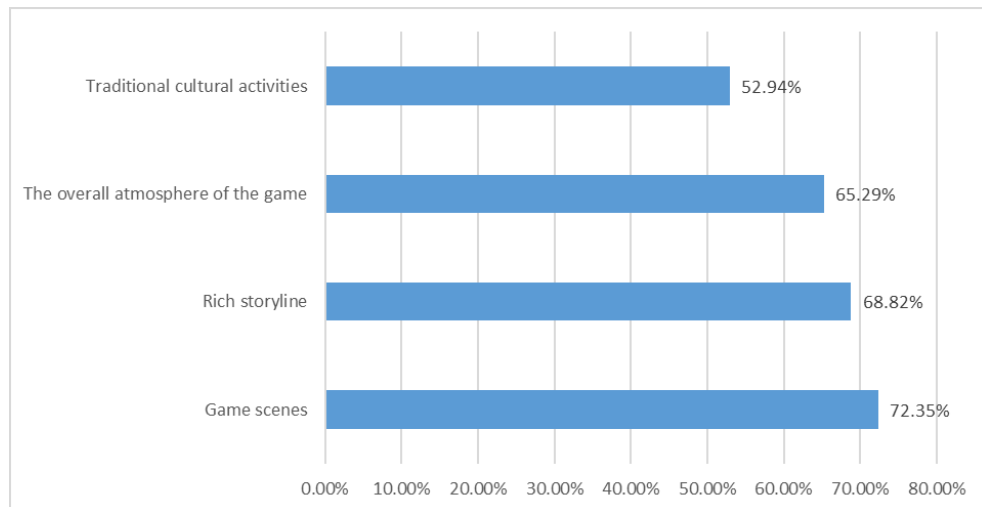


Fig. 3 The result of question 3

The data shows that most respondents who believe that “Black Myth: Wukong” is related to Chinese culture believe that “Black Myth: Wukong” fully demonstrates the depth of Chinese culture through its rich storyline, profound cultural connotation, meticulous cultural details, and traditional cultural activities. The results of the survey are probably due to the profound connotation and infinite richness of Chinese culture. Different from the narrative

plot and background of other ordinary games, “Black Myth: Wukong” has rich cultural materials, thus rising to a new level, which allows gamers exposed to Chinese culture in the game.

4. Revelation

Through in-depth research and analysis of the impact of

“Black Myth: Wukong” in the field of cultural dissemination, we have extracted the following key insights, hoping to provide valuable references for the international dissemination of future cultural products.

4.1 Innovative Presentation: Modern Stimulation of Traditional Cultural Vitality

The great success of “Black Myth: Wukong” is determined by its deep excavation and innovative presentation of traditional Chinese culture. The game not only retains the framework of classic mythology but also injects new vitality into traditional culture through modern visual arts, narrative techniques, and technological means. The combination of deep excavation and innovative presentation not only rejuvenates traditional culture in modern society but also demonstrates a perfect integration of traditional culture with modern technology. It inspires us that, in the context of globalization, if cultural products aim to stand out in the international market, they must deeply excavate the essence of local culture while daring to innovate and present traditional culture in novel ways. By integrating modern technology and artistic elements, traditional culture can be made more vivid and interesting, attracting the attention and affection of more international audiences. Expressing the content of traditional Chinese culture in the way of thinking and style of modern people and applying our own culture to everyday things can make cultural dissemination have content, characteristics, and meaning [9]. “Black Myth: Wukong” is a vivid practice of this concept.

4.2 Emotional Resonance: Deep Connections in Cultural Dissemination

The cultural elements in the game are not merely decorative or background elements; they are the core components that build emotional resonance and cultural identity within the game. The shaping of a game’s cultural and spiritual core is the foundational design work that gives the game its narrative concept. It is the internal driving force that guides the game towards a deeper, richer, and higher-quality development [10]. In “Black Myth: Wukong,” this cultural and spiritual core successfully establishes emotional resonance with gamers through its meticulously designed mythology framework and character portrayal, thereby enhancing gamers’ sense of identity and belonging towards Chinese culture. The cultural elements in the game are tightly integrated with the storyline, allowing gamers to resonate emotionally with traditional culture while experiencing the game. This resonance not only brings the audience closer to the culture but also sparks their interest and curiosity in traditional culture,

prompting them to actively explore and learn more about Chinese culture. Therefore, in the process of cultural dissemination, emphasizing emotional connections by telling captivating stories and showcasing unique cultural details is crucial for stimulating emotional resonance among the audience, enhancing the effectiveness of cultural dissemination, and promoting the development of cultural heritage.

4.3 Deep Integration: Effective Strategies for Cultural Dissemination

The popularity of “Black Myth: Wukong” in the international market is attributed to its precise market positioning and effective dissemination strategy. The game not only retains rich Chinese cultural characteristics but also successfully attracts the attention of global gamers through internationalized narrative methods and visual presentations. At the same time, the game deeply integrates cultural elements with game mechanics, making culture an integral part of gameplay and experience. The combination of precise positioning and deep integration not only enhances the fun and appeal of the game but also strengthens the effectiveness of cultural dissemination. It inspires us that in cross-cultural dissemination, we should have a deep understanding of the cultural background and the needs of the target market, which can help us formulate precise strategies for various people. Furthermore, emphasis should be placed on the organic integration of cultural elements with product functions, and we should enhance the cultural value of the product through innovative design and technological means. Through precise positioning and deep integration, effective dissemination and wide influence of culture can be achieved, which will promote the internationalization of Chinese culture.

5. Conclusion

Under the trend of cultural interaction around the world, this study focuses on the role of the game “Black Myth: Wukong”, which is rich in traditional Chinese cultural elements. Through questionnaires, we conducted an in-depth analysis of gamers’ acceptance and awareness of Chinese cultural elements in the game and explored the inspiration that the game’s success in the international market provides for the cross-cultural dissemination of other cultural products. The research results demonstrate that “Black Myth: Wukong” has garnered widespread attention internationally due to its rich cultural elements and high level of interactivity, becoming a successful case of cultural dissemination. This further validates the effectiveness and broad prospects of games as emerging carriers of cultural dissemination.

Future research can develop more various mechanisms of games in cultural dissemination, especially the role of interactivity in enhancing the effectiveness of cultural dissemination. Additionally, examining the synergistic effects of games with other media, as well as the unique role of games in cross-cultural dissemination, will provide new perspectives for the formulation of cultural dissemination strategies, promoting the development of the cultural industry and deepening cross-cultural exchanges.

Author Contribution

All the authors contributed equally, and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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