

Influence of Social Media on the Application of Chinese Traditional Cultural Elements in the Fashion Industry

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Abstract: The New Chinese Style is a popular outfit style in China, but it is still undergoing development. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the relationship between social media and New Chinese Style using a case study approach. According to the results, social media plays an essential role in the development of popular style and communication. The popularity of New Chinese Style on social media is inextricably linked to sales of New Chinese Style garments online shopping, and the comments of users also influence the design direction of New Chinese Style garments. The authenticity of information uploaded to social media should be strictly controlled. In addition, fashion designers should learn what is the true essence of Chinese traditional culture before designing clothes.

keywords: New Chinese Style, communication, Chinese traditional culture

1. Introduction

Upon the release of the skirts on Dior's official website in July 2022 for the early autumn of 2022, Chinese social media platforms erupted over the new skirt series. Because Chinese netizens observed that this skirt was very similar to the traditional Chinese horse-faced skirts from the Ming Dynasty, Dior's official description of this skirt was an iconic Dior silhouette, without mentioning Chinese traditional clothing. For more than ten days, this incident has been a hot topic on Chinese social media. The heated discussion about this incident on Chinese social media is closely related to the application of Chinese traditional cultural elements in the fashion industry by the Chinese public in recent years. Whether they are bloggers or ordinary users of various social media platforms, Chinese traditional cultural elements are increasingly being incorporated into public discourse.

New-Chinese style has become a popular search term on social media platforms in China. There was a report published on the RENOTALK website in foreign countries describing the new Chinese style, referring to adding some new elements based on Chinese style, without departing from it. The combination of East and West elements, or modern Chinese elements, can be used to create a new Chinese style. There is a great deal of openness and inclusivity in the new Chinese style [1]. As a result of the concerted effort made by advocates of this style on social media and through E-commerce, traditional cultural elements are increasingly being incorporated into modern style, as social media platforms have grown in popularity. Due to the popularity and wide-ranging nature of social media platforms, the spread of new Chinese styles is very fast and covers a wide audience.

In recent years, many experts have studied and made significant achievements in the field of New Chinese Style apparel. Several scholars have also studied the impact of social media on modern Hanfu. A brief summary of theoretical researches into the topic of New Chinese Style

apparel and self-media has revealed that the majority of existing studies are focused either on the design and purchase intentions of new Chinese apparel, or on the trend of apparel marketing in the global social media market. A limited number of scholars have explored the role of social media development in the design and marketing of new Chinese clothing.

According to Chen Han, the idea of 'neutralization and beauty' has manifested itself in new Chinese design aesthetics through artistic conception, form, color, and other aspects [2]. In the current era of overwhelming various design styles, Chen Han believes that the new Chinese design style is inseparable from the fact that the aesthetic principle of 'neutralization and beauty' still occupies the mainstream position despite the overwhelming number of design styles available [2]. The new Chinese design style has attracted wide attention largely due to the fact that it meets the expectations of the Chinese people for new elements created by integrating traditional aesthetic ideas with modern design ideas. Xie's study indicates that through the performance Hanfu bloggers on Weibo convey to the audience an iconic image of the ancient elite, as well as the ideal self and the aspirations to achieve the beauty, taste and spirit of the ancient noblewoman. In addition, the performance of Xie thinking Hanfu enthusiasts contributes to a better understanding of the role of Hanfu and its link with identity [3]. As well as, the content posted by fans of the new Chinese style on social media platforms helps the public better understand and even appreciate the new Chinese style. It also helped the new Chinese-style clothing enterprises to establish a more complete and more market-oriented brand positioning. There is no doubt that the 21st century is the Internet era, but it is also a period when traditional industries are facing the greatest challenges. By examining Little Red Book, Weibo and Taobao as examples, this study examines how social media and shopping websites influence publicity, brand building, and marketing of New Chinese Style clothing. The following questions will be discussed in further detail. Why do people pay attention to the New Chinese Style at this time of rapid technological advancement? What is the impact of self-media platforms on the spread of New Chinese Style apparel? How does this mode of communication enlighten New Chinese Style clothing brands? What can be done in the future to improve the development of New Chinese Style clothing in a sustainable manner? By analyzing the traditional Chinese aesthetic consciousness, the characteristics of various Internet platforms and the modes of transmission and profit methods through social media, this paper not only reveals how New Chinese Style clothing can be transmitted and profit from online platforms, but it also suggests ways of better integrating traditional culture into new Chinese clothing, thereby promoting the growth of Chinese clothing brands and related products.

2. Case Description

A steady increase in content containing the keyword "new Chinese style" has been observed on multiple Internet platforms over the past two years. In general, these platforms can be divided into social media and online shopping. Weibo and Little Red Book are used as examples for analyzing the popularity and types of Chinese style clothing in social media, while Taobao is used to illustrate online sale trends.

According to the 49th "Statistical Report on the Development of China's Internet Network" released by the China Internet Network Information Center on February 25, 2022, there are 1.032 billion Internet users and a penetration rate of 73.0% of Internet users in China [4]. It is evident from this that China has developed a large and active digital society as a result of its Internet. Due to the high popularity of the Internet, the majority of Internet users are quickly exposed to the new Chinese style attached to the rise of the Internet, and some will have a great deal of interest in this style, which frequently appears on their own social platform homepages as a result. In addition, Internet companies use big data technology to mine consumers' potential or hidden consumption demand for the new Chinese style and stimulate consumption. Online shopping websites

successfully convert Internet users' attention to the new Chinese style into commercial value.

Founded in 2013, Little Red Book is a lifestyle platform and consumer decision portal [5]. According to Xinhuanet, Little Red Book has over 300 million users as of July 2019. Little Red Book launched the search topic "New Chinese Style" on November 19, 2018. Since August 6, 2022, the number of page views for the topic "New Chinese Style" has exceeded 99.8% of similar topics [6]. A social media platform called Sina Weibo is designed to provide consumers with a way to interact with brands through official accounts. There are many new Chinese clothing brands or designers who interact with consumers through this platform. The platform also contains 113,000 topics related to "New Chinese Style". 130 million views and 130 million discussions [7].

Taobao is one of the most popular online shopping platforms in China. Since March 2022, the search popularity of "new Chinese" keywords on Taobao has steadily increased from 25,000 to nearly 100,000 by July 2022(Figure 1) [8].

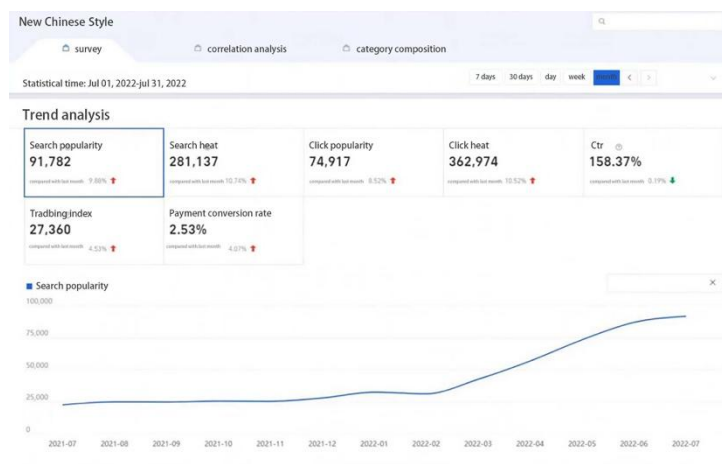


Figure 1: July 2021-July 2022, Taobao's search popularity trend of 'New Chinese Style'.

The 'New Chinese Style outfit sharing' topic is an extension of the topic 'New Chinese Style' in the Little Red Book. The topic of 'New Chinese Style' was launched on June 22, 2021, two years after the topic of 'New Chinese Style' was launched. It is estimated that the total historical views of the 'New Chinese Style outfit sharing' have exceeded 99.72% of similar clothing topics, while the number of participants has reached 26,800 [9].

The Little Red Book launched the topic tag 'New Chinese garment' on September 21, 2021. As compared to the topic of "New Chinese outfit sharing", which was launched in June, this tag clarified in more detail that New Chinese Style refers to a style of dress with distinctive national colors. There have been 1.9362 million historical views of the topic 'New Chinese garment', which is more than 99.08% of similar topics [10].

Comparatively to the previous tag of wearing this big theme, the two topics of "New Chinese Style Dress" and "New Chinese Style Cheongsam" have been refined to the clothing category. As can be seen, this is a detailed search direction after the public has a certain desire to purchase Chinese style clothing. In addition, the historical views of 'New Chinese style Cheongsam' exceeded 91.96% of similar topics [11], and the historical views of 'New Chinese style Dress' exceeded 99.43% of similar topics [12].

Since March 2022, the transaction index and payment conversion rate for New Chinese Style keywords have also steadily increased. According to Back Office Business Advisor Ordering Market Insights, the transaction index related to the new Chinese style has risen to 27360 as of July 1, 2002 (Figure 2) [13], and the payment conversion rate is close to 2.6% (Figure 3) [14].

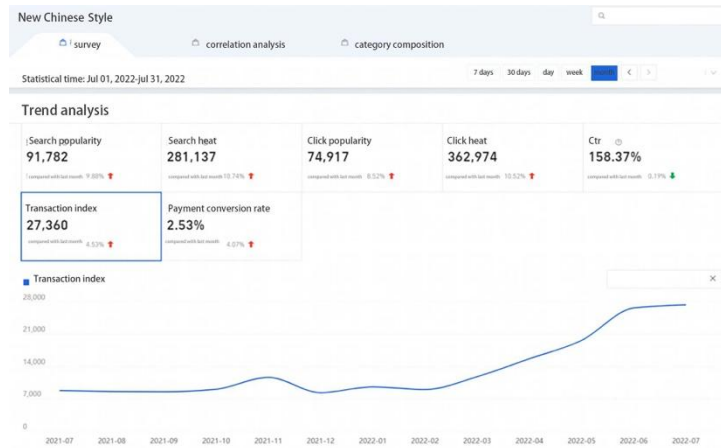


Figure 2: July 2021-July 2022, Taobao's Transaction index trend of 'New Chinese Style'.

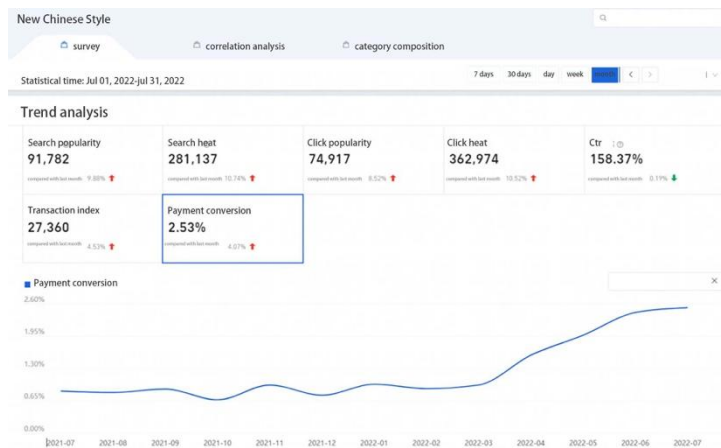


Figure 3: July 2021-July 2022, Taobao's Payment Conversion trend of 'New Chinese Style'.

3. Analysis

3.1. Influence of Chinese Traditional Culture on New Chinese Style Clothing

New Chinese Style apparel refers to new innovative thinking, new design philosophy, new science and technology, and new international trend and lifestyle. The 'Chinese' of New Chinese Style apparel represents that the traditional Chinese clothing takes the implicit beauty as the basic tone to pursue the expression of the artistic conception, which can achieve the effect of association and aftertaste, and emphasize the hazy feeling of the clothing. 'New' and 'Chinese' are combined together to design the clothing that conforms to the current living environment of Chinese people, which meets the demand for fashion in modern society and is full of the spirit of the times. The deep ideological culture behind it contains the Chinese national style [15]. New Chinese Style dressing has attracted a significant amount of attention because the wearer can express self-identity, national pride, and adapt to daily life scenes.

The beauty of moderation, modesty, harmony, implication and implication in Chinese aesthetic thought has a profound impact on the expression of New Chinese Style clothing [16].

The traditional Chinese garment has been characterized by loose shapes since ancient times, and loose garments have been admired for centuries. New Chinese Style clothing is also influenced by the Chinese aesthetic based on traditional Taoism and Confucianism. In general, there are three

types of modeling styles found in New Chinese Style clothing. The classical Chinese aesthetic is characterized by natural flowing and drooping shapes. Besides, modern aesthetics is used in order to emphasize the curvilinear beauty of the human body. Furthermore, the combination of the two forms creates a harmonious design of contrast beauty, resulting from the collision of artificial shapes with non-artificial profiles and combining modern and traditional elements.

Alternatively, the simple and concise style of neutralization in Confucian philosophy is perfectly aligned with the modern minimalist aesthetic that is required by the design of New Chinese Style clothing against a modern backdrop. It is Tangy's design concept to adhere to the route of 'natural, ecological, environmentally friendly, national', and to the 'ecological view' in the selection of materials. The garments are all made from natural fabrics, especially silk, which combines traditional and modern techniques perfectly. The silk originated from China and required soaking in the juice of Chinese herb, sealing with mud, and finally being exposed to the sun for coloring. Using tie dye, printing, and slight carving of the folds, this simple, quick, and natural production method is also the most touching aspect of Tangy clothing [16]. By subtraction, the clothing can be recreated in combination with traditional culture while preserving the simplest and purest, which is also part of the cultural identity that is associated with the Chinese culture. By providing consumers with a modern aesthetic feeling, New Chinese Style clothing can specifically impress them.

It is important to note that in Chinese traditional aesthetic concepts, the concept of beauty is not limited to shapes, but lies more importantly in appearance and implication, which are the most important components of expressing beauty. New Chinese Style aesthetics is keen to create a kind of associative artistic conception of objective objects and surrounding environment, which is particularly obvious in the form of New Chinese Style photography. An important aspect of this type of photography is the fusion of characters in New Chinese Style costumes and the general background, which emphasizes the idea of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. It is through this type of photography technique that the viewer can understand the spiritual and cultural connotations of the aesthetic freehand brushwork of the New Chinese Style costume.

3.2. New Chinese Style as a Form of Recreation

New Chinese clothing not only deeply excavates the valuable Chinese traditional culture, but also combines the modern urban lifestyle and the modern aesthetic trend. Then it transforms and innovates in a fashionable way. The popularity of New Chinese Style clothing can be attributed primarily to the fact that it is not a rigid copy of ancient Chinese cultural symbols. Even though it has characteristics of Chinese local culture, it is distinct from 'Chinese elements' that western fashion professionals have perceived in the past as stereotypes. As a matter of fact, it is a recreation based on Chinese aesthetic value that is full of life and fashion.

Chinese traditional culture was revived during the period of the New Chinese Style. As national power increased and national consciousness gradually returned, people began to sort out the ideas from the chaos of imitation and copying. In the early stages of exploring the local consciousness within the Chinese design community, the gradual maturation of the new generation of design teams and the consumer market has resulted in an implicit and beautiful New Chinese Style. There are two main aspects to the New Chinese Style. An important aspect of this research is determining the cultural significance of Chinese traditional style in the present era. Another is contemporary design that is based on a comprehensive understanding of Chinese contemporary culture. The New Chinese Style is not merely a collection of pure traditional elements, but rather a mixture of traditional elements and modern elements based on the understanding of traditional culture. As a result, traditional art is properly reflected in the modern society by creating things that combine traditional charm with aesthetic needs of modern people [17]. Chinese style clothing is characterized by the recreation of new elements based on traditional elements, combined with the pursuit of a better life

by the contemporary people in the design of clothing and accessories. New Chinese Style does not simply incorporate traditional patterns or elements into modern clothing. Instead, it breaks the stereotype of the traditional elements, patterns and other forms, deconstructs and reconstructs the excellent traditional cultural elements, which meets the pursuit of seeking self-identity, emotional identity and actual penetration in the contemporary consumer market. As a result, it creates a new clothing style with the future attributes combined of the distinctive characteristics of modern fashion and the excellent cultural spirit of the Chinese people.

3.3. Self-media Plays a Key Role in the Development of the New Chinese Style

The development of social media has inevitably led to the emergence of the New Chinese Style. As the Chinese younger generation's purchasing power increases, Qu Fang, co-founder of Little Red Book, hopes to find goods that are more closely aligned with their own style and lifestyle awareness. Second, New Chinese Style clothing satisfies not only the aspirations of the Chinese youth groups to stylize their appearance but also their emotional identification with Chinese traditional culture. Additionally, the development of New Chinese Style is inextricably linked to the development of self-media platforms. It is possible for relevant brands and designers of New Chinese Style clothing to receive new feedback continuously through the promotion of self-media platforms, and then make better products to meet the needs of consumers and trends, which is the only way to achieve sustainable development in the New Chinese Style clothing industry.

The rapid development of 5G internet has resulted in the emergence of numerous social media platforms. In spite of this, each platform has a different positioning and usage. Because of the nature of the Sina Weibo platform, many brands and businesses associated with New Chinese Style open official accounts, operate their own homepages, and interact with fans and customers in comment areas or private correspondence. For example, New Chinese Style representative independent designer brand UMA WANG and the new designer Taobao store RIMLESS, both have opened their official accounts on Weibo. In order to provide consumers with the most up-to-date information about the brand's products, the brand publishes its new products every season on Weibo. As a consequence of Sina Weibo's platform, the official account can serve as a publicity tool and announce the latest products in real time. In addition, these enterprises can communicate their brand ideas, allowing users of Weibo to better understand their products' spiritual connotations and brand ideas. It is also possible for the brand and independent designers to receive comments and suggestions from Weibo users through the official account, allowing them to develop new products and better understand the demands of the brand audience at the same time.

3.4. The Interactions among Users on Social Media

Don E. Schultz stated in an interview with Manager magazine in 2009 that consumers can find what they need and what they are interested in using the new media age. The change in the form of communication creates a new opportunity for the fashion style in the process of development to communicate what they want at any time and anywhere they choose.'

It is important to realize that, in the relational virtual community network, the user is not only the producer and publisher of information, but is also the consumer, receiver, and disseminator, which contributes to the platform's attention and relevance [18]. Little Red Book is a User Original Content (UGC) e-commerce social platform, Due to the precise feature of UCG, many information receivers on Weibo have changed their identities into content producers on Little Red Book. In general, New Chinese Style related contents with communication significance published by users of self-media platforms can be categorized into two categories.

Typically, some bloggers do not mention the purchase channel or brand information associated

with the clothing. It is the purpose of these types of posts to share pictures, and it is possible that users may need to ask questions in the comment section in order to obtain relevant brand information, which indirectly promotes the New Chinese Style brand or New Chinese Style clothing. The network node of this type of communication is, however, not very tightly bound. The majority of connections between nodes are weak relationships. Structure holes and intermediary nodes do not have a high control index. As a result, there is a low degree of restriction on each node. Communication networks with 'scattered interconnections' have the characteristics of equal discourse interaction. In addition, the discussion in the online interactive expression does not have a taboo, which makes the communication process more authentic and convincing [19].

Conversely, self-media platform users who include references to the clothing brand or use the tag New Chinese Style in their content, such as New Chinese Style-wearing or New Chinese Style-dresses. Two groups of individuals will benefit from this format. Through the push of big data, people who are interested in New Chinese Style and related brands can passively and rapidly receive the content they are seeking. Second, users that actively search for New Chinese Style or related topics can accurately obtain the relevant information.

4. Suggestion

'New Chinese Style' is a style attached to social media to grow. Therefore, it is also affected by a part of shortcomings from social media. like quality of clothing cannot be ensured. Fashion designers cater to consumers' taste relentlessly and neglect traditional culture.

First, because of low threshold feature of social media, anyone can upload their thinking. There is much false information about New Chinese Style, which will mislead consumers. Some Merchants pretend as consumers to publish information that are beneficial to themselves. Some people believe that and purchase the clothes mentioned in this information. When they receive the clothes, they will find that the clothes is not as good as the information on the social media. This will cause New Chinese Style Clothing to lose many potential loyal consumers in the development process. These low quality garments not only hinder the development of New Chinese Style, but also affect apparel industry.

Second, many designers cater to consumers' tastes without thinking for sales. They design garments without substance, which loses the heart of New Chinese Style with traditional culture as design inspiration. Many designers copy patterns from traditional costume onto modern shapes, directly using elements with stereotypes like stand-up collar and Chinese knotted buttons. This New Chinese Style clothing without innovation is unduly consuming people's preferences and expectations for New Chinese Style. It is way off to focus on form and not on garments' expressing Chinese aesthetics.

On the first point, social media should better control the advertising on the social media. Platform can provide access to report when costumers discover deceptive advertising. At the meantime, consumers should provide evidence to prove the social media accounts misrepresented its products in the advertisements. This can protect interests of consumers and businesses on social media.

If brands want to design and manufacture outstanding New Chinese Style apparel, they should have further study of traditional culture. This requires designers to not only to trace sources of design elements, but also to recreate these elements into New Chinese Style apparel. In addition to the correct application of traditional elements, it is also important to consider practicality and functionality of garments in contemporary living. Besides design, brands also can focus on craftsmanship. The excellent shell fabric can improve the texture of garment and better to express traditional thinking. The Chinese traditional Botanic dyeing is a method that use dyestuff extracted from various parts of plants to dye fabric. The fabric is combined with minimalism shape, which

interprets Chinese naturalism and meets aesthetic needs of modern society.

5. Conclusions

Based on second-hand data of prevalence, types of topics on social media and online sales, this study analyzes why New Chinese Style has become so popular and how New Chinese Style garments have spread. A detailed analysis of four aspects is conducted, including the influence of Chinese traditional culture on New Chinese Style Clothing, the development of the New Chinese Style as a form of recreation, the role of self-media in the development of the New Chinese Style, and interactions between users on social media platforms. As a result of the analysis of the case study, It can be drawn the following conclusions: New Chinese Style is prevalent because it provides a means of expressing self-identity; Chinese traditional culture combined with modern lifestyle make this style unique; as a consequence of consumers and brands communicating via social media, the spread and growth of New Chinese Style has been further enhanced.

Although findings from this research have provided direction on New Chinese Style clothing, further empirical studies on New Chinese Style clothing are required to test and refine these findings, which will require more first-hand information, such as questionnaires and data statistics.

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