Understand the Cultural Influence of Short Videos in the Communication of Public Health Information

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Abstract

Introduction: Groups with different ideologies have different perspectives on civilization and, therefore, can exhibit various cultural values. In today's globalized world, people from different cultural backgrounds interact through the web, and using emerging communication technologies, such as short videos, is a challenge, especially in public health. Although studies have shown that globalization can alter the process of cultural production and consumption and strengthen cultural identity, there are still differences in cultural production and cultural identity in public health.
Methods: This study explored the differences in information understanding from different cultural contexts in the healthy cultural space and used qualitative analysis to explore these differences. Use of online ethnography for short video text objective observation and analysis. This study will take TIKTOK as the research object and analyze the feedback of different cultural groups on the problem in the real-time interaction of the subjects public health environment.
Findings: This study reveals key differences in cultural communication strategies and highlights the challenges of cultural acceptance in both contexts. The findings provide fresh insights into how multiculturalism shapes and is influenced by the use of new media technologies in public health communication.
Originality: This study provides novel insights into the unique communication practices of two specific social media accounts (@publichealthmsia and @健康中国). By focusing on their distinct challenges and approaches, it introduces innovative frameworks and guiding questions for addressing technical dilemmas in social media communication.
Keywords: Public Health Communication, Multiculturalism in New Media, Comparative Analysis (China and Malaysia).

Introduction

Internet technology provides a platform for users to express themselves and form an online culture through stories (Sidorenko et al., 2021). The emergence of social media caters to this demand by enabling users worldwide to share ideas and engage in the interaction of ideas and cultural ideas through social media (Xu, 2022). Globalization is embodied in this process, which has a significant property of communication through the integration of information worldwide, especially the interaction between culture and society (Xu, 2022). According to Cao (2021), the fragmented message and the ever-changing content that envelops us and impinges on our existing ideas, despite the boundaries and distances between words and reality, but there is still no redeeming in changing the living habits of contemporary people. Social connections figured prominently in TikTok's content, and strangers could connect meaningfully. The importance of performers as unique subjects is overshadowed by their participation in

more extensive cultural activities (Schellewald, 2021). Because of TikTok's media nature, future trends emphasize the concretization and expressiveness of communication, which means that content touches and creates ways of sharing emotions (Schellewald, 2021). This model defines the flow of culture in the media and the creative interpretation of popular culture. The form of a short video has been tied to basic communication patterns. It is recognized as a publicly shared platform-specific language, so in short video applications, it can be understood that the audience is in a familiar cultural context (Schellewald, 2021). TikTok connects individual users to the broader cultural dynamics represented on TikTok and changes the way culture spreads. The characteristics of platform communication, such as popularity, timeliness, and interactivity, make communication more rapid and in-depth (Cao, 2021).

After 2019, public health issues began to emerge in public attention, and coordinated action by social networks such as TikTok ensured the authenticity of content (Sidorenko Bautista et al., 2021). However, due to the conflict of media positioning, TikTok's content logic is based on the need for entertainment to possess attributes and creativity, which leads to a predetermined role for the sender and receiver of information in the context of communication (Sidorenko Bautista et al., 2021). The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic has led to many young users joining the community to learn about information and produce content. As a result, it has become a critical digital channel for disseminating information related to Covid-19. The World Health Organization, the Red Cross, and other official agencies have long acted through it, using specific tags that many private users use. This has enabled experts to understand better users' habits associated with pandemics and the misinformation and risks associated with such a digital environment. Although the social image and positioning of the distribution channel are not mainstream, TikTok users will have a critical perspective and free participation in content sharing in a relatively easy environment (Bhandari and Bimo, 2022). In the past decade, public health information has spread narratively, so storytelling has become the primary mode of communication and plays an essential role in transmitting normative and normative information. However, the narrative approach has also become a notable focus when communicating modern health information, with most forms of health information being preached and summarized in conjunction with checklists (Murphy et al., 2015). TikTok's appearance will help change the inherent mode of public health transmission and attract more people's attention.

As TikTok's global influence grows, the U.S. government sees the Chinese government as promoting Chinese culture and values through platforms like Douyin. This could threaten the culture and values of the West, represented by the United States, and lead to a decline in its global influence, so TikTok has had a period of information blackout in the past, that is, as a Douyin platform for cultural isolation in China (Lin, 2023). So, in a way, it is hard for Douyin users in China to communicate freely around the world, given the ease of access to information, where it is doubtful that pop culture's accessibility attributes are affected; thus, there are cultural differences (Kurniawan, 2018). Also, because TikTok is one of the most popular smartphone apps, it has successfully promoted popular culture among young people and has high satisfaction. Its role as a medium and trendsetter of popular culture has been examined in several countries (Kurniawan, 2018).

TikTok is a social sharing platform that allows people to socialize and create 'New identities' with their consent. In these channels, individuals create virtual identities that do not belong to them but can define themselves as they wish, especially concerning the

TikTok app's content and the youth of the user community. Leading the world in video content has also brought about cultural change in the everyday practice of the masses (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). In identity change, the audience is no longer passive but actively expressing their feelings and ideas. New media is gradually developing to meet users' information interaction and software expression needs, combining different scenarios to provide personalized services. It enables users to use the application by proactively gathering resources and creating value. New media provides the content for the story to be told. In addition, users can reach out to more people and interact and exchange ideas by promoting their work on TikTok (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022).

The advent of social media has changed the way people communicate and interact. Prior to technological advancement, communication was conducted through face-to-face interaction. Nevertheless, in this modern and complex age, communication can no longer be physical, and social media has become a form of entertainment. The process of change experienced by the media in this field is also reflected in practice (Prasetyorini and Suprajang, 2023). Social media is shaping the popularity of the hedonic lifestyle and is becoming an essential part of life (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). Under the consuming psychology, the cultural industry is gradually formed, and the products and places of the cultural industry surround leisure time. With the development of communication technology, various trends of thought began to spread widely, such as shared values, the boundaries of personal relationships, moral understandings, perceptions, and notions of privacy have changed or changed (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022), currently, within the framework of all these assessments, social media is one of the most important places to go through all of these changes. Social media is the center of entertainment and leisure, not just a medium for watching videos or getting information through communication. It is essential to remain visible and well-known in such media (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). For a long time, media scholars have taken a negative view on the form of public comments or short videos, believing that TikTok's communication practice is unconscious. Therefore, the contradiction between the forms of communication and the entertainment environment on TikTok needs further study (Schellewald, 2021).

One of the main features of social media is that it is user-centric. In this channel, users can actively produce and manage their content and consume other produced content. This kind of user is the medium of both producer and consumer, and the way users use, and the needs they desire to satisfy are also undergoing changes and transformations in the process (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). Therefore, TikTok has become the primary tool for constructing cultural space, and over time, this understanding of entertainment has the potential to translate into cultural accumulation. It also shows that the public's search for happiness is a social output. TikTok is thus becoming a tool in this regard (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). The rapid development of social applications has brought much convenience to people's lives. However, the popularity of social applications is a double-edged sword. First, it helps to narrow the distance between people. As instant messaging becomes more and more convenient, people can communicate with family and friends anytime and anywhere. However, large information flows often lead to difficulties in tracing ideas and original texts (Wang and Chen, 2021). The visual stimuli of TikTok users focus on the primary source of information. In particular, the random flow of short videos, the way TikTok is narrated, and its audience and participation elements set it apart from other social networks, meaning that studying TikTok activities or cultural flows is limited. For verification of ideas, therefore, comparisons can be given to situations at specific times or on specific themes (Sidorenko Bautista et al., 2021). At the same time,

social media recommendation systems based on big data algorithms, such as TikTok, provide unprecedented convenience for people living in information globalization. There are also potential risks, such as limited information reception (Xu, 2022). In addition, the diversity and complexity of the content of international communication are more profound than the traditional mass media, and with the development of the Internet, a global standard platform emerged. However, they are limited by linguistic and cultural differences between countries and by political levels (Liu Lei, 2011).

In Southeast Asia, precision marketing to young people has given many teenagers a sense of belonging and loyalty to TikTok. TikTok's short videos target this potential market, offering short, accurate content over the Internet and on mobile devices. Therefore, a short video captures the user's fragmentation time better than a long video (Xu, 2022). As an innovative platform that allows official agencies to interact with users, it presents itself as a technology-based application that allows users to generate and share information when individuals use social media. The emergence of social media in recent years with advances in communications technology is shaping and changing the way information is disseminated, and they are beginning to realize the importance of harnessing the power of social media (Liu et al., 2022). TikTok, for example, offers users many fascinating filters, shooting templates, and engaging music clips, while the ability to produce audio-visual content caters to the audience's needs. These features encourage influencers to create more replicable content for other users to emulate, thus increasing user stickiness. More importantly, TikTok makes some refinements and innovations for user interaction, an effort that demonstrates the importance TikTok places on user experience (Wang and Chen, 2021).

TikTok was founded in China in 2016, allowing users to create and post short videos of 3 to 60 seconds with music and audio-visual effects (Kennedy, 2020). During the outbreak, numerous daily reports of a rapid increase in Covid-19 cases and deaths occurred. In 2019, app downloads increased by 34 percent in the first week of the British blockade, while in the United States, the first three weeks of March increased by 27% compared with the same period in February (Kennedy, 2020). The consensus in these reports is that the coronavirus blockade should be attributed to TikTok's use and exponential growth in popularity. During the coronavirus crisis, TikTok's cultural visibility rose significantly, from a space previously conceptualized as private and unjudged to a space of public awareness, surveillance, and evaluation (Kennedy, 2020). TikTok's cultural consumption pattern has also changed society as a whole. TikTok has also changed the general public's consumption pattern culture, among which it only passively consumes the culture presented by the industrial culture. TikTok facilitates mass production culture (Kurniawan, 2018). Surrounded by complex visual images and portable technology, they are more likely to be bored and have shorter attention spans. Therefore, their consumption of information has changed (Cervi et al., 2021).

Moreover, TikTok users represent different cultural backgrounds, and the government should pay close attention to social media content (Schellewald, 2021). At the macro level, citizens show a similar preference for the way physicians communicate, so cultural adaptation may not be required when cross-cultural medical information emerges (Rimondini et al., 2015). The international cross-cultural studies of a broader cultural context will encourage the development and promotion culturally competent health care (Rimondini et al., 2015).

Currently, many studies have focused on social media, especially cultural construction. The distinction between TikTok and Douyin indicates a symbolic divide in

nature. However, in a sense, TikTok as a social media platform can gain worldwide popularity regardless of national boundaries, showing that software users are convergent on specific features. The research on TikTok or Douyin can be divided into two kinds at the cultural level: one is the symbolic cultural identity, and the other is the dialectical thinking of identity from the cultural perspective. The former has been studied extensively, for example, on the publicity and shaping of the city image by the government in TikTok (Wang, 2023), defining digital communication practices that contrast the technical or hardware content of the term (Izotova et al., 2021). The application of Cross-cultural communication in TikTok (Wang and Chen, 2021), there are also studies of discourse analysis of digital communication practices, which attempt to use symbolic systems to conduct cultural analysis of context (Kozhemyakin, 2016). Discourse analysis is conducive to critical analysis of the social context and its context, but it is often hard to keep up with the speed of digital content because of excessive detail. When they are in the category of cultural thinking, scholars focus on the study of expression and understanding, such as TikTok as a communication environment of the various ways of expression, or to explore youth political expression and collective action in the form of short videos (Zeng, 2021). The need for meaningful communication in a video-sharing context (Schellewald, 2021), critical discourse analysis of individual and state ideologies in news reports, reveal the ideological and political positions of the text, as well as the issue of user identity topic preferences in social media (Pan et al., 2016), to study the interests and needs of the audience.

The online community is, to some extent, a virtual world consistent with the target environment of online anthropology, a research approach that will focus on specific practices and domains (Hart, 2017). This is particularly true for regional activities with diverse cultural backgrounds and norms. Ethnography seems to be the best way to provide this context awareness and should guide data collection on short video platforms (Schellewald, 2021). The TikTok Application is an interactive platform where content is subject to background review, so sampling content from TikTok can ensure that the ethical issues of the video message are as far as possible. It also facilitates access to data in a broad platform for accessing information (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). In the platform, social communication is accessible, so the text is mainly used to realize the user's role in the social group in communication behavior. Therefore, communicative practice (using digital techniques) can become the object of discourse analysis and acquire discourse attributes (Izotova et al., 2021). In the global cultural industry's development, the media is transforming from representation to matter. The popularity of short videos in the Digital Age indicates the change in narrative and reception, which is also an essential aspect of cultural development (Wang, 2023). In qualitative description analysis, the method based on literature research and social media data can be interpreted from the text reality, technical expression, and ideological levels (Kurniawan, 2018). However, to implement this context-based approach, avoid over-interpreting individual videos. Instead, focus on their embeddedness in the larger context of common trends, buzzwords, or platform-specific languages. Part of the challenge lies in the accelerated nature of TikTok. Not only are individual TikTok videos ephemeral, but the background to TikTok trends is also ephemeral. Trends tend to subside in a short time or to be replaced by new trends. The ethnographic approach focuses on the continuity of time rather than the number of individual cases and videos analyzed, and it can provide the necessary longitudinal perspective to understand the constantly used and changing forms of expression on the platform (Schellewald, 2021). Consistent with the positioning of ethnography in the

hermeneutic paradigm, online ethnography raises research questions (rather than hypotheses) intending to describe and interpret social, cultural, and communication phenomena in virtual spaces (Hart, 2017).

Although TikTok is very popular abroad, whether TikTok can truly demonstrate its value in the context of media globalization will become a question. The split between TikTok's world and China's platforms will be problematic. There will be doubts about whether the short new video transmission methods will bring about a familiar cultural context (Lin and Zuo, 2023). At the same time, due to the denseness and immediacy of the media ecosystem, false information tends to appear in social media, characterized by hyperconnectivity, technological developments, and the expansion of new media and social networks. This has led to changes in communication traffic and an unprecedented increase in information sources, allowing media to be replaced, in many cases, by social networks as the primary source of information (Sidorenko Bautista et al., 2021). Given the mistrust of information in traditional media and the exponential growth of misinformation on the Internet, there is a need for verification mechanisms that help improve citizens' access to information, and show users the traceability of their published information content (Sidorenko Bautista et al., 2021), then the official channel will become a reliable source of information for the audience or users. At the same time, tags are used to convey information concisely, and centralized is a common form of communication in digital technology, especially on the Internet and social networks (Izotova et al., 2021). This social imperative must be objective, with the audience deciding to read the post under the tag and spread the message. This ability arises from context, cultural context, and understanding of the semiotics and semantics of information, which are formed in the appropriate response of the recipient (Izotova et al., 2021). Nevertheless, there is also a crisis, with relatively little research on the dissemination and appropriation of video on platforms such as TikTok, which will track how people find meaning and meaningful experiences in the context of TikTok communication (Schellewald, 2021).

International communication theory holds that the influence of international communication covers cross-regional cultural, economic, social, political, and other aspects, and it is increasingly able to get involved in the specifics of how many people live and how organizations operate (Castells, 2009). The diversity and complexity of international communication content have more profound connotations than traditional mass media. Through the public opinion field, content production, choice, dissemination, and transformation (Lypka and Vasylenko, 2023). Compared with traditional Mass Communication, the content and path of international communication have more obvious sociological characteristics (Xu, 2022). Therefore, this study used many sociological research methods and theories to help complete the cultural analysis. Postmodernism has changed the understanding and cultural interpretation of real life and, through practice, the means of communication in space and time, but this communication involves the concealment of identity (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). It also reduces prejudice for further cultural exchange.

Along with the development of communication technology, in the process of globalization, because of the increasing size and the formation of cultural industry, this is a structural social change, but for individuals, individual preferences are different. There are also differences, but in terms of identity, all people become cultural audiences, receiving ever-changing entertainment content (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). The theory of universal culture is defined as the field of interaction, cultural exchange, and cultural

penetration. The global flow of culture is not reciprocal but only in one direction (Kurniawan, 2018). In this age of globalization, time and distance are not a matter of communication. This theory has the same meaning in the ideological context, such as working together to discuss oppression and injustice. The reality of global culture is a heterogeneous and dynamic one, but the homogenization of culture is inevitable in the era of globalization (Kurniawan, 2018).

At the same time, in the field of communication, the formation and representation of online identity in social media is the focus of theoretical research in social communication. Identity can mean how we portray different aspects of identity in culture and media or express ourselves (Bates et al., 2020). In addition, identity is built on interactions with other users' likes, forwards, and comments. These are all integral parts of online identity formation. Unlike face-to-face contact, people who observe the identities of others on the Internet can open more information for analysis, which can be accessed continuously and openly (Izotova et al., 2021). One can consciously form one's own words, choosing self-presentation as an extra-linguistic element of speech formation, coupled with forming a communication with others, having data about one's audience, thus attempts to establish effective and influential communication with others, using language technology to form communication or specific topics, which in turn, complement the speaker's identity, and contributes to his social media performance goals (Izotova et al., 2021).

The widespread use of short video platforms such as Douyin in China and TikTok in Malaysia has had a significant impact on health communication in both countries. TikTok had more than 1.5 billion users worldwide in 2021, and its health and wellness content grew by more than 600%, demonstrating the great potential of short video platforms in disseminating health information (Xu et al., 2022). In China, Douyin facilitates the dissemination of health knowledge, especially in improving public health literacy, through its strong user base and precise algorithms (Wang & Li, 2023). In Malaysia, TikTok's health content is more focused on mental health and public health, reflecting cultural differences in social media usage and health communication needs. Studies have shown that the analysis of this difference has important implications for optimizing health communication strategies (Basch et al., 2021).

Both @publichealthmsia and @健康中国 were chosen for the study because of their importance in their respective countries. @Health China is the official account of China health communication. It has a wide coverage and high authority, and represents the spread of health information on Douyin. Publichealthmsia is the main window for official health communication, focusing on local public health issues. By comparing the two official accounts, the study can reveal the cultural differences between China and Malaysia in the health communication model, and provide reference for the policy-making in the field of new media health communication between the two countries. This study explores two specific social media accounts(@publichealthmsia and @健康中国), offering insight into their distinct communication practices rather than a generalized experience. This research contributes new frameworks for addressing technical dilemmas in social media communication, providing specific guiding questions for media practitioners.

Methods

TikTok was selected as the primary research subject due to its significant role in shaping digital interactions and cultural consumption globally. As a leading short video

platform with a user base exceeding one billion active users across diverse regions (DataReportal, 2024), TikTok provides a rich field for studying public health communication in cross-cultural contexts. Unlike traditional media, TikTok's algorithm-driven content delivery optimizes engagement by tailoring videos to users' preferences, enabling the platform to transcend linguistic and cultural barriers (Le et al., 2023). This capacity is particularly valuable for disseminating complex health information, as it facilitates widespread visibility and accessibility among younger, digitally native audiences, a demographic often targeted in public health campaigns (Montag et al., 2023). Furthermore, TikTok's distinct content format--short, creative, and easily shareable--has proven effective in simplifying and popularizing health-related messaging, even in contexts where health is not traditionally prioritized in social media discourse.

This study mainly discusses the cultural identity differences of short video users in the field of public health in the context of globalization, when public health becomes an essential topic in the dissemination of short video, in the production of cultural consumption, individuals in different cultural contexts will tend a particular cultural product, understanding the group differences will help improve the cultural acceptance of multicultural individuals. The health field has been a blind spot in previous research on social media because of its entertainment and consumption properties. Health information is often complex and challenging to get attention to. However, because of the high traffic of short videos, health information is more readily accepted on such a platform, so TikTok was chosen as the primary medium for research. In the current study, a qualitative approach will be used to examine three related questions in TikTok/Douyin: how well is public health information received and cared for in TikTok/Douyin? what are the characteristics of public health information on different platforms, TikTok or Douyin, in terms of cultural transmission or communication? Analyzing the social practices and cultural preferences of TikTok and Douyin's audience. The study will extract data from two official video accounts, TikTok (@publichealthmisa) and Douyin (@健康中国), on short video reading between 2023/4/1 and 2024/4/1 because of the policy of cultural segregation, only Malaysia and China as a case for comparative analysis.

To investigate how public health messages are received and understood on TikTok, this study employs network ethnography. This method integrates traditional ethnographic approaches with digital media analysis, focusing on the behaviors, interactions, and cultural practices of users within the virtual community (Murthy, 2021). By observing the content and commentary patterns on two official accounts, TikTok (@publichealthmsia) and Douyin (@健康中国), the study captures the dynamics of cultural exchange and communication practices in Malaysia and China. The platform's unique capability to adapt content to specific cultural and social contexts makes it an ideal medium for examining cross-cultural differences in public health communication. Additionally, TikTok's design, which encourages user participation and co-creation, allows for a deeper exploration of audience engagement, preferences, and interpretations of public health narratives. The comparative focus on Malaysia and China highlights how policy differences and cultural factors shape the dissemination and reception of health information, offering insights into the potential for cross-cultural understanding in globalized media environments.

The following procedures were used in the study: (a) to collect health-related media information and social attention from two accounts of the two platforms from the 2023/4 to 2024/4 period; (b) to categorize the data obtained; (c) to assess the data; (d) based on the objectivity of data observation. This research adopts the Internet media observation,

the scope of which will include the content of the comment text in the comment area and the objective situation observation in the virtual space to ensure that it has no cultural orientation, behavioral background, participation, and preference of the characters were analyzed (Hart, 2017).

Results

Online ethnography is a method of field research in virtual space (Hart, 2017), which is full of observations and interactions in new fields. During observation, researchers must limit themselves to observing activities that do not interfere with the virtual space (Hart, 2017). may require synchronous or asynchronous text, audio, and video-based interactions with other members at the micro level. It can also include reading and responding to posts, articles, comments, and other written material on the site, which at a macro level may involve work, social, and entertainment-related tasks to promote community activities. Thus, implementing online ethnography in social media is a response to human behavior and culture in virtual spaces (Hart, 2017). TikTok and Douyin, as the two social media platforms for the study, face virtual audiences that often come from different social environments and communication communities, and thus, the setting of themes helps to provide limitations for the study. This study is based on the increased attention to health worldwide after Covid-19, especially on public health events, where society invests greater focus (Moorhead et al., 2013). Douyin and TikTok were the first communities to offer instant messaging and video text to the general public, fulfilling the need for social interaction during periods of social distancing (Wang & Wu, 2021). Short video software has gained much attention due to its entertainment effect, creating a strong case for studying the public health implications of social media (Chan and Leung, 2018). The short video network ethnography can effectively trace the influence of group psychology and cultural emotion on public health information and discover the cultural communication mode and the possibility of multicultural interaction (Döveling et al., 2018).

Overview of TikTok and Douyin. TikTok is an international platform with a large number of users around the world. In order to study a representative, this study selected Malaysia as the target for research. The study focused on the official Malaysian public health account (@publichealthmsia). According to Sun et al. (2021), Malaysia has implemented a universal health coverage policy, which shows that, as a state or an official, the health of its citizens is always a matter of concern. Similarly, China is also providing medical subsidies for the health of its citizens, and the National Health Commission has set up an official media platform (@健康中国) to disseminate health information. However, as a public health propaganda platform, it is only a universal or auxiliary health knowledge dissemination platform. It cannot provide medical advice for health itself, so as a public knowledge platform, it is possible to react conditionally to the bias of different countries towards health information (Sun et al., 2021). Especially in the rapid development of the Internet, much information is quickly transmitted to the audience and will soon reach the field of vision, which can be used in public health emergencies simultaneously to warn people. After Covid-19, more people began to pay attention to health information because of the individual's need for health and safety, especially the young people active in social software (Cheng et al. 2021). They gradually became the focus of communication and production. Short videos on official platforms can be understood as official or government concerns and considerations for the health of citizens. In contrast, citizens' spontaneous feedback can promote the wide dissemination

of information and provide timely feedback and suggestions for official platforms. A platform separate from politics or a specific formal setting can be more conducive to an individual's acceptance of health information (Yang et al., 2021).

In this study, the official data of TikTok and Douyin are collected in the following areas: title, description, upload time, video format, views, comments, likes, and collect. Through the manual collection, the primary data of the two platforms (@publichealthmisa and @健康中国), @publichealthmisa, the official TikTok information platform, is only available for the last year. This shows that the account has not been on TikTok long. Regarding following users, it has only 4.433 fans, with 24.3 K likes. In the past year, the platform has sent related videos 24 times, an average of 1.012 likes per video, which is a relatively young platform, but as can be seen from the specific attention, five of the videos got a high cumulative number of views, more than 10k. There are some very influential short videos, up to 260.4 K. @健康中国 is an official platform organized by the Chinese Health Commission to deliver official messages. In fact, during the Covid-19 outbreak, China was actively looking for a platform that could comfort the general public and deliver relevant information promptly. When the epidemic passed, the platform became famous for transmitting health knowledge, and occasionally, there was propaganda about the epidemic. Due to its vast audience, the platform has more than 3.600 cumulative works. The account was set up in 2018, with 5.223K fans and 13.146K likes. If the average number of likes is calculated, the average number per article is 3.651. The account uses affordance, a platform that divides information into seven main collections because of the volume of video and the ability of the audience to categorize the content they want. The platform is very good at segmenting health content, such as health information science, the latest epidemic disease tension, and official press releases. The platform's message reflects some of the characteristics of Chinese politics and is not simply understood as a platform for delivering health benefits but also about health issues and health information from a political perspective. This form may bring more credibility to the audience because there will be government spokespeople leaving the country, but at the same time, there will inevitably be ideological management from a cultural or ideological point of view (Seeck, H. et al., 2020).

Primary data Since the number of items varies greatly, this study takes the time as the cut-off point, intercepts the short video content released from 2023/4/1 to 2024/4/1 as the observation text, and in the statistical process, the researchers specifically looked at the frequency of videos posted at different time points. Although @publichealthmisa is the official platform, it is not officially certified by TikTok. However, the PHM logo is clearly visible in each short video and is Malaysia's most visible public health user. From the frequency of official video releases, we can see that as an official release, their focus is not on TikTok. In the past year, 24 videos have been released, and only in November last year were 11 posts published. Compared to @健康中国, a total of 375 posts were published during the same cycle, and April 2023 was the month with the fewest posts, with nine posts. Here is the detailed release data (Table 1):

Table 1. Summary of data set

Data source	videos	Information collected	Manner of collection	Collection period
TikTok	24	Title, description, upload time, video format, views, comments, likes, and collect.	Manual	April 1, 2023– April 1, 2024

Douyin	375	Title, description, upload time, video format, views, comments, likes, and collect.	Manual	April 1, 2023 – April 1, 2024

Note: TikTok= TikTok@publichealthmisa, Douyin= Douyin@健康中国

Table 1 also covers some significant issues that need to be analyzed. On the TikTok platform, for example, @publichealthmisa's prominent followers are Malaysian users, as well as @健康中国, both are official platforms for information transmission to the public. The platform uses Malay as its primary language. There are some obstacles to international cultural transmission, but it takes another form to make up for the intention of transmission. In the short videos, the poster is a poster for health issues. Although there is a language barrier, the poster to A warning diagram is transmitted using an image. In terms of content, @publichealthmisa focuses on common epidemic diseases, mental health, and family relationships, reflecting the official perception of health information regarding social relationships. Physical well-being is only one aspect. Interpersonal Harmony, a sense of mutual understanding, and building family relationships are all essential aspects of well-being. Shows that the account has a strong focus on emotions. It is also a manifestation of humanitarianism.

Figure 1. TikTok poster example (source: TikTok @publichealthmisa, n.d.)

In the @健康中国 account information, the use of language is still biased towards the Chinese audience, perhaps because Douyin is only available in China, so the language problem is ignored. Short video accounts in China tend to capture real videos and reproduce natural scenes in pursuit of public trust. There were also some policy documents released. From the video footage, it could be seen that the content of the text only appeared as subtitles. Most of the information was popularized by experts or scholars; only a tiny part of the content was presented in pictures, but the layout was the same; only the text parts changed. In the narrative's message, more attempts are made to persuade the audience and identify the video characters for the text prompt. This shows that in @健康中国's account building, there is a fixed expression of what the audience is likely to accept, and since the number of videos released each month is almost the same as the number of days, the video quality or the degree of care is not high, most of the interview video-based, add subtitles and unified video decoration border. Much homogeneous content appears under the condition of a certain kind of cultural acceptance, which will dilute the audience's extraction of critical information. It also helps the audience better understand the message they need to see.

Figure 2. Douyin's short video example (source: Douyin @健康中国, n.d.)

Within the feedback and comment mechanism for short videos, find that many short videos in @publichealthmisa are favorites and rarely commented on in the comments section. However, in some of the more popular short videos, see from the comments section, there will be a large number of comments from users in more than two languages, indicating that in short videos on the subject, attention from audiences from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds can be obtained, and according to the content of the comments mostly to share the common experience, and will choose to share to their side of the people. In the @健康中国 short video user preference survey, the majority of users also liked and collected short videos, but the comments section had very few responses to the video content, mainly in the form of emoticons. Another part of the platform will be to send some irrelevant content under the theme or to express the short video publisher's commentary. Judging from the content, the comments on both short videos are quite different and have much to do with the subject matter. Most of the information @publichealthmisa provides is life-related tips. As a result, the comments section is more characterized by an exchange of information, while @健康中国 is more about reading likes and receiving and identifying with information, and the subject matter is primarily professional health knowledge explained by experts. As a result, ordinary people have little discussion or interaction about professional information.

Due to constraints in research conditions, including access to comprehensive data and the challenge of cross-platform content comparability, this study focuses on analyzing two highly popular short videos on a similar public health topic within a one-year timeframe. This choice inherently limits the breadth of data, potentially affecting the generalizability of findings regarding feedback differences among online communities from distinct cultural backgrounds. This revision clarifies the limitations by specifying research conditions (data access and cross-platform comparability) and acknowledging the potential impact on the study's generalizability.

Due to subject matter limitations, the analysis used the only vlogger video on @publichealthmisa, a health appeal about smoking with 6.537 likes, 371 comments, and 583 favorites. The main content of the video is that Malaysian celebrities are recovering from smoking illness, so for public health, it is a celebrity effect to try to get the public's attention on the dangers of smoking. In the comments section, it was confirmed that most wanted him to recover and that his attitude towards smoking was incredible. It is not surprising that Malaysia, as a non-smoking country, has such comments or thoughts, but viewers in the comments section were concerned about the smoking incident itself as if they were not aware of the official platform's role as a smoking warning.

Similarly, in @健康中国, a short video with approximately the same number of likes and comments as @publichealthmisa's main comment was selected. Due to the difference in positioning between the two platforms, there is also a big difference in the case of real-life events. @publichealthmisa is more of a celebrity incident that raises the alarm about health habits, while in @健康中国, most real-life cases are sudden or catastrophic health losses, and the injured or the main body of the video is the general public. Such a video is closer to the public but can also remind the audience that life may be unexpected at any time, so they should be prepared. Most of the comments in the comments section were about concerns and institution-building suggestions, indicating that @健康中国 audience has a strong passion for participating in decision-making or enforcing civil rights.

As a result, there are differences in the cultural needs of groups from different cultural perspectives, and it is not easy even to define whether the account received the user's needs. In contrast to the traditional passive acceptance of communication, the role of human interaction in new media is primarily an exchange of ideology and power. On official platforms, short video platforms are often endowed with personality, forming a unique discourse context in space and a thinking shell (Izotova et al., 2021). However, has digital technology changed the way it spreads? Then, the answer is inevitable. At the technical level, the operation of communication and the batch and industrialization of information are intensifying. Many platforms have gradually become the center of information interaction by providing much information. However, when users face a vast amount of information, there will inevitably be fatigue and perfunctory responses (Izotova et al., 2021). Emoticons and specific conversational techniques abound in the comments section, creating a barrier to the user's perception of the message or cultural core. As an official platform, people accept it almost without bias due to the influence of credibility, so the ideology behind it is easy to ignore, but through cultural comparison, they can feel differences in emotion, intention, identity, and focus (Lin, 2023).

Discussion

The interaction or further assimilation of cultures is a long process involving the infiltration of cultures and the fusion of weak cultures (Xu, 2022). Therefore, understanding and accepting cultural diversity are essential in this process, as they will accelerate the exchange of different cultures and facilitate the exchange of helpful information between groups. However, in globalization, local networks are emphasized because different cultural claims exist within different cultures and are regulated centrally (Xu, 2022). However, social media is a unique place where different cultures can subtly influence audiences because, at an emotional level, basic human morality is shared. Although the two platforms chosen for this study are culturally, linguistically, and formally segregated, the concerns of individuals within a group, the primary concerns about health, and the potential impact of celebrity or authority on the audience both were responded to during short video shooting and viewing (Xu, 2022). However, this study only examined the theme and presentation of the video and did not explore whether the video was republished after the release or for other purposes of interference with the cultural environment. In a general sense, although individuals have easy access to everyday information in the video, the focus is mainly on the details of life or joint problems, and it is difficult to know the cultural difference between the creator's background and itself (Schellewald, 2021). Nevertheless, this study fills that gap.

While getting comments from netizens, we found that in addition to the video itself

being highly liked, hot reviews will also be noticed by more users, which often represents the consensus of public opinion. Ordinary people can be known and seen in a very short time through social media. A large number of people see the effectiveness of this power in a small number of celebrities who are struggling to find their place in these media that have become centers of attraction (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). Therefore, technology has gradually become a cultural symbol with bias or orientation in the virtual field. When digital technology is used for interpersonal communication (communication behavior), the content will not change, but how they are implemented affects perception (Izotova et al., 2021). When individuals are in a place of entertainment, they create similarities in their understanding of entertainment by acting together with other individuals in the area beyond their identity structure. Industrialization and the production mechanisms provided by machines have led to the shortening of working hours or the acceleration of processes, leading to a redefinition of the relationship between the concepts of leisure and work. Individuals who have been working at the same pace throughout the business process see their free time as a need for entertainment, so it is understandable that when somber news of a disease disaster appears in short videos, it pulls the masses back into the real world, where they are easily excluded (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). At the same time, popular culture can also be considered in a political context because the sphere of hegemony and domination is related to ideology (Söğüt and Öngel, 2022). When a topic becomes a national concern, it is hard not to become a short video hotspot, especially after the Covid-19 era in 2020, when controlled or politically motivated content started to flood short videos, and it continues to this day.

Similarly, the narrative of short videos remains a concern. Communicating declaratively or in a didactic manner reduces the message's resistance but hinders the interaction's vitality. Short videos are unsuitable for highly interactive, modal platforms, but fictional storytelling or healthy communication can be more persuasive, responsive, and relatively effective (Murphy et al., 2015). In the digital world, discourse tools constitute network identity, so that comments will be the focus of the study (Izotova et al., 2021). In digital communication, an effective strategy for communicating with users and forming an online identity should be established based on the real priorities of social interaction and online communication goals (Izotova et al., 2021). The official platform is such an online identity, and although many countries have begun to set up official accounts, the construction of content and access to users are some of the difficulties. When faced with a large number of audiences and users, maintaining user viscosity will be an essential link to enhance the impact of the account. Health culture differs from other cultural forms, although it exists in ideology and faces different problems in different countries. Health issues are a worldwide concern and may be a source of national truth at this time, but they also inspire other countries at some levels. In particular, in digital media, culture is no longer a problem of cultural acceptance in a narrow sense but also a problem of how individuals receive information from different sources in the digital field (Deuze, 2006). The culture has reached a symbolic consensus that limits expression, such as the ability to like, collect, and forward. The word symbol represents the user's emotions, no matter where they are. As long as there is a cultural identity for the content, the technology will recognize it, and there are questions about the idea of short video shooting when cultural acceptance becomes a concern, then the cultural expressiveness set by digital technology will be noticed by more people (Karizat et al., 2021). For example, gaining cultural transmission power by taking advantage of authority identity can help short videos reduce the difficulty of cultural acceptance. When the body

language or presentation of a short video matches the psychological reception patterns of the user in the entertainment arena, the content can also use technology as a shortcut to cultural acceptance. Not only that, user comments are personalized, but if there is a high level of agreement in the comments section, then that means more people are persuaded in the discourse context, which can be used to counter the case of cultural acceptance.

This study also has some limitations. For example, in the case selection, Malaysia was chosen as the target country. The goal was to select a country with different beliefs and cultural characteristics as the study object. However, there may be some limitations in short videos because the official accounts do not have enough samples to reflect the culture's characteristics comprehensively (Howard, 2021). In addition, the research method used is network ethnography, which requires immersive observation of cases to describe the flow of culture. Due to the opacity of emotional displays in official accounts, tracking them can be challenging (Insight7, n.d.). Lastly, relying on a single research method, such as network ethnography based on objective observation principles, limits the ability to understand users or account managers without gaining the deep trust of interviewees (Howard, 2021; Insight7, n.d.).

Conclusion

This study examined the dissemination of public health information on Douyin and TikTok, revealing significant differences in audience engagement and cultural acceptance across platforms. While entertainment news tends to attract greater public interest, public health content can achieve widespread attention when it resonates with user preferences, highlighting the emotional and cultural dimensions of such topics (García & Fernández, 2023). In China, official health videos often carry authoritative and credible messages, which enhance their reception but limit their ability to reflect unique cultural characteristics (Zhu & Zhang, 2023). Conversely, Malaysian public health videos focus on practical tips for daily life, yet inconsistent account management reduces their ability to attract sustained attention. Both platforms prioritize national concerns, such as anti-smoking campaigns, leveraging the emotional and ideological appeal of these issues (Rejeb et al.,2024). Additionally, the role of cultural identity is evident, as Chinese videos emphasize discourse power, while Malaysian videos foster accessibility and positive feedback (Lee et al., 2024). This research underscores the importance of cultural context and novelty in shaping audience responses to public health communication. By understanding these differences, global short video platforms can develop more effective, culturally sensitive strategies for public health messaging, thereby broadening their societal reach and improving communication outcomes.

Conflict of Interest

We certify that there is no conflict of interest with any financial, personal, or other relationships with other people or organization related to the material discussed in the manuscript.

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