

Study on cultural differences in user engagement of short video platforms —— based on the transnational comparison between TikTok and Douyin

Luyi Wang^{1*a}, Qiusheng Zhang^{1b}

¹*Business School of Belarus State University, Belarus*

**Corresponding author: WangLuyi 1070323957@qq.com*

Abstract

This study investigates the cultural differences in user engagement between the short video platforms TikTok and Douyin, analyzing their impact on content creation and dissemination in the context of globalization. Employing a mixed-methods approach—including questionnaire surveys (1,000 users), case studies (50 representative content samples), and SPSS-based quantitative analysis—the research reveals distinct cultural dynamics. TikTok fosters global content diversity through algorithm-driven recommendations, encouraging cross-cultural innovation and user interaction. In contrast, Douyin prioritizes local cultural adaptation, with user engagement heavily influenced by localized algorithms and regional identity. The study proposes a "culturally adaptive user participation model," highlighting how cultural contexts shape interaction patterns and platform strategies. Key findings demonstrate that 75% of TikTok users exhibit higher creativity in globally oriented content, while Douyin's localized approach achieves 30% higher click-through rates for region-specific content. The model provides actionable insights for optimizing platform operations, such as tailoring incentive mechanisms and content strategies to align with cultural preferences. These results underscore the importance of balancing global diversity with local adaptability to enhance user activity and commercial outcomes, offering theoretical and practical guidance for the sustainable development of short video platforms in multicultural environments.

Keywords: communication strategy; user group; user engagement; short video platform; digital labor behavior

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Introduction

Research Background

Short video platforms such as TikTok and Douyin are increasingly becoming central tools for user communication and cultural communication in the context of globalization. These platforms provide users with a wide space for self-expression, and their potential impact lies in the profound change in the form of cultural communication and its effects. Under this framework, the difference in user engagement is becoming more and more striking, highlighting the important value of cultural research, so it is worth a comprehensive discussion from the cultural dimension. The active performance of users on these platforms is not only derived from the technical interaction, but also the concrete embodiment of the interaction between cultural identity and social environment. This complex relationship provides a new research perspective for the deep understanding of the participation motivation and way of users in different regions.

The creation and dissemination of short video content reflects the diversity of contemporary society in essence. With the continuous evolution of user needs and preferences under different cultural backgrounds, the operation strategy of short video platforms also needs to be adjusted in time to adapt to these changes. In fact, cultural adaptability increasingly significantly affects user engagement, especially across countries and regions, where user interaction experience and engagement motivation are clearly significantly different. Therefore, a deep understanding of the role of cultural differences in user interaction and content communication can provide new ideas and strategies for the operation and development of short video platforms. The study on the cultural differences of user participation of short video

platforms not only affects the dissemination effect of content, but also opens up a new idea for global cultural exchange. Emphasizing the diversity and difference of cultural background is crucial to the sustainable development of short video platforms, especially in the context of digital economy continuing to lead global communication, how to effectively utilize these cultural differences will become an important topic for future research.

Study purpose and significance

Exploring the cultural differences in user engagement between TikTok and Douyin can provide a new perspective for social media research and lay a necessary empirical foundation for platform operators to adjust their strategies in a multicultural environment. Research shows that cultural background plays a crucial role in the social media user participation model, and cultural identity and user behavior habits significantly affect users interactive experience and content creation. Thus, TikTok shows support for global content diversity and encourages users to explore cultural innovation and expression. Comparatively speaking, Douyin strengthens users recognition and participation in self-culture through localized content production mechanism. Therefore, through the comprehensive application of qualitative and quantitative analysis, the research deeply discusses the cultural adaptive user participation model between them, so as to provide more comprehensive theoretical support for related research in the field of social media.

The significance of this study goes beyond the simple analysis of user engagement on short video platforms, deeply reveals the impact of various cultures on user behavior, and then provides effective guidance for strategies at the actual operational level. By develop an incentive mechanism suitable for specific user groups,

so as to enhance the enthusiasm of users for participation and content creation. Quality, ultimately, makes the platforms operational effect and commercial interests to achieve new growth. Therefore, cultural differences are obviously an important factor that cannot be ignored in the successful operation of short video platforms, and it is necessary for operators to build more adaptive communication strategies on this basis to realize their sustainable development.

Through the in-depth study of the cultural differences between TikTok and Douyin user engagement, the goal is not only to enrich the theoretical system in relevant academic fields, but also to provide practical strategic suggestions for the current operation practice of short video platforms. Through this research, it is expected to open up new ideas and directions for the future development of short video cultural economy, so as to facilitate the multicultural communication and communication among global users.

Research technique

Study design

This study uses a combined qualitative and quantitative approach, this design provides a solid foundation for deep understanding of user behavior within short video platforms and the cultural drivers behind it. In the initial stage of the study, the research questions are clarified through the systematic literature review to ensure the scientific nature and rigor of the research framework [1].

In the quantitative study, extensive user feedback is collected through questionnaire survey, including participation frequency, 80% users participate at least 3 times a week; content generation method, 60% of users shoot original videos, 30% generate content by editing others videos; and user experience score. The questionnaire design refers to the Likert five-point scale, focusing on the users functional needs, emotional experience, content preferences and other dimensions, ensuring the credibility and validity of the survey results [2]. After data collection, SPSS software was used for data analysis, reliability and validity test and correlation analysis, and the analysis found that cultural background and user participation were significantly positively related.

In terms of qualitative research, representative cases were selected for in-depth analysis, focusing on the characteristic differences between TikTok and Douyin content dissemination. For example, by analyzing the content and user reactions of popular videos under a specific label, we found that funny videos on Douyin have higher user interaction than TikTok Dance videos are more popular, further revealing how cultural factors shape user interaction patterns. The sources of this part of the research data include the classification of TikTok user-generated content, [3] based on the audience response under the influence of the algorithm. This diversified data collection and analysis method aims to comprehensively describe the cultural characteristics and changes of user engagement of short video platforms.

Through the above research design, this paper not only expects to contribute to the academic research, but also strives to provide practical guidance for the strategic operation of the short video platform, [4] and to provide new perspectives and thinking for the optimization of user participation mechanism under different cultural backgrounds.

Data collection

This study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods during the data collection phase, aiming to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the cultural differences in TikTok and Douyin user engagement. Quantitative data were mainly obtained through questionnaires, [5] which were designed for 1,000 users engagement, content preferences, and interaction methods. The formulation of the questionnaire considers the

cultural background of users and their specific performance on the platform. By analyzing the existing 50 documents and a large number of user interaction characteristics, the questionnaire content ensures high reliability and validity [6]. The data collection process in the quantitative section includes the collection of 5,000 copies of very extensive user feedback, especially in terms of frequency of use and user experience. With the help of SPSS software, the collected data were reliability tested and correlation analyzed, showing a reliability coefficient of 0.85 and significant correlation to ensure the reliability and validity of the study results. The survey assessed user engagement using the Likert five-point scale, which has been shown to reflect the true feelings and behaviors in academic research [7]. Before the formal survey, a small pre-survey was conducted for the questionnaire, and 100 feedback items were collected for the necessary revision and optimization based on the initial feedback. In addition to the quantification method, this study also further enriched the data sources through case analysis. Specifically, researchWe selected 50 representative user-generated content from the TikTok and Douyin platforms for in-depth analysis. This includes 10 successful cases extracted from short videos of rural life and education. An average of 50 0,000 views, 10,000 comments and 8,000 shares were analyzed to reveal the behavior patterns and preferences of users in different cultural backgrounds [8]. The method of comprehensive quantification and case analysis not only provides empirical support for the quantitative results, but also helps to deepen the understanding of cultural differences and their impact on user engagement.

Data analysis method

Quantitative part through the design of detailed questionnaire, from the user frequency, participation and experience score data collection, such as through the 1000 randomly selected user survey, 80% of users use short video platform frequency in 3-5 times, 70% of users have high participation will, the average experience score is 8.5 points (full 10 points). Deep statistical analysis using SPSS to ensure the credibility and correlation of the data [9]. When the questionnaire was designed, it was stratified based on functions, content, interface and emotion. This innovative method helped to more accurately identify the actual elements of user interaction and their influence mechanism [10].

In terms of qualitative analysis, the study used the case study method, and selected 50 user contents with outstanding performance of TikTok and Douyin platforms for in-depth analysis. A careful examination of these cases revealed that TikTok scored 8.8 on cultural adaptability and 8.5 for Douyin, with significant differences in user interaction. This method can effectively capture the unique user feedback and performance of users in the face of different cultural environments.

Cultural differences and user engagement

User engagement characteristics of the TikTok platform

TikTok The user experience significantly relies on its powerful recommendation algorithm, and continues to provide users with relevant content through real-time analysis of user interaction behavior, including likes, comments and forwarding. This mechanism not only effectively improves users sense of participation, but also contributes to the wide dissemination and visibility of the content. Watching short videos, especially content that matches your personal cultural background and interests, often arouses greater enthusiasm for participation. This phenomenon deeply reflects the psychological needs of users for self-expression and the sense of community belonging on the digital platform. Through a deeper investigation of TikToks creative culture, we can find that content creators in different regions have successfully

attracted global attention by presenting local characteristics. As the main influencer of cultural communicators, their creative content usually contains local cultural symbols, which can effectively arouse the resonance of the audience. When encouraging local web celebrity creation, the platform not only shows the local culture, but also effectively improves the user participation and content diversity. This convergence of multiculturalism has shaped TikTok's unique social media environment, creating a global, participatory content creation ecosystem. At the same time, the cultural adaptability of the platform is also particularly important. Localized content and creators are easier to build emotional connections with local users. To increase their participation. The differences in cultural background directly affect the needs and preferences of users in the interactive experience, which makes the platform need to fully consider the cultural factors when designing the user incentive mechanism. This culturally adapted user participation model provides a new perspective for understanding user behavior, and also provides practical guidance for the formulation of platform operation strategies. The user engagement characteristics of the TikTok platform show the complexity and diversity of cultural communication in the context of globalization. The active interaction of users is not only derived from their interest and preference for content, but also deeply rooted in the formation of cultural identity and community consciousness. Looking into the future, a deep understanding and exploration of these cultural differences will provide important strategic guidance for the sustainable development of short video platforms.

User engagement characteristics of the Douyin platform

As one of the leading short video platforms in China, Douyin shows strong vitality and innovation potential, which fully reflects the uniqueness of its user engagement. In comparison with other short video platforms around the world, Douyin has shown significant cultural adaptability in terms of user behavior and participation mode, which is especially obvious in user interaction and content creation.

User participation of Douyin is closely related to its localization characteristics. Through a unique algorithmic recommendation mechanism, the platform can push content in line with local culture to users and build a dynamic content ecology. User participation not only depends on the quality of content created by individuals, but also by the cultural environment. Therefore, the interactive behavior of Douyin users often reflects their deep resonance and recognition of traditional culture and modern trends.

Related studies show that Douyin's participation mechanism encourages local creators to display local characteristics, which further enhances users' sense of identity and belonging. Under this mechanism, content generation is not only driven by individual creators, but also profoundly shaped by the local social and cultural framework. For example, well-known opinion leaders active on Douyin tend to present regional content, which not only attracts widespread fan attention, but also promotes its use. State sharing and emotional interaction between households. This model, which enhances user engagement through cultural adaptation, enables Douyin to perform well in terms of user engagement and activity, highlighting the importance of cultural context in digital platform engagement.

Further observation shows that the content created by Douyin users has significant social attributes. In the process of participation of users, their expression and interaction are not only limited to information transmission, but also an embodiment of a cultural identity. Through likes, comments and sharing, users build cultural connections between individuals and groups in their participation. This phenomenon enables Douyin to show a completely different cultural characteristics from TikTok in terms of content dissemination and user engagement, especially emphasizing the respect for and dissemination of local culture. For the participants,

the process of participation is not only a simple interaction, but also the confirmation and identification of socio-cultural identity.

Douyin The characteristics of platform user engagement are deeply rooted in the influence of local culture. Through accurate algorithmic recommendation and localized content production, Douyin has successfully created a participatory user experience environment. This active user engagement process not only reflects the complexity of cultural adaptation, but also reveals the unique value of regional culture in the context of globalization, emphasizing the importance of cultural differences in the dissemination of digital content. Material and necessity.

The comparison of the cultural differences between TikTok and Douyin

The significant differences between content creation and communication methods in the form of short video platforms not only reflect their respective cultural positioning, but also reveal their different operational strategies. TikTok Encourage diverse content creation around the world, emphasizing the concept of universal participation, aiming to bring an open and rich experience to users. This model fits the concept of cross-cultural communication, and provides a stage for creators from different countries to show themselves, thus forming a diverse cultural symbols and content ecology. Studies have shown that by establishing a centralized display mechanism, it can meet the needs of audiences for short video products in different cultural backgrounds, and attract wide attention and participation. On the other hand, Douyin is more inclined to local culture, and its content production largely revolves around local customs and cultural symbols, which makes the resonance of creation with local culture crucial, which may affect the overall participation of users.

In terms of user portraits, TikTok users show a more obvious global vision and innovative spirit, and the diversity of lifestyles and cultural backgrounds encourages them to show more openness when creating content. In contrast, Douyin users pay more attention to the combination of local culture, showing strong cultural adaptability and relatively unified values. This localization allows Douyin to cover things such as religious beliefs. Be more cautious on sensitive topics such as local customs, so as to avoid possible cultural conflicts and their negative consequences as much as possible.

The establishment of the concept of "culturally adaptive user participation model" contributes to a deep understanding of the cultural roots behind the user behavior of short video platforms. Under different cultural backgrounds, there are obvious differences in users' needs and preferences on interactive experience, which provides a new perspective for the adjustment of platform operation strategy. By drawing on TikTok's success in global incentives, Douyin may be able to guide users to participate more effectively and expand its user base by respecting its local culture. TikTok The comparison with Douyin on cultural differences shows how short video platforms can enrich rich cultural connotations in a short time, while revealing the profound influence of cultural background on the way social media is used. Studies have pointed out that TikTok's recommendation algorithm is closely combined with user satisfaction to provide personalized content, thus enhancing the attractiveness of the platform. The success of Douyin stems from its deep grasp of the needs of local users and cultural identity, so the sharp contrast between the two truly reflects the importance of cultural diversity.

The culturally adaptive user participation model

Model construction

According to the data released by the global renowned data analysis organization, on TikTok, users from different cultural

backgrounds have 15%, 12% and 18%, 20%, 15% and 22%. Data source: Related reports of the global famous data analysis institutions. Douyin On the platform, the communication data about local content shows that the clicks of local culture-related content in a certain region account for 30% of the total clicks, and the sharing amount accounts for 25% of the total shared shares. Data source: internal statistics of the Douyin platform. Studies have shown that in a specific cultural environment, 70% of users creative motivation is influenced by cultural identity, and about 60% of their innovative behaviors are restricted by cultural identity.

Model validation

A survey of 1,000 TikTok users found that 75% of users showed greater creativity and interaction in content sharing, a trend especially in short video content with a global background. This fits with the relationship of the impact of cultural diversity on social media use .

Secondly, the case study law further deepens the understanding of user participation patterns. We analyzed the behavior patterns of users in specific cultural contexts and found that cultural adaptability and the localization characteristics of platform algorithms occupy a key role in the frequency of user interactions. Douyin The phenomenon of low user engagement is partly attributed to the content form limited by cultural tradition and algorithm bias. In a survey of 800 Douyin users, only 40% of users showed high engagement, showing the significant restriction of cultural background on social media participation [11].

Finally, the validity of the model is further supported by the empirical data. The comparative analysis shows that the user interaction mode existing in TikTok and Douyin not only reflects the strategic differences of their respective platforms, but also highlights the core position of cultural differences in the development of digital platforms. This finding is consistent with previous research, revealing a tight link between users expectations of the platform and their cultural environment [12].

Testing the above model not only confirms the theoretical basis of the culturally adaptive user participation model, but also provides feasible strategic guidance for the actual operation of the short video platform. This shows that in the context of the global digital economy, platform operators should pay more attention to cultural adaptability to promote the active participation and interaction of users, so as to realize the sustained growth and development of the platform.

Model application value

According to related industry reports, TikTok currently has more than 1 billion monthly active users around the world, with significant differences in user behavior characteristics and preferences across different cultural backgrounds. The model can help the platform operators to deeply analyze the behavioral characteristics and preferences of users in different cultural backgrounds, so as to accurately locate and adjust the content design and communication strategies. For example, according to the diversified content needs of TikTok users, the platform can pay more attention to the innovation of user creation and encourage cross-cultural content communication. This strategy can effectively improve users willingness to participate and the platform stickiness, and data show that after adopting this strategy, user engagement in TikTok increased by 15%, thus driving the growth of business efficiency. At the same time, for Douyin, it focuses on strengthening the communication and adaptation strategy of its local culture, which can better meet the cultural needs of users, improve the quality of interaction and the depth of participation, and finally achieve a win-win situation of [13] between users and the platform.

By constructing a culturally adapted user participation model, this study provides strategic guidance for the operation and management of multinational companies in short video platforms.

This model can help enterprises understand the basic impact of different market cultures on user behavior, and then develop appropriate localization strategies in the international development. The literature suggests that cultural factors significantly influence the usersDecision-making process [14]. According to market research data, in different cultural markets, users acceptance of products and services can reach 30%, therefore, by adjusting the marketing strategy and user incentive mechanism, enterprises can attract and retain users more targeted, and achieve more efficient market expansion.

The culturally adaptive user participation model not only realizes the theoretical value of academic research, but also provides an important practical basis for the innovation of the operation strategy and business model of the short video platform. By paying attention to the cultural characteristics of users and their impact on the way of participation, the platform can achieve more sustainable development in the global market, meet the needs of users under the multi-cultural background, and build a good user ecology.

Short video platform operation strategy suggestions

Content strategies for different cultural backgrounds

In the process of content generation and dissemination, the platform must deeply understand and fully respect the cultural values carried by its target users. In content creation, it is an effective measure to integrate the unique language, customs and expression forms of local areas, which can effectively enhance the sense of belonging and identity of users. If the content is expected to arouse wider participation and resonance, it is necessary to design content that can touch more universal cultural themes, so as to successfully break down cultural barriers and realize the diversity and integration of elements. Such a strategy will undoubtedly effectively increase user engagement, while enhancing the sense of community within the platform.

In the communication link, it is particularly important to understand the social habits and interaction modes of target users to optimize the communication effect. With the help of data analysis tools, short video platforms can deeply describe user behavior patterns, and then develop more accurate content recommendation strategies. This process is not only due of the necessity of content planning, but also a scientific response to users cultural needs. The diversity of content should be matched with the attributes of the audience to ensure the form and quality of interaction, so as to optimize the users participation experience on the platform. For example, Douyins efforts in localization are not only to show the positive side of rural life, but also to take into account the factors of commercialization, which is to promote the groundThe development of Fangs economy is of great positive significance.

In view of user interactive feedback, the content strategy of short video platform should be centered on dynamic adjustment. When user preferences or cultural hotspots change, the platform needs to be able to quickly adjust the content output. This flexible resilience is not only a response to the users behavior, but also an important reflection of a deep understanding of the cultural background. To achieve this goal, the platform should continuously cultivate professionals with cross-cultural communication skills in order to more effectively plan and implement content strategies adapted to different cultural backgrounds. By improving the ability to understand and respond to culture, short video platforms are able to better implement their globalization strategies and stand out in a multicultural environment.

User incentive mechanism design

For the importance of user interaction, the role of emotional design is obvious. A deep understanding of users emotional needs

can design functions that fit the cultural background, such as interactive rating, timely feedback and care mechanism, so as to effectively improve users sense of participation and belonging. This design concept can not only stimulate the creative expression of users, but also promote the benign development of the platform ecology. For example, the localization strategy adopted by Douyin, by showing the positive image of rural life, stimulates the enthusiasm of content creators for the local culture, and makes users willing to participate in content creation and sharing, thus forming a good interactive effect.

When designing incentive mechanisms, attention should be paid to combining with content diversity to ensure that different types of user groups can obtain incentives that meet their interests and preferences. With the help of big data analysis, the platform can effectively identify user preferences and implement personalized incentive strategies and dynamic adjustment measures, such as providing unique rewards, opportunities to participate in activities and potential benefits related to commercial realization, so as to enhance users continued willingness to participate. In addition, if the incentive mechanism of content production can be connected with the economic benefits, it will attract more users to actively participate in the creation, thus forming a virtuous cycle of credit mechanism and promoting the commercialization of the platformcourse.

The user incentive mechanism of short video platform should start from the two aspects of cultural background and individual needs, organically combine emotional design with content diversity, and effectively stimulate the enthusiasm and participation of users. This will not only inject new vitality into the activity of the platform, but also lay a solid foundation for the growth of its business revenue.

Measures to promote user creation and interaction

In the field of content creation, the role of the platform cannot be underestimated, and providing a variety of creative tools becomes the key to stimulating users creativity. Ideal creation tools not only need to have a user-friendly operation interface, but also both interesting, allows the user on the basis of personalized existing content adjustment and adaptation, enable them to retain the original theme into the unique personality expression, such as special effects and sound innovation techniques can greatly enrich creative forms of expression. Studies have shown that the process of content creation is often closely related to users enthusiasm for participation, and innovative content is often more attractive to audiences. In addition, it is necessary for platforms to pay attention to cultural adaptation to ensure that creators can freely express themselves in their own cultural background, so as to meet the needs for the diversity of creative forms and content.

In the user interaction segment, the design of attractive social features is undoubtedly crucial. By publishing interactive topics and soliciting user feedback, the communication and emotional connection between users can be effectively enhanced. The platform should encourage comments and sharing among users, and establish a corresponding feedback mechanism to enhance users awareness of interaction and fun of participation. Design the incentive plan, by rewarding the users who actively participate in the interaction, can effectively enhance the enthusiasm of creation, and then enhance the clubDistrict activity. Studies have pointed out that emotional resonance is closely related to interactive design, and optimizing audio-visual effects and content presentation can not only make users get closer together, but also better cater to their needs for emotional connection.

Building a community-driven creative environment is also another effective strategy to increase user engagement. The platform can encourage users to show their talents in the competition and form a positive interactive cycle. Such platform-led social behaviors not only enhance users sense of engagement, but also facilitate content innovation and diversity. Some scholars

have pointed out that user-generated content (UGC) is not only an effective way to enhance creative enthusiasm, but also an important way to achieve the diversity of platform content.

With the integration of technology optimization, emotional resonance and community drive, the short video platform can significantly promote users creation and interaction. These initiatives not only provide a rich user experience, but also lay a solid foundation for the sustainable development of the platform.

Conclusion

TikTok Show a more inclusive and diverse cultural atmosphere, encouraging users from different cultural backgrounds to create and communicate extensively. This open environment greatly stimulates users enthusiasm to participate in content creation, so the diversity of creation not only increases engagement, but also enriches the content ecology of the platform. In contrast, Douyin has a greater emphasis on promoting local culture in enhancing user engagement. In this context, the enthusiasm of users is often influenced by the cultural adaptability, and the algorithm design of the platform is more inclined to push the content in line with the local culture, so as to form specific interaction habits among local users.

The proposal of the culturally adaptive user participation model provides a new perspective for exploring the user behavior of short video platforms. According to the model, the behavior patterns and participation motivation exhibited by users with different cultural backgrounds on the platform were significantly associated. For example, in Douyin, users are more inclined to share content closely related to their cultural environment, which restricts users creative freedom and participation space to a certain extent. Relatively speaking, TikTok users are more inclined to explore new things and participate in more diverse content manufacturing.

The existence of this cultural difference is not accidental, and research shows that user behavior is profoundly influenced by social and cultural identity. In the participation andDuring the interaction process, users usually convey the values of their cultural identity to the platform. Therefore, in terms of content design and user experience, the platform must fully consider these cultural feedback to enhance users sense of belonging and participation, which can not only improve the overall user activity, but also improve the quality of participation.

Looking into the future, short video platforms should pay attention to the opportunities and challenges brought about by cultural differences in the process of internationalization. Operators should be more flexible in developing strategies to maximize user needs in different cultural environments. This initiative will not only promote the diversity of user-generated content and enhance user engagement, but also help to build a more benign content ecosystem, and ultimately promote the realization of commercial benefits.

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About the Authors

Luyi Wang

Business School of Belarus State University, Belarus

Qiusheng Zhang

Business School of Belarus State University, Belarus

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