A Study of New Media and Chinese Generation Z Youth Subculture: A case of Chinese Digital Nomads Gathering in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

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Abstract

This study used a questionnaire survey of Chinese Generation Z and in-depth interviews with Chinese digital nomads gathering in Chiang Mai, Thailand, to examine the relationship between new media and Chinese Generation Z youth subculture. The study finds that because of the symbolic understanding of self-knowledge and the need to use the Internet to satisfy the needs of Chinese Generation Z, the new media has become a structural force contributing to the emergence of Chinese Generation Z youth subcultures. Because of the interactive and decentralized nature of Internet communication, a new type of "DAO" (Decentralized Autonomous Organization) youth subculture has been formed. This youth subculture is characterized by spontaneity, identity, and virtual-real symbiosis, and its organization is characterized by digitization, de-neutralization, interest gathering, and a high degree of autonomy. The conclusion of this study, to a certain extent, extends the study of youth culture based on interest aggregation in the Internet era.

Keywords: New media, Youth subculture, Generation Z, Digital nomads

Introduction

China moved to the Internet in 1994, and Chinese Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2009, has been called "Internet natives" along with the development of the Internet in China. They are more likely to accept and master new media technologies, are good at utilizing the Internet for information search and dissemination, and are accustomed to communicating and expressing themselves on the online platform. Since 2005, China's Internet new media technology has been developing at a high speed, and the new media has become an important communication channel in China. With the current development of the Internet in China, Chinese people have become very accustomed to living in a mobile Internet world, where socialization, entertainment, information dissemination, and consumption are achieved through the new media. Chinese Generation Z puts more emphasis on personal privacy, individual expression, entertainment social integration, effectiveness, virtual and real symbiosis, decentralization and digital assets.

The new media of the Internet has allowed Chinese Generation Z youth to become digital nomads, no longer confined to a geographic area, and to live in clusters all over the world. According to ClubMed UK 2021, Thailand is the world's No. 1 digital nomad destination.

Chiang Mai in Thailand has now become an important destination for Chinese digital nomads. Focusing on why Chinese digital nomads choose to gather in Chiang Mai, as well as the forms and characteristics of gathering in Chiang Mai, is of research value in studying the relationship between new media and the youth subcultures of Generation Z in China.
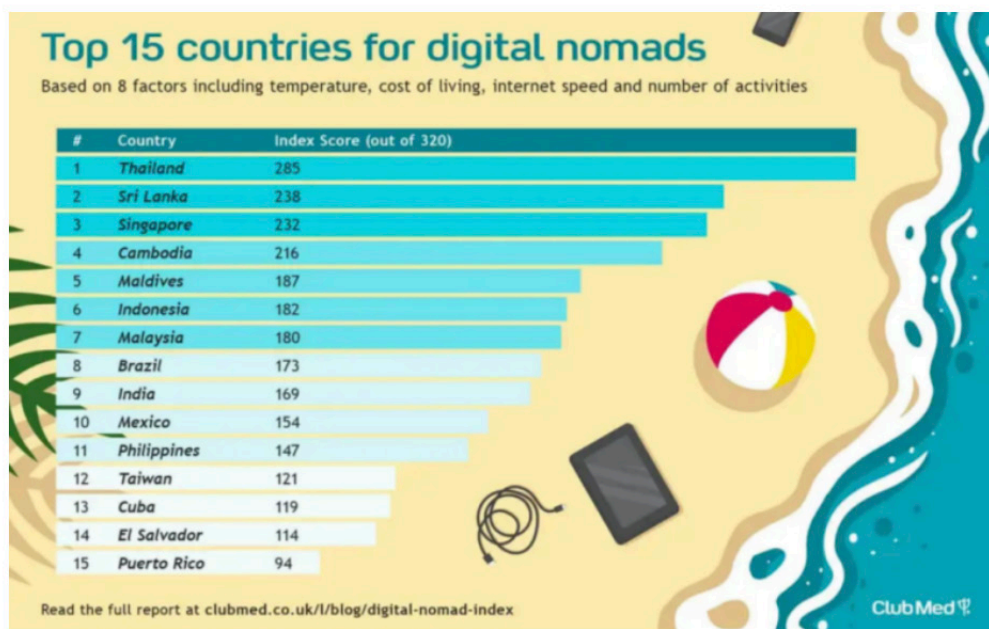

FIGURE 1

CHART RANKING THE WORLD'S TOP 15 COUNTRIES FOR DIGITAL NOMADS

Objective

Based on the above research background, the purpose of this study is to investigate the phenomenon and causes of the aggregation of Chinese Generation Z digital nomads in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in order to argue: first, the relationship between new media and Chinese Generation Z youth subculture. Second, the causes and characteristics of the gathering of Chinese Generation Z youth in the new media environment.

Literature Review

The study of youth subculture in China began in the 1980s, later than that of Europe and the United States, and initially focused on the manifestations of youth's "rebelliousness" in pioneering literature, rock music, and modern and contemporary art activities. The research theory and research paradigm follow the Birmingham School of youth subculture research, using "class agency", "ritual resistance", "symbolization", The research is conducted from the perspectives of "class agency", "ritual resistance", "symbolization", "political integration", "commercial integration", etc. It tends to explain the phenomenon of Chinese youth with the relevant theories of Europe and the United States, and emphasizes the superiority of the mainstream culture, and only explains the relationship between the subcultures and the mainstream culture as well as the inherent conflicts of the youth subcultures.

The research on Chinese youth subculture based on the Internet communication environment started in 1998 because of the "hacking incident of China Shanghai Information Network", and the research stance also began to tend to study Chinese youth subculture in order to explain the more grandiose issues of Chinese society and culture in the new period, and at this time, the research on Chinese local youth subculture entered the "post-Internet stage". At this time, the study of Chinese local youth subculture has entered the "post-internet stage".

Hypothesis 1: Because of the new media, many youth subculture types and phenomena have emerged.

Hypothesis 2: The new media form a structural force that facilitates the emergence of a youth subculture for Generation Z in China.

New Media Contributes to the Emergence of Different Youth Subcultures in China's Generation Z

China's current object is mostly the study of Chinese youth subculture types and phenomena under the Internet environment, part of the literature is summarized as follows:First, Secondary Cultural Research. Zhang Jiaqi (2022) focuses on China's Generation Z. She explores the consumption of animation by Generation Z in order to understand the consumption concepts of Generation Z. She also explores the consumption of animation in China.Second, Online Game Research. Long Shuting (2023) argues that the essence of online games for Generation Z players is to communicate their emotions and satisfy their emotional needs. According to Li Xingchen (2022), game consumption has become the daily entertainment consumption of Generation Z, but there are problems such as impulse consumption and show-off consumption in the process of consumption.Third, Fan Culture Research. Chen Shiyu (2020) analyzed the communication characteristics of "Generation Z" fan communities in terms of the relationship between communication subjects, the mode of communication discourse, and the effect of communication.

consumption of animation in China. Second, Online Game Research. Long Shuting (2023) argues that the essence of online games for Generation Z players is to communicate their emotions and satisfy their emotional needs. According to Li Xingchen (2022), game consumption has become the daily entertainment consumption of Generation Z, but there are problems such as impulse consumption and show-off consumption in the process of consumption.Third, Fan Culture Research. Chen Shiyu (2020) analyzed the communication characteristics of "Generation Z" fan communities in terms of the relationship between communication subjects, the mode of communication discourse, and the effect of communication.

In the study of Chinese youth subcultures, Mead's Symbolic Interactionism and Katz's Uses and Gratification theories provide important theoretical perspectives.Symbolic Interaction Theory helps to understand how Chinese youth express identity and group belonging through specific symbols and behaviors For example, Ma Zhonghong (2023) investigates the "meng(cute)" element in the secondary yuan culture, and explores how youth subculture groups interact internally through unique symbolic systems to form unique cultural circles.Usage and fulfillment theory in Chinese youth subculture can explain how young people obtain information, entertainment and social fulfillment through media such as social media and short video platforms. For example, Sheng Jiyue (2024) takes B station as an example to explore its role as an important platform for youth subculture, which not only provides a space for content consumption, but also serves as an important channel for youth to express themselves and build communities.

Hypothesis 3: In the new media environment of the Internet, young people of Chinese Generation Z gather together because of different interests and hobbies.

Hypothesis 4: Chinese Generation Z youth have their own subculture discourse system and cultural barriers.

New Media and Youth Subculture are Closely Related

China's current research on new media and youth subculture takes different phenomena as research objects, does not cut in from different disciplines, and studies the relationship between new media and youth subculture from different research perspectives, and the specific literature is summarized as follows:

First, influence research. Impact research is a prominent research perspective in the study of new Internet media and youth subculture in China, highlighting the impact of youth subculture. For example, Zheng Xiayu and Yu Jiaqiang (2022) believe that compared with the older generation, "Generation Z" is highly dependent on the Internet for information acquisition, socialization and entertainment, social cognition, and the construction of a value system, and is more experienced in the use of media, more educated, and has a completely new style of media. They are more experienced in media use and have higher media literacy, and have brand-new audience qualities.

Second, relationship research. Relational research focuses on the relationship between the new media on the Internet and Chinese youth subcultures, for example: Chen Lin (2016) studies the communication activities of youth subcultures on the Internet, revealing their communication characteristics of gathering and flow, participation and sharing, and segregation and fusion, and pointing out that youth subcultures construct their own new media space by doing so; Zhang Mingxin and Liu Yusi (2013) put forward the proposal of "socially interactive communication technology". Zhang Mingxin and Liu Yusi (2013) study the role of the use of "social interactive communication technology" on the real-life interactions of young people. In addition, there are also studies exploring the relationship between commercial consumer culture and youth subculture, for example, Ma Zhonghong (2010) argues that the new media, consumer society, and globalization have allowed commercial logic not only to borrow, possess, and embed youth subculture, but also to actively stimulate and shape youth subculture, and that commercial interests and cultural identity are not completely antithetical and contradictory.

Third, behavioral research. Behavioral research is currently more focused on the theme of studying the formation of young people's interesting groups and their behavioral characteristics in the new media environment of the Internet, for example: Luo Ziwen (2013) argues that network virtuality can lead to the alienation of youth interesting groups and individuals from real life, which leads to negative impacts such as obsession with the network and the dissolution of mainstream culture; Fan Shilong and Sun Ying (2017) argue that the youth network interesting groups' differences in value choices lead to a shift in their behavior.

Hypothesis 5: In the new media environment of the Internet, the "DAO" type of community of interest is formed.

Hypothesis 6: The "DAO" type community of interest has

Youth Subculture Communities in the New Media Environment have Their Own Unique Characteristics.

In recent years, research related to the new Internet media and Generation Z has also received attention, mainly focusing on the behavioral habits, consumption characteristics, and personality traits of young people in Generation Z. For example, Li Lin et al. (2022) found that young people in Generation Z have unique characteristics of their own. For example, Li Lin et al. (2022) made a literature review on the concepts and consumption of the "Generation Z" group; Liu Xiaoyuan (2021) studied the influence of the integration of Generation Z's identity and their willingness to purchase local brands; Deng Shichan (2021) studied the design principles of vertical interest socialization for Generation Z youth. There are also some business research reports on the consumption habits and trends related to Generation Z, such as: hand puppet consumption, beauty consumption trend research and so on.

As for the research on the use of new media of Generation Z in the Internet, it is mainly developed from the perspective of news, communication, film and television, and the characteristics of Generation Z as the communication recipients in the media social relations, new media use habits, etc., for example, Zeng Ying (2008) was very early in the study of the then-new media on the study of the new generation's spiritual ecological pairs; Zhang Youquan (2019) for the symmetrical analysis of the post-1995 audience in the television media research; Li Xiaoli (2020) used Q method to study the motivation of selfie for female college students of generation Z; Cui Ziman (2020) focused on the motivation and music social behavior of generation Z users using music social networking in online music communities; Ren Zinan (2021) studied the principles of the construction of generation Z in the system of online expression and discourse; Wang Xu (2021) studied the principles of designing social H5 works for generation Z; Sun Yongjun (2021) to study the visual presentation and characteristics of Generation Z social media APP, etc.

Research methodology

In the problem analysis stage, this study was conducted using a mixed research method, with a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research, applying questionnaire surveys to collect information about the use of new media on the Internet by young people of Generation Z in China, and applying in-depth interviews to collect information about the aggregation of Chinese digital nomads who have gathered in Chiang Mai, Thailand. In the problem solving stage, SPSS statistical analysis method and case study method were used to analyze the collected information and draw conclusions.

Total sample size of the questionnaire: according to the 2019 China Census, the total population of Generation Z in China is roughly 264.1 million. Sample size: according to the stratified and random sampling sample size calculation formula

$$n = \frac{(p*q)z^2}{e^2}$$. n is the sample size; z is the standard error corresponding to

the selected confidence level, which is generally 1.96; p is the percentage of the estimate in the overall population, which is set to 94%; q: 100%-p; e is the permissible error, i.e., the ratio of error in the total number of sample estimates that can be received, which is set to +2.7%, and 495 Chinese Z Generation respondents' questionnaires, and the specific sample size is calculated as shown in the following equation:

$$n= \frac{(p*q)z^2}{e^2} = \frac{(94*10)1.96^2}{2.7^2} = \frac{940 \times 3.84}{7.29} = \frac{3609.6}{7.29} \approx 495$$

Number of in-depth interviewees: the in-depth interviewers needed to fulfill two criteria: they had gathered in Chiang Mai, Thailand in the last month; and they had made at least five statements in the last month in the online community among the Chinese digital nomad community. 17 Chinese digital nomads were selected for in-depth interviews.

This study is based on Osgood and Schramm Circular Mode, applying Elihu Katz's Uses and Gratification Theory, and George H.Mead's Symbolic Interactionism, this study explores how the dissemination of information on the new media platform of the Internet breaks down the inequality brought about by the traditional mass communication tools, and how it builds up the youth subculture of China's Generation Z. Applies the use and satisfaction theory to analyze the relationship between new media and the youth subculture of Generation Z in China. Apply the theory of symbolic interaction and analyze the reasons and characteristics of the gathering of young people of Generation Z in China in the new media environment from the perspective of Mead's "subject-me" and "object-me".

Findings

An Overview of Chinese Generation Z Youth's Use of New Media

In this study, a questionnaire was administered to Chinese Generation Z youth born between 1995 and 2009 from 21:40 on June 18, 2024 to 10:35 on June 29, 2024, with the option of "whether or not you agree to voluntarily fill out the questionnaire truthfully", which involves minors under the age of 18 years old, and requires the consent of their guardians. A total of 508 questionnaires were collected, of which 492 were valid.

In terms of the age of Internet exposure, more than half of the respondents (52.4%) started to access the Internet at the Chinese school age, around 6 to 12 years old. In terms of the motivation for need fulfillment in using the new media, respondents' shopping and consumption needs, learning needs, gaming and entertainment needs, hobby needs, and work needs ranked high, accounting for 80%, 70.2%, 65%, 59.4%, and 51.6% . In terms of which features of the new media are the reasons why people are willing to use these platforms, the top five features of Internet platforms that respondents find attractive to them are: abundant information (78.4%), rapid dissemination (68.6%), interactivity (51.8%), freedom of expression (47%), and aggregation according to interests (45%). More than 98.4% of the respondents considered the new medium of the Internet to be generally important, important and very important to them, as shown in the chart below:

Very Unimportant 0.8%
Unimportant 0.8%
Very Important 33.2%
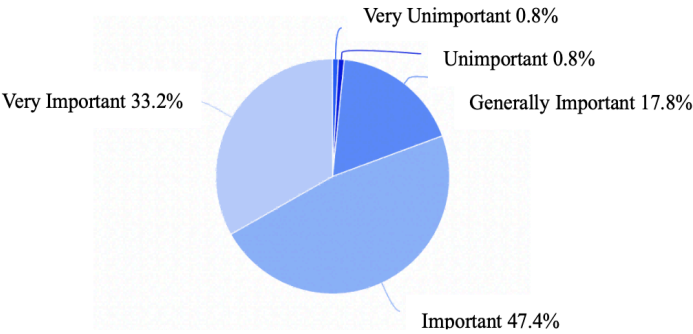Generally Important 17.8%
Important 47.4%

FIGURE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF CHINESE GENERATION Z RESPONDENTS' RATING OF IMPORTANCE OF NEW MEDIA

The results of the ANOVA analysis of the relationship between the importance of Generation Z to the new media of the Internet and their age of onset of Internet exposure in the Questionnaire on the Use of New Media are as follows:

Table 1			
ANOVA OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE IMPORTANCE OF NEW MEDIA TO GENERATION Z AND THEIR AGE AT THE BEGINNING OF INTERNET EXPOSURE			
Options	Sample Size	Average Values	Standard Deviation
0 to about 5 years old	24	4.33	1.05
6 to about 12 years old	262	4.18	0.72
After 12 years old	206	4.01	0.81
F	3.500		
P	0.031		

F: The variance ratio, which is used to compare the magnitude of between-group differences to within-group differences. （The larger the F value, the more significant the between-group difference, that is, the greater the difference in means between different groups.）
P: Significance level, used to determine whether the difference in sample means is significant.

ANOVA: To collect information on Chinese Generation Z's ratings of the importance of the new medium of the Internet and the age at which they started to access the Internet. The total sample size was 492, which was divided into three groups: 0 years old and around 5 years old group (24), 6 years old to around 12 years old group (262) and 12 years old and beyond group (206). Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the differences between the different age groups in terms of their importance to the new medium of the Internet. According to the ANOVA results, there was a significant difference between different age groups in terms of their importance to the new Internet medium (F=3.500, P=0.031). Further post-hoc test showed that the mean importance rating of the group around 0 years and 5 years was 4.33 (standard deviation=1.05), 4.18 (standard deviation=0.72) in the group from 6 years to around 12 years and 4.01 (standard deviation=0.81) in the group from 12 years onwards.

Based on the results of the above analysis, it is concluded that Generation Z's exposure to the Internet at the beginning of different ages has an impact on their importance to the new Internet medium, and the earlier Generation Z touches the Internet, the more important they consider the new Internet medium to be to them.

The Gathering of Chinese Digital Nomads Clustered in Chiang Mai, Thailand

According to the survey, there are hundreds of young Chinese digital nomads gathered in Chiang Mai, most of them are software engineers, designers, self-media, marketing and sales. The main communities in Chiang Mai, where Chinese Generation Z digital nomads gather are SeeDAO, Four Seas Community, PlanckDAO, 706 Chiang Mai, DaliHub, MaskNetwork, RSS3, Nomadverse DAO, Matters, and Great Voyage DAO.

In this study, 17 Chinese digital nomads gathered in Chiang Mai, Thailand, were selected for online in-depth interviews in order to understand their reasons for choosing Chiang Mai and the relationship between new Internet media and digital nomad subculture.

Interview outline: "1. What is your professional or disciplinary background? 2. What are your reasons for choosing to become a digital nomad? 3. How long have you lived in Thailand or Chiang Mai in the last year? 4. What are your reasons for choosing to reside in Chiang Mai, Thailand? 5. Have you effectively found the digital nomad youth subculture circle that you identify with through the new media of the internet? 6. Do you agree that the digital nomad circle you are in has certain cultural barriers? 7. Do you join digital nomad-related communities, forums, or organizations on the new media platform of the Internet? 8. What are the reasons for you to join this community organization? 9. What characteristics do you think this community organization has? 10. Do you create and manage your own persona on the new media platform of the Internet? 11. Why do you create and manage your own persona on the new media platform of the Internet? 12. Do you create and manage your own persona on the new media platform of the Internet? What are the reasons for you to create your own personal persona on the new media platform of the Internet? 13. Are you satisfied with your current status?"

Interview time: July 1, 2024 from 13:00 to 17:30. Interview format: online. The interviewees and some information are listed below:

Table 2						
TABLE OF INTERVIEWEES AND SELECTED INFORORMATION						
Interviewees	Professional Background	Length of residence in Chiang Mai, Thailand within the last year	Have you ever joined a digital nomad community on a new media platform on the Internet?	Do you think there are cultural barriers to the digital nomad community?	Whether to create your own persona on new media platforms on the Internet	Are you satisfied with your current status?
Interviewee 1	Literature and History	Within 1 month	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Interviewee 2	Science and Engineering	Within 1 month	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Interviewee 3	Science and Technology	Within 1 month	No	No	No	Yes
Interviewee 4	Science and Technology	Within 1 month	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Interviewee 5	Arts & History	1 month to 3 months	No	Yes	No	No
Interviewee 6	Science and Engineering	Within 1 month	No	No	No	No
Interviewee 7	Art	Within 1 month	No	No	No	No
Interviewee 8	Science and Engineering	3 months to 6 months	Yes	No	No	No

Interviewee 9	Arts and History	6 months to 12 months	Yes	No	No	Yes
Interviewee 10	Literature and History	Within 1 month	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Interviewee 11	Arts and History	Within 1 month	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Interviewee 12	Science and Engineering	1 month to 3 months	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Interviewee 13	Science and Technology	Within 1 month	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Interviewee 14	Arts & History	6 months to 12 months	No	Yes	No	Yes
Interviewee 15	Science and Engineering	3 months to 6 months	No	No	No	Yes
Interviewee 16	Literature and History	6 months to 12 months	No	No	No	No
Interviewee 17	Literature and History	1 month to 3 months	No	No	No	No

Interviewees' professional backgrounds cover both science and arts, and all have gathered in Chiang Mai, Thailand in a recent month, some for more than a month. More than half of these respondents have joined digital nomad communities on new media platforms and believe that digital nomad culture has cultural barriers.

Summarizing the reasons why interviewees chose to gather and live in Chiang Mai, Thailand, there are two levels of national advantages and city advantages. Advantages at the country level in Thailand: first, Thailand is the world's digital nomad gathering place with a good working atmosphere; second, Thailand's visa policy for China and digital nomads, which is more convenient; and third, Thailand's food is in line with the appetite and the price of goods has an advantage. Advantages of Chiang Mai at the city level: First, Chiang Mai has a quieter city atmosphere and cooler climate environment compared to other cities in Thailand; second, there are more young digital nomads gathered in Chiang Mai, Thailand, with a good youth culture; third, Chiang Mai's old city has historical and humanistic features; fourth, Chiang Mai has more Chinese and Chinese sojourning tourists, which has a more cordial cultural atmosphere.

Interviewees' main reasons for choosing to become a digital nomad are categorized into three points: first, time can be arranged freely, second, work and life can be arranged independently, and third, the place of residence can be arranged freely.

82.35% of the interviewees have joined the community related to digital nomads. The reasons why the interviewees chose to join the digital nomads to participate in this community organization on the new media platform of the Internet are summarized in several points: firstly, it is possible to get to know unfamiliar friends with the same interests as their own, secondly, it is possible to discuss and exchange the topics of their own interest, and thirdly, it is possible to obtain the information of their own interest in a timely manner.

The characteristics of the digital nomad community according to the interviewees are summarized in five main aspects: first, the community organization is formed by members' self-organization, second, the members gather because of common interests or commonly recognized cultures, third, the members are mostly strangers who have not met offline, fourth, the community organization is decentralized and self-governing, fourth, the discussion content revolves around the topics related to interests or recognized cultures, and fifth, the community organization has key opinion leaders. The key opinion leaders in the community organization.

More than half of the interviewees created and operated their personal personas on new Internet media platforms for four main reasons summarized: first, it can be a combination of offline and online, and is an online extension of one's real-life role; second, it can gain more social attention and social satisfaction; third, it can be a way to freely express one's views and display oneself; and fourth, it can be a way to learn about oneself through the perspective of Internet user.

Conclusion and Discussion

Conclusion1: New Media Has Allowed Many Youth Subculture Types and Phenomena to Emerge

Through a questionnaire survey of young people in China's Generation Z, it was found that the new medium fulfills the needs of shopping and consumption , learning , gaming and entertainment, hobby, work. And because the Internet is characterized by abundant information, rapid dissemination, interactivity , freedom of expression, and aggregation according to interests it has allowed many youth subculture types and phenomena to emerge.

Conclusion2: New Media as A Structural Force Contributing to the Emergence of Youth Subcultures

Based on the above findings, more than 98.4% of the respondents consider the new Internet media to be generally important and very important to them. Applying the theory of symbolic interaction proposed by Mead, it is found that Chinese Generation Z young people have a very clear concept of "I" and "Me" in the new Internet media platform. By creating and managing personal personas on the Internet new media platform, on the one hand, the "main I", as the subject of will and behavior, realizes a self-awareness, self-expression willingness, and self-image shaping through the management and creation of personal personas, forming the "main I" role;

on the other side as a representative of others' social evaluation and social expectations of the "guest me" , is the "main I" in the social relations of the embodiment of the realization of the image of others on their own evaluation and perception of the role formation.

Continuing to apply Mead's concept of Role Taking, it is clear that Chinese Generation Z youth believe that individuals can recognize themselves through interaction with others, tell who they are through others, and develop their ability to act through interaction with others. They are also very good at applying the new media of the Internet to "role-play" and gain others' perceptions of themselves. As the social, two-way and interactive nature of self-propagation, human internal communication is a social process of two-way interaction between the "master self" and "guest self", and the medium of interaction is also the information, that is, what Mead said "Meaningful symbols".

By analyzing the reasons why Chinese Generation Z participants use the new Internet medium, it is found that the new Internet medium can satisfy their own usage needs. By applying Elihu Katz's Uses and Gratification Theory, it can be found that Chinese Gen Z young people regard the new Internet media as a platform to satisfy their needs through use. In the process of growing up, Chinese Generation Z has specific needs brought about by social and psychological factors, and these needs have generated expectations of satisfaction through the new Internet media, and then realize the satisfaction of their needs through the active use of the new Internet media.

Because the new media of the Internet has the characteristics of rapid dissemination, rich information, interactivity, equal communication, free expression, gathering according to interests, virtual identity, data digitization, and decentralization, this puts the right to release information not only in the hands of the media, but also in the hands of the audience.

Who according to their own motives and reasons, generate specific needs and media expectations, and take the initiative to release information and content related to their needs, personalization, values, and self-characteristics independently through the new media. It is these characteristics of the new media of the Internet that build the structural forces that contribute to the emergence of youth culture or youth subculture.

Conclusion3: In the New Media Environment of the Internet, Chinese Generation Z Youth Gather Because of Their Interests and Hobbies

Mark Post argues in The Information Way that "the Internet is a decentralized communication system. The Internet is also decentralized at a foundational organizational level, facilitating the decentralization of language."

In the New Media Environment of the Internet, Chinese youth subculture is not only a form of organization, but also a platform for social interaction and expression of cultural values. This autonomy and sharing provides the basis for the formation of cultural creativity and community cohesion. Members have common cultural values and identities, and through these platforms, they communicate, share and interact with each other to find like-minded people.This has allowed Chinese Generation Z youth to gather on the new media platform of the Internet because of their different interests and hobbies.

Conclusion4: Chinese Generation Z Youth Have Their Own Subculture Discourse System on New Media

Youth subculture is characterized by decentralization, without a centralized management structure in the traditional sense. As a new form of organization, it emphasizes equal participation and autonomous decision-making among members. In youth subculture, this decentralization means that the generation of activities and ideas is not restricted by traditional authority or centralized structure, and relies more on autonomous actions and interactions within the group.This has led to the need for China's Generation Z youth to have their own subculture discourse in the new media. It has formed its own subculture discourse.

Conclusion5: In the New Media Environment of the Internet, the "DAO" Type of Community of Interest is Formed

Based on the above conclusions, the study finds that Chinese youth subculture has formed a new type of DAO (decentralized autonomous organization) youth subculture in the Internet. This form of youth subculture is characterized by a combination of reality and reality. Young Chinese digital nomads gathered in Thailand not only communicate and discuss online, but also meet offline.The virtual community becomes the main place for them to communicate, share creativity and show their identity, and at the same time, these virtual communities can also promote offline activities and physical gatherings in the real world, thus realizing the interactive coexistence of virtual and real interactions.

Conclusion6: The Organizational Characteristics of the New Type of "DAO" Youth Subculture: De-neutralization, Interest Gathering, and a High Degree of Autonomy

This study analyzes the characteristics of the communities that Chinese Gen Z participants said they have joined, and concludes that the "DAO" youth subculture has the following main characteristics:

First, decentralization. Its state is distributed and decentralized, rather than having a central node and hierarchical management structure. The most distinctive feature of "DAO" youth subculture organizations is decentralized autonomy. They are usually built based on blockchain technology and smart contracts, without a traditional centralized management structure.

Second, interest gathering. Its members are strangers or even AI people with common goals, common interests, common cultural identity, and certain interest relevance, rather than acquaint-ance circles and person-to-person organizations. "DAO" youth subculture organizations are often involved in the investment and governance of projects of common concern or interest.

Third, highly autonomous. Its norms are autonomous principles of governance, rewards and punishments, and decision-making agreed upon by strangers within the organization, rather than rules and regulations such as enforcement, and "DAO" youth subculture usually distribute decision-making power through the issuance of Governance Tokens.

Recommendation

This study examines the phenomenon of Chinese digital nomads gathering in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and the youth subculture behind it in relation to the new media, and makes some applied and theoretical recommendation.

In terms of application recommendation, the findings of the study can provide references for the government and social organizations. First, the government can draw on the successful experience of Chiang Mai to attract digital nomad groups and promote local economic development and cultural diversity by optimizing the policy environment, reducing the cost of living and upgrading digital infrastructure. Second, social organizations can promote youth participation in social governance by supporting the practice of digital nomads, exploring new organizational forms of decentralization and autonomy, and enhancing the vitality of social innovation.

In terms of theoretical recommendation, this study provides new perspectives for the study of youth subculture. First, the study reveals how new media technology builds structural forces to promote the formation and dissemination of youth subculture, providing empirical support for media research. Second, the proposal of "DAO" youth subculture provides a new research direction for understanding the organizational characteristics of youth subculture in the Internet environment.

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