

# Research on the Communication Effect and Path of Sizhou Opera on Short Video Platform

## --Taking Tiktok as an Example

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### Abstract

**Sizhou Opera is one of the local opera genres in Anhui Province, mainly spread in Sixian, Lingbi, Siyang and other places in Anhui Province. It belongs to the category of traditional opera, which continuously absorbs the artistic forms of other local operas on the basis of tradition. In the era of new media, short videos have quickly occupied the online market with their rich and diverse dissemination methods. Sizhou Opera also has a certain audience on short video platforms, but the audience range is still small. This paper analyzes the current situation of Sizhou Opera's communication on the Tiktok platform, finds out its existing problems, and puts forward corresponding solutions to provide reference for the communication of Sizhou Opera on the short video platform.**

### Keywords

**Sizhou Opera, Short Video, Communication Effects.**

## 1. Research background

Sizhou Opera is one of the national intangible cultural heritages, mainly popular in Sixian, Lingbi, Siyang and other places in Anhui Province. It emerged in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties and was influenced by local folk songs and minor tunes during its development, gradually forming a local style of opera. In traditional communication channels, the dissemination of Sizhou Opera is mainly based on theatrical performances. Traditional theatrical performances mainly include singing, recitation, acting, and playing, with the singing part accounting for a large proportion. In the era of new media, short videos have quickly occupied the online market with their unique advantages. Short videos can not only enrich people's entertainment life, but also increase information dissemination and cultural exchange. In the era of new media, short video platforms have quickly occupied the online market with their rich and diverse dissemination methods. People can watch, forward, or comment on short videos through their phones. Among many short video platforms, Tiktok is favored because of its unique communication mode. It has a wide range of audiences and can interact with them. Tiktok plays an important role in the dissemination of opera culture. Taking Tiktok as an example, this paper explores the communication effect and path of Sizhou Opera on the new media platform, aiming to understand the achievements and problems of Sizhou Opera on the Tiktok platform. At the same time, it can help the main body of Sizhou Opera to better understand the platform of Tiktok and innovate it, so as to promote the development and inheritance of Sizhou Opera.

## 2. The Development Status of Sizhou Opera

The origin of Sizhou Opera can be traced back to the Spring and Autumn Period, with a long history. Due to the fact that Sizhou Opera is based on folk legends, customs, and local customs as its creative source, and its content mostly reflects the daily lives of ordinary people, it is also

known as "Sizhou Small Miscellaneous Opera" among the people. In the long-term development process, the repertoire, music, and performing arts of Sizhou Opera have continuously developed and changed with the changes of the times. Nowadays, the performance forms of Sizhou Opera are mainly divided into three categories: family dramas, folk dramas, and song and dance dramas. As a folk cultural art, Sizhou Opera, like other traditional Chinese operas, mainly focuses on "singing, reciting, and playing" in its performance form. It is mainly divided into five parts: singing, reciting, doing, playing, and music. Among them, singing and recitation are the most important parts of traditional Chinese opera performance. In terms of singing, the singing forms of Sizhou Opera include: one person with multiple roles, one person singing alone, group singing, duet singing, etc. In terms of singing, Sizhou Opera mainly focuses on high pitched tunes, supplemented by minor tunes.

With the continuous development of the social economy, Sizhou Opera has also gone through a long period of development. During this period, Sizhou Opera developed many excellent works and repertoire. However, with the continuous development of social economy and changes in people's ideological concepts, Sizhou Opera also faced many difficulties and challenges during this period. In order to ensure the better inheritance and development of Sizhou Opera, relevant departments have formulated a series of measures to promote the further development of Sizhou Opera.

### **3. Analysis of the Communication Effect of Sizhou Opera on Short Video Platforms**

Through the new list data platform, the author mainly selected five Sizhou opera creators on the Tiktok platform to analyze the communication effect:

The "Sizhou Opera and Xiangjie" has released 330 works, mainly focusing on performing Sizhou opera. Her performance form is relatively formal, often wearing costumes to perform various classic Sizhou opera, which includes various series, such as "Wu Han Killing Wife", "Drinking Noodles and Leaves", "Little Second Sister Dreams", "Three Generations", and so on. Her homepage introduction is very simple and clear: "Inheriting Sizhou Opera". Although the number of works by this 'Xiang Jie' is not high, the quality is relatively high. The majority of her videos are longer than 60 seconds, accounting for 87%. The most common release time period is from 17:00 to 18:00, accounting for 73%. In the past 90 days, her works have received a total of 114500 likes, with an average of around 2081 likes per work, around 120 comments, and about 95 shares. Compared to the past, the number of likes has been decreasing, with a decrease of 10.31%. The author has 153700 Tiktok fans, of which 67.61% are male, 56.57% are over 50 years old, and 44.72% are in Anhui Province. These fans tend to have a lot of interests, such as follow up, cultural education, and storyline videos. At the same time, the author will conduct a live broadcast of Sizhou opera performances from 18:00 to 21:00 every day, with a duration of more than 2 hours. The average number of online viewers per live broadcast is around 2000. Finally, apart from a small amount of live streaming income, the author has almost no sales revenue, and the monetization ability of the account is not high.

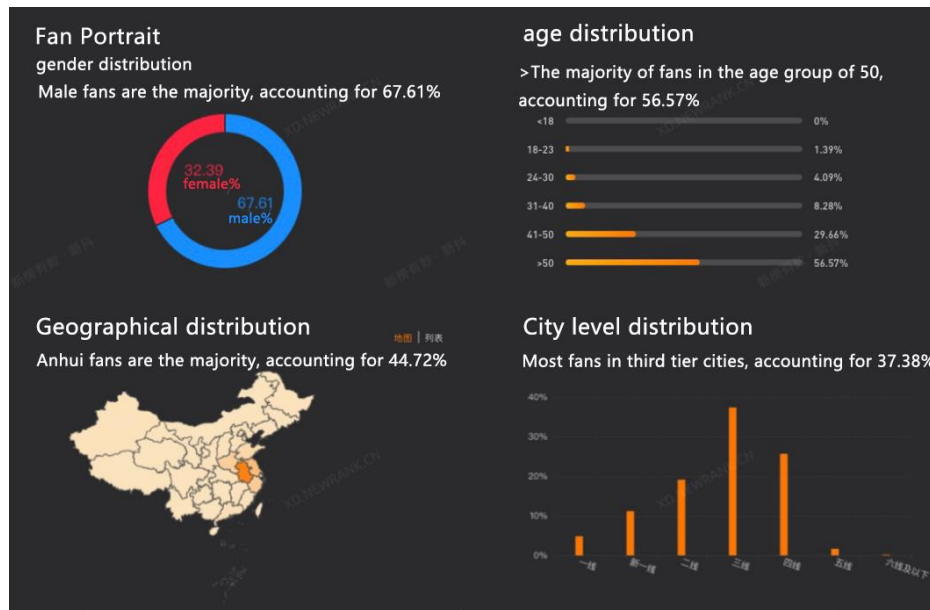


Figure 1 Tiktok creator Sizhou opera, portrait of Xiangjie fans

Yang Hua from Sizhou Opera "has released 922 works, and the content is also a performance of Sizhou Opera. However, this author's performance style is relatively "down-to-earth" and often improvises some classic Sizhou Opera repertoire in various life scenes wearing a regular costume. The homepage introduces his identity as a Sizhou Opera actor. Yang Hua's works also take over 60 seconds, accounting for 81% of the time, and are released between 9:00 and 10:00. In the past 90 days, her works have received a total of 21500 likes, with an average of 1023.86 likes per work, 96.86 comments, and 59.29 shares. Her works have been increasing in likes recently, with a 22.46% increase in likes. The author will also perform live performances of traditional Chinese opera, with live broadcast time mainly distributed between 12:15 am and 18-21 pm, with an average live broadcast time of over 2 hours. But her live streaming shows have a relatively small number of people online, mainly in the range of 72 to 120. The author has 82000 Tiktok fans, of which 53.75% are male, 65.55% are over 50 years old, and 57.06% are local audiences in Anhui Province. The same interest preferences are found in accompanying/cultural storyline videos. Having a small amount of live streaming revenue and no sales revenue.

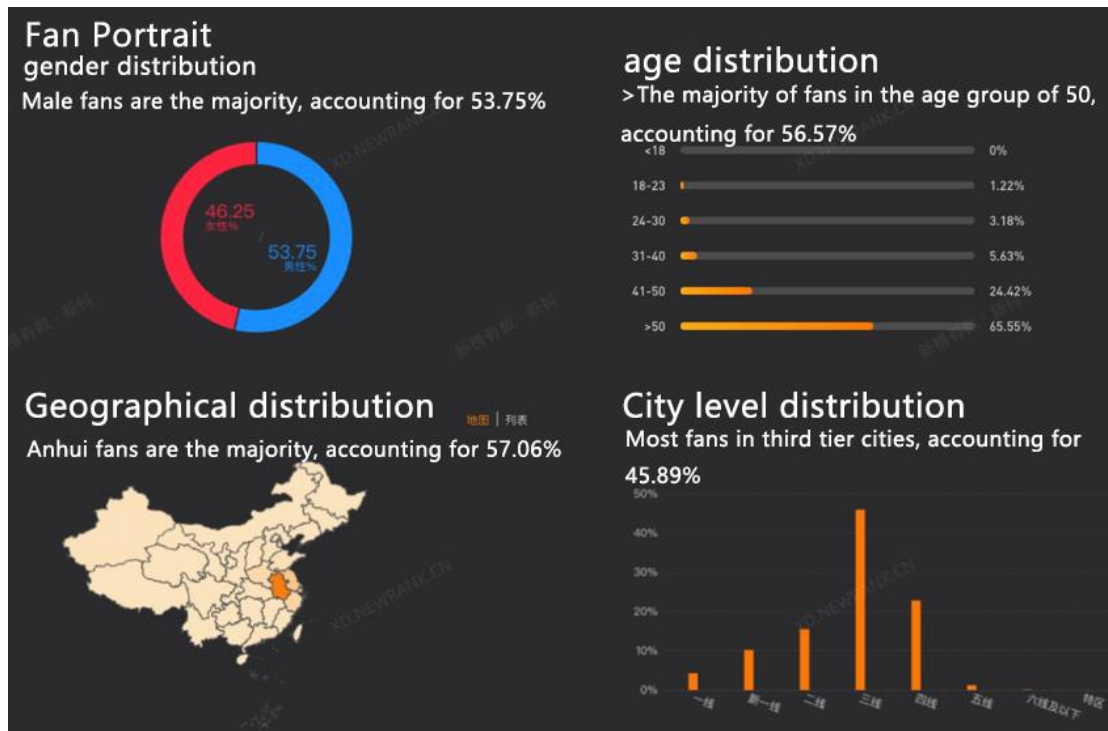
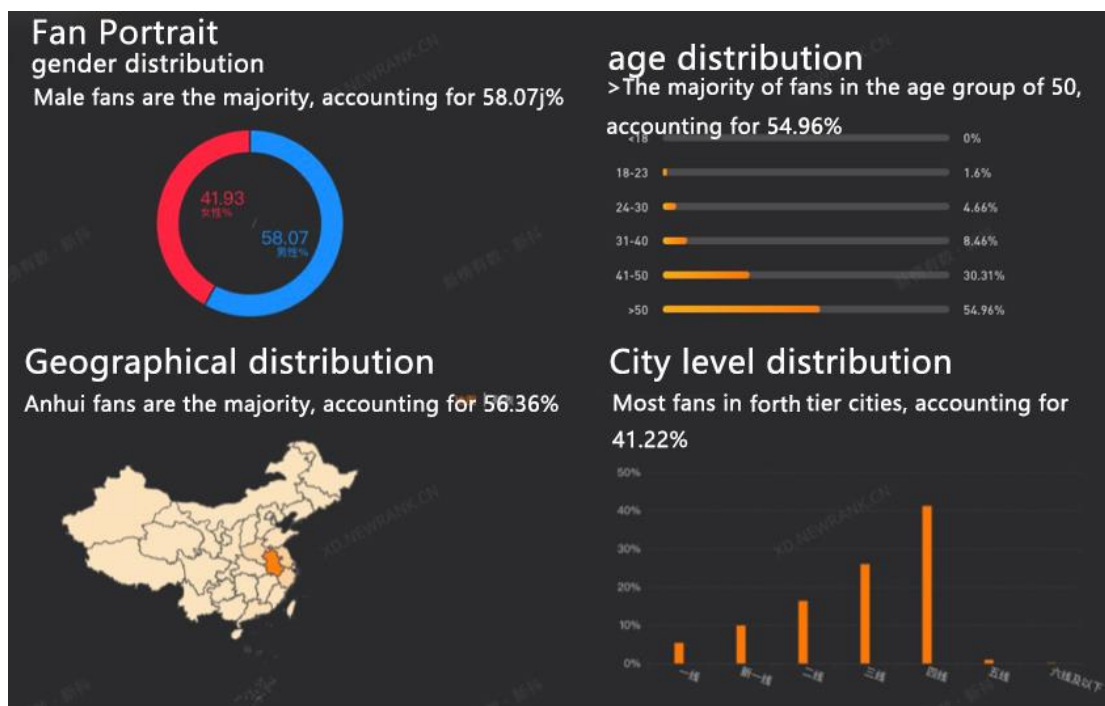


Figure 2 Tiktok creator Sizhou Drama Yang Hua fan portrait

Yao Yong of Sizhou Opera "has released 1266 works, with varying quality. There are officially filmed Sizhou Opera performance videos that showcase his profound skills in Sizhou Opera, while there are also works that are shot casually, with even very casual and chaotic shooting techniques. Some works may have repeated releases. It is obvious that the author did not receive professional learning in the shooting and publishing of short videos. His video duration is mainly between 30-60 seconds, accounting for 74%, and the release time is mainly around 16:00. In the past 90 days of publishing works, their total likes were 3252, with an average of 92.91 likes per work and an average of 12.69 comments. This is a relatively high decrease compared to the past, with a likes to likes ratio of 54.32%. Unlike the previous two, the author has not opened an account for live streaming. Yao Yong of Sizhou Drama has 21600 Tiktok fans, of which 58.07% are male, 54.96% are over 50 years old, and 56.36% are audience in Anhui Province. He prefers to follow up, cultural education and drama videos.



**Figure 3** Tiktok creator Sizhou drama Yao Yong fan portrait

The Xiangyang Sizhou Drama Troupe has released 1241 works. But in fact, due to popularity reasons, the new ranking platform stopped updating its account data on July 18, 2021. This was created as an official account of Sizhou Opera Troupe. The author mainly publicized the local Sizhou Opera Troupe through the Tiktok platform to undertake drama performance projects. Similarly, the account author does not possess the professional literacy of new media and often publishes daily works unrelated to Sizhou Opera. The themes and quality of the works are quite uneven, and the total number of likes for all works is 213000, with 18000 followers. Among them, male fans account for 62.24%, those over 50 years old account for 58.39%, and local fans in Anhui Province account for 58.39%. The live content of this account is mainly about the performances of its theater troupe in various regions, with an online audience usually not exceeding a hundred people. Another account that can be compared to "Xiangyang Sizhou Drama Troupe" is "Suzhou Sizhou Drama Troupe". Released 167 works, which are more formal and professional than the former, mostly for the daily performance sharing of the drama troupe and the collective performance of the festival drama troupe. Its fan base is 7251, with 65.04% being male and 61.69% being over 50 years old. The audience in Anhui Province is 65.06%. The total number of likes received is 46000, but there has been no live streaming on the account, and the fan audience is mostly the main body with demand for the local Sizhou Opera Performance Troupe.

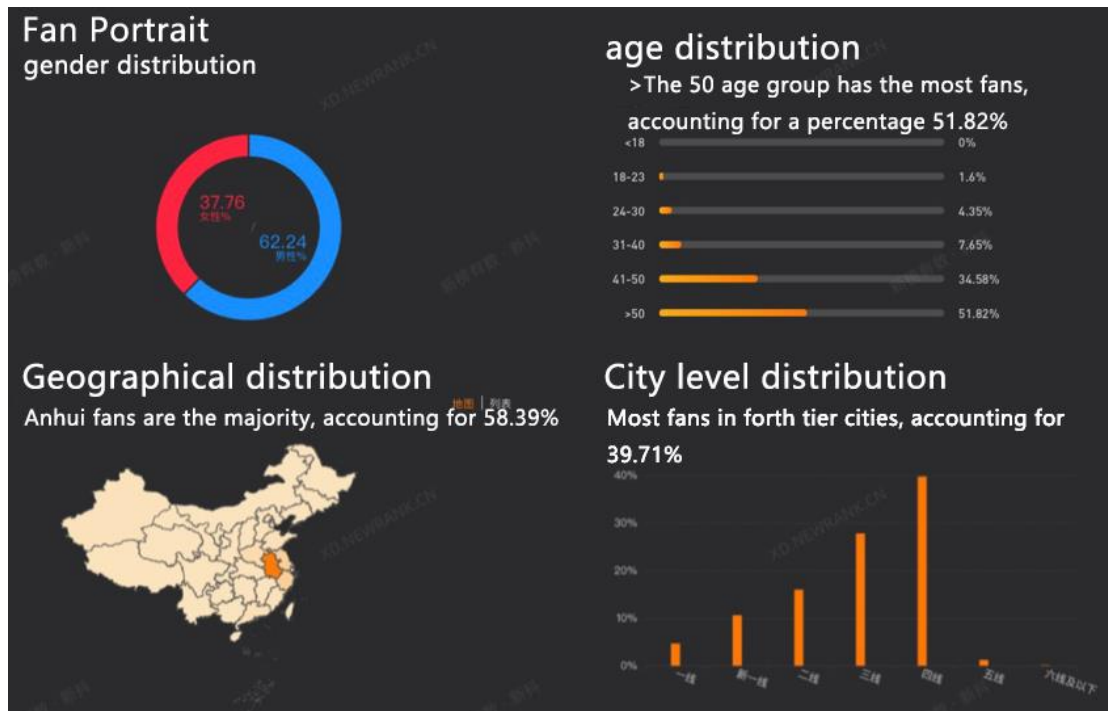


Figure 4 Tiktok creator Xiangyang Sizhou Drama Troupe fan portrait

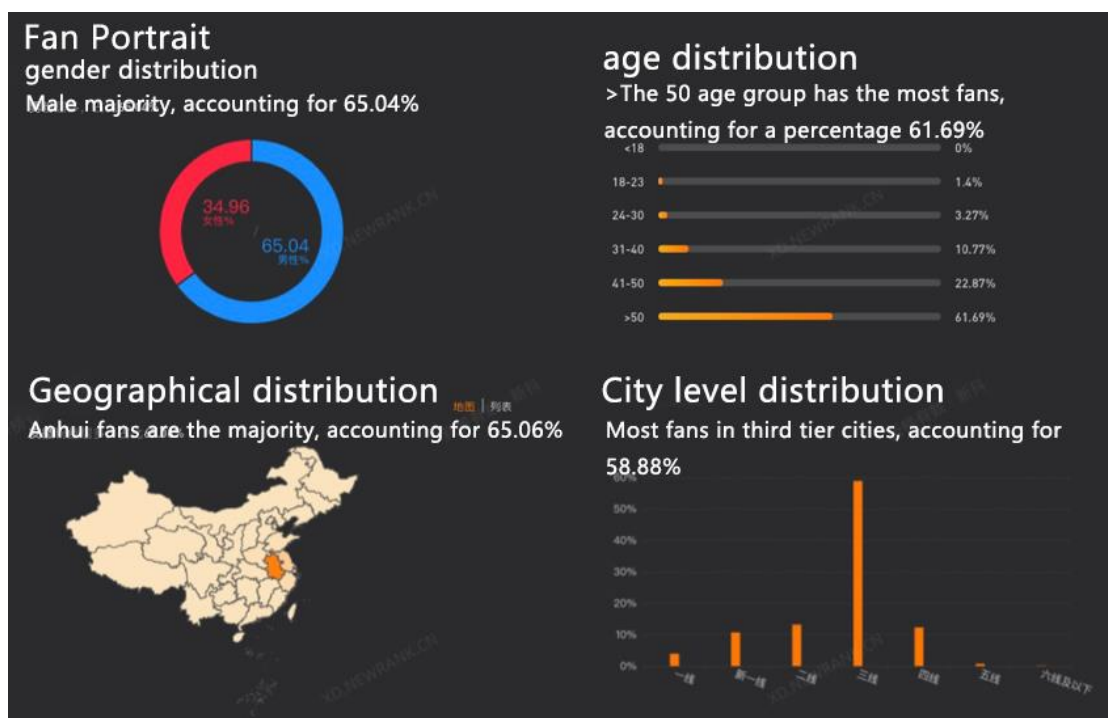


Figure 5 Tiktok creator Suzhou Sizhou Drama Troupe fan portrait

According to the above account number of Tiktok Sizhou Opera and the communication analysis, we can draw the current situation of the creation and communication of Sizhou Opera: the quality of the creation of Sizhou Opera on the new media platform is uneven, most of them have not received complete education and learning on the creation of new media works, and the creation is arbitrary and professional. But there are also a small number of more professional and formal works; The audience of Sizhou Opera on the new media platform is mostly the middle-aged and elderly male group in Anhui Province, the birthplace of Sizhou Opera. The communication scope is narrow, the gender ratio of the audience is uneven, and the

age is too old to attract the current trend seeking young groups; The monetization ability of creators of Sizhou Opera on the new media platform is poor, and most creators are driven by their passion for creating their works, which is also a reason for the uneven quality of their works.

#### **4. Problems of Sizhou Drama Spreading on Tiktok Platform**

##### **4.1. The form of dissemination is relatively single, and its advantages in dissemination have not been fully utilized.**

The performance form of Sizhou Opera is relatively traditional, and the content is also relatively single, mainly consisting of plucked instruments. Initially, there was only one local pipa (like a smaller sized pipa, made by Sizhou Opera artists themselves, with the main part made of willow wood and the panel part made of paulownia wood, with two strings, also known as the willow leaf qin. Only one and a half octave interval can be played, without half tones and a small range) and one bangzi. After the 1970s, instruments such as the four stringed willow qin and erhu were used instead. These traditional instruments are not well-known to modern young people and mainstream groups, and in the era of new media, they lack integration with modern life and cannot meet the aesthetic needs of modern young people.

Tiktok mainly focuses on short videos, medium and long videos, and pictures and texts. Although there are some Sizhou opera actors sharing Sizhou opera on the Tiktok platform, there are few fans and little influence, so Sizhou opera can only be spread in a single form on the Tiktok platform, unable to achieve wide field and deep level communication. Sizhou opera does not play its communication advantages on the Tiktok platform.

##### **4.2. The creative content is mixed, and professionals and amateurs are squeezed into the ranks of creators without distinction.**

Tiktok is an We Media platform, and everyone is a content producer. Therefore, there is no clear restriction on the content producers of Sizhou Opera, which gives professionals and amateurs the opportunity to join the ranks of creators, resulting in mixed production content of Sizhou Opera. At the same time, the cultivation of Sizhou opera inheritors still relies on the apprentice model of word of mouth, which means that the cultivation of an excellent Sizhou opera inheritor needs a long period, and the number of Sizhou opera professionals is reduced, thus the influence of professionals on the Tiktok platform may not be as great as that of amateur bloggers.

In addition, there is a lack of official and authoritative accounts for Sizhou Opera, and the accounts that publish content of Sizhou Opera are often not limited to Sizhou Opera, with poor verticality and severe homogenization of content, making it difficult for audiences to systematically understand the professional content of Sizhou Opera. High quality original content is the foundation and important way to attract audiences. The lack of innovation and homogenization of Sizhou Opera information on new media platforms seriously hinder the deep development of Sizhou Opera art. []

##### **4.3. Under the new media environment, the Lebensraum of Sizhou Opera is squeezed by various cultural forms.**

Sizhou Opera was originally one of the main forms of spiritual entertainment for the people of northern Anhui. After tea and dinner, people gathered together to watch and listen to the opera, obtaining aesthetic enjoyment and spiritual satisfaction. However, in the contemporary social environment, cultural forms are becoming more diverse, and cultural forms such as film and television dramas and animation are squeezing the Lebensraum of Sizhou Opera. [] As Internet aborigines, young people who are also the main users of Tiktok have been exposed to cultural

works such as animation, animation, movies, TV dramas, movies and so on since childhood. They know little about operas, and are even less interested in operas; At the same time, in the context of deep cultural exchanges between the East and the West, Western culture with greater visual impact and stronger cultural shock has occupied a large part of people's spiritual world, and Marvel characters and superheroes seem to have greater appeal to young people. On the other hand, Sizhou Opera adopts traditional forms of artistic expression and traditional artistic expression rules. Its content mainly reflects events in historical periods. Although it can show events in specific periods and reflect national spirit, national integrity and cultural characteristics, it does not meet the cultural needs of contemporary Tiktok audiences, and is out of touch with people's aesthetics in the context of contemporary new media. Therefore, due to external and its own reasons, Sizhou Opera faces challenges in Tiktok, including not only the cultural extrusion at home and abroad, but also the difficulties of audience reduction and limited communication.

#### **4.4. There is a gap in the innovation of Sizhou drama repertoire, and the number of innovative tracks has decreased.**

The Chinese nation is a nation that emphasizes cultural inheritance, and people have always been committed to the development and inheritance of excellent traditional Chinese culture. However, the folk art of Sizhou Opera has not received the same treatment. Even though government departments vigorously protect this intangible culture, its inherent characteristics still hinder the inheritance of this art. The current development of Sizhou Opera mainly relies on government funding support, and the number of inheritors is decreasing with the changes of the times. The main reason is that contemporary people lack understanding of Sizhou Opera, and a large number of people are not aware of such a genre of opera in China. Therefore, the innovation of Sizhou Opera's repertoire lacks motivation and main force. However, Tiktok is a platform with extremely fast content update speed. The innovative tracks of Sizhou Opera can not obtain long-term communication flow in Tiktok. Sizhou Opera can not really be exposed on the new media platform only relying on the existing traditional tracks, nor can it attract young people to actively understand and inherit Sizhou Opera.

In addition, the current aesthetic perspective has changed, but the performance methods of Sizhou Opera have not been updated with the development of the times, which means that Sizhou Opera is not adapted to the changes in aesthetic aesthetics of the times. This performance form is still very outdated, and the lack of innovative repertoire that combines with the times means that the scope of dissemination of Sizhou Opera is very limited.

### **5. Suggestions for the dissemination of Sizhou Opera on short video platforms**

#### **5.1. Create a unique account image and establish brand awareness**

In the current situation of short video platforms with homogeneous content, "uniqueness" is the key to account success. For the spread of Sizhou Opera on the Tiktok platform, first of all, the account location should be clear and definite. In terms of target audience, it is necessary to expand the audience scope, not limited to Sizhou opera fans, but also attract young people to watch and spread; In terms of video style, combining popular vocabulary and popular elements, highlighting the characteristics of the new era and promoting the "youthfulness" of Sizhou Opera. Secondly, the creative content should be both comprehensive and personalized. At present, creators of Sizhou Opera mainly focus on well-known songs for dissemination, such as "Picking up Cotton", "Whipping the Reed Flower", "Qin Xianglian", etc. This provides a reverse approach for the creation of short video content of Sizhou Opera, that is, selecting the highlights of the less influential songs and combining them according to the content connection to create



highlights. In terms of creative content, character recording columns and opera explanation columns can also be established. In terms of character recording columns, by recording some performance content, behind the scenes makeup and performance experiences of opera actors, the actors' behind the scenes stories can be presented in a form similar to Vlog, catering to the curiosity of the audience; In the column of traditional Chinese opera explanation, the Anhui dialect can be used to explain and distance oneself from the audience, using the form of "explanation small classroom" to explain professional terms of traditional Chinese opera. Finally, the account personality should be friendly. To actively interact with the audience, respond to comments in a timely manner, meet the reasonable needs of the audience, create a friendly and interesting image, and stand out among a group of creators of Sizhou Opera. By creating such a highly personalized and innovative account, it can leave a deep memory in the hearts of the audience, help establish the brand awareness of Sizhou Opera, and create a good atmosphere for the sustainable inheritance and development of Sizhou Opera.

## **5.2. Integrating diverse cultural and artistic forms to create traffic explosion points**

During the 13th Five Year Plan period, the central government issued outline documents on the development of the music industry and major cultural industry projects to support the development of the cultural industry, thereby establishing the important position of the music industry in the national economy. The launch of this policy has opened up a huge development space for the creative inheritance and development of Sizhou Opera to a certain extent, inspired the idea of taking the path of integrated development, and also stimulated the creation of diverse artistic forms by Sizhou Opera inheritors. For example, in 2017, the modern musical "Emotional Soul Pulling Tune" starring Tao Wanxia and Sun Mei from Suzhou Drama Troupe innovated its performance form, added artistic interest, and gave the script a strong sense of the times, which has been sought after and loved by many audiences. At present, the development of information and digital technology has profoundly changed the performance form and dissemination pattern of traditional Chinese opera, and also provided new opportunities for the development of traditional Chinese opera culture. The dissemination methods of Sizhou Opera should not be limited to musicals, documentaries, and microfilms. Digital technologies such as AI can be used to reproduce the culture of Sizhou Opera in the lives of the audience, promote the culture of Sizhou Opera through ways that young audiences love, connect with the emotional orientation of the audience, and showcase the modern spiritual pursuit in the actual creation of opera. For example, on the Tiktok platform, modern technology can be used to design opera headdresses and facial makeup effects, produce cultural derivatives such as handicrafts, cultural games, costumes, books, etc. with Sizhou opera cultural elements, or integrate Sizhou opera element fragments with micro animation, micro film, pop music, games, dance, facial expression packs, etc. [1], or carry out Sizhou opera art exhibition to attract people from all walks of life for joint publicity, By organically integrating diverse cultural and artistic forms, we aim to create explosive traffic points, expand the scope of dissemination, and stimulate the vitality and vitality of Sizhou opera art.

## **5.3. Cultivate more professional talents and enhance audience stickiness**

As a very valuable intangible cultural heritage and artistic resource, Sizhou Opera is an important path to promote its good inheritance and development, which is to establish a sound professional talent training system. From the perspective of the cultivation of early inheritors of Sizhou opera, it can be seen that the main approach was through the teaching of apprentices by masters in the troupe or the inheritance between families. Therefore, the scope of talent cultivation is relatively small, and the inheritance of skills is mainly based on the experience of teachers, with relatively limited professional theories. Therefore, it is urgent to cultivate young professional talents and inject new forces into the inheritance of Sizhou Opera. Firstly, it is

possible to cultivate and introduce talents through Sizhou opera on campus. For example, Anhui North Suzhou University utilizes its unique cultural traditions and rich educational resources to jointly build the Sizhou Drama Academy with the local government, providing more opportunities and platforms for learning the Sizhou Drama Performance major. At the same time, the theater alliance and theater troupe alliance have also launched a talent oriented training plan. This approach not only solidifies students' theoretical and cultural foundation and performance professional foundation, but also provides important talents for the inheritance of Sizhou opera. Secondly, the introduction and incentive plan for professional talents can be released on the Tiktok platform to attract talents with strong interest and professional ability to join the Sizhou opera inheritors team, and promote the vitality and vitality of traditional opera culture. For newly recruited young talents, it is necessary to focus on cultivating their opera performance ability and singing skills, effectively inheriting the distinctive singing style of Sizhou Opera, and cultivating their opera literacy. At the same time, these young talents have strong modern thinking and innovative spirit, can use the new era strategy in the operation of the Tiktok platform and the creative inheritance of Sizhou Opera, better close to the audience psychology, meet the audience's needs in the creation content, enhance the audience's stickiness, and strengthen the artistic communication effect of Sizhou Opera.

## 6. Conclusion

In the era of new media, short video platforms have become one of the main ways for people to understand local opera. By analyzing the current situation of Sizhou Opera's dissemination on short video platforms, it can be found that Sizhou Opera has achieved certain results in dissemination on short video platforms, but there are still problems such as a single dissemination channel and low user stickiness. Therefore, we should promote the dissemination of Sizhou Opera on the short video platform by strengthening the management and promotion of the platform, cultivating professional Sizhou Opera short video talents, producing excellent and local characteristic short videos, and strengthening innovation in the dissemination content of Sizhou Opera, in order to promote the better inheritance and development of traditional opera culture in the new media era. Currently, as an emerging industry, the cultural industry plays an important role in promoting China's economic development. In the process of cultural industry development, how to effectively utilize new media to spread traditional culture is also a noteworthy issue. As an important carrier of local traditional culture, local opera in Sizhou must fully utilize new media technology and disseminate traditional culture through new media in order to achieve better development. This article conducts research and analysis on the dissemination effect and path of Sizhou Opera on short video platforms, hoping to provide certain reference significance for the dissemination of Sizhou Opera on short video platforms.

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