

The Rise and Development of Micro-Dramas in China: Characteristics, Evolution, and Social Impact

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the rapid rise of micro-dramas in China, an emerging form of online audiovisual literature and art, which has become a significant cultural phenomenon due to its short, concise, and fast-paced nature. The article analyzes the characteristics of micro-dramas, their evolution from fringe to mainstream, and their social and cultural significance. Micro-dramas not only meet the demand for rapid and fragmented content consumption but also contribute to cultural innovation, providing a new mode of storytelling and emotional expression in the digital era. Furthermore, micro-dramas have impacted traditional film and television industries and influenced societal aesthetics, offering new opportunities for the online audiovisual market.

KEYWORDS

Micro-dramas; online audiovisual culture; cultural innovation; social impact

As an emerging form of online audiovisual literature and art, micro-dramas have rapidly emerged in the field of online cultural consumption due to their short, concise and fast-paced nature. Unlike traditional long-form videos or movies, micro-dramas usually refer to web episodes of shorter duration, concise content, and diverse forms, generally ranging from a few minutes to half an hour, which are suitable for rapid consumption on mobile devices. This emerging form of drama can provide a complete storyline and audio-visual experience in a short period of time, which satisfies the demand for instant consumption of spiritual food in the fast-paced life of modern people.

1 Characteristics of the Development of Micro- Drama in China

First of all, the development of micro-dramas is characterized by short time but strong narrative density in terms of time length and narrative density. The length of a single episode of micro short drama is usually less than 10 minutes, which requires the completion of the story in a very short period of time, and therefore has a high narrative density. The short duration of the micro drama requires it to complete the story in a limited time, forming a high narrative density. This kind of narrative makes the micro short drama able to quickly attract the audience's attention and provide a rich plot and emotional experience in a short period of time. For example, as mentioned in the literature, "Dream on! Jingjing" shows the main character's relationship experience with different types of boyfriends through the rapid switching of each episode, and each episode is full of drama and emotional conflict, which makes the audience get satisfaction in a short time. This high narrative density not only tests the creativity and conceptualization skills of the scriptwriters, but also puts higher demands on the director's narrative skills and the actors' expressiveness.

Secondly, micro-drama has media integration. Micro short drama integrates the characteristics of traditional film and television drama and short video, forming a unique art form, showing high field and high intertextuality. Micro short drama integrates the characteristics of traditional film and television drama and short video, forming a unique art form. This fusion is reflected in the way of production, dissemination and acceptance of micro-dramas. As mentioned in the literature, "This Man is a Little Cold", through the unit structure, each unit is independent of the chapter, while maintaining the coherence of the characters and scenes, so that the audience can get a complete story experience even in the fragmented time. This media integration of micro-short dramas enables them to adapt to different viewing scenarios and user needs, enhancing their competitiveness in the online audiovisual market.

Furthermore, micro short plays present non-specialized characteristics in audiovisual style, simplify the treatment of space and time, and emphasize the direct supply of emotion and mood. Micro short plays are characterized by non-specialization in audiovisual style, which simplifies the treatment of space and time. This non-specialized audiovisual style makes micro short plays more intimate and authentic. For example, Night Shift Diary reinforces the direct supply of emotion and mood through simplified sets and non-professional performances, enabling the audience to empathize more easily. This non-specialized audio-visual style of micro-sketch not only lowers the production threshold, but also allows more creative and talented individuals the opportunity to participate in content creation.

Finally, micro-dramas cover a variety of subjects such as sweet favor, suspense, humor and funny, and they are more niche than traditional dramas in the choice of subject matter. micro-dramas cover a variety of topics, such as the fantasy suspense of "Psychic Princess" and the comedic elements of "Diary on the Set", to meet the tastes of different audience groups. This diversity of genres enables micro-dramas to cover a wider range of audience groups and provide diversified content choices. The genre diversification of micro-short dramas also reflects the demand for innovation and diversity in the online audiovisual market, and promotes the further development of micro-short dramas in terms of artistic expression and exploration of themes.

2 Evolution of micro-dramas

First, the evolution from the fringe to the mainstream. The rise and development of micro-short dramas can be traced back to the moment when it emerged as a new cultural phenomenon in the Internet. Initially as a niche form of content, the development of micro-short dramas was limited by traditional TV dramas and traditional video formats, and gained the attention of users mainly in small online communities and specific video platforms. Over time, micro-sketch dramas gradually found their niche and began to attract a wider audience base. In the beginning, the content production of micro-dramas was relatively rough, lacking a specialized production team and a clear audience group. However, with the improvement of network infrastructure and the development of network culture, micro-drama began to gradually develop into a unique cultural product. Creators have begun to explore different narrative techniques and content forms, making micro-dramas have more possibilities in artistic expression and storytelling. With the rise of short video platforms, the distribution channels of micro-dramas have also been greatly expanded, and more users have begun to come into contact with and experience this new cultural product. The emergence of these new contents is not only an innovation in content and form, but also represents a shift in audience demand and consumption habits. Users are paying more and more attention to the characteristics of "short" and "fast" for content consumption, which contributes to the rapid development of micro short drama in the market.

Second, technology-driven content innovation. With the progress of technology, especially the development of mobile Internet and short video technology, the way of content production and consumption of microshort dramas has been revolutionized. Short video platforms such as Jittery, Shutterbug, and B-station not only provide new content dissemination channels, but also provide space for micro-drama creators to create and share content. Through the recommendation algorithms of these platforms, the content producers of short micro-dramas can more accurately understand and seize the target user groups, so as to create content that better meets their tastes. Advances in technology have not only changed the way content is produced, but also the habits of content consumption. With the application of new technologies such as 5G, 4K, HDR, etc., the picture quality and viewing experience of micro-dramas have also been improved. At the same time, the exploration of AI, AR/VR and other technologies has also brought new possibilities for the expression and viewing experience of micro-sketch dramas.

Furthermore, the guiding role of market demand. Changes in market demand play a decisive role in the development of micro short plays. With the popularization of smartphones and 4G/5G networks, there has been an obvious shift in the habits of users in consuming content. Users are more and more inclined to consume cultural products that are short, fast and easy to consume. This shift has provided fertile soil for the development of micro-dramas and promoted the diversification and specialization of micro short drama content.

Finally, policy and cultural support. Government policy support and cultural recognition have created conditions for the development of micro short plays. Through a series of policy support and support for the network culture industry, the content creation and dissemination of microshort dramas have been given more space and stage. For example, the improvement of the management of China's online audiovisual programs and the support for online artistic and literary creation have created a strong guarantee for the healthy development of micro-dramas.

The development characteristics of micro-sketch dramas and their evolution are the result of a combination of factors, including technological progress, market demand, policy and cultural support. The interaction of these factors has contributed to the transformation of micro-sketch dramas from the fringe to the mainstream, and has led to the expectation that micro-sketch dramas will continue to exist as a vibrant cultural phenomenon in the future.

3 The social and cultural significance of Chinese micro-dramas

In the current trend of network culture consumption, micro-short dramas have rapidly occupied the market heights with their fast consumption characteristics and diversified and high-quality contents. Through literature research, it can be found that micro-short dramas, as an emerging type of online drama, have already demonstrated their value and potential that cannot be ignored in many aspects.

In terms of social significance, micro-dramas, as a carrier of cultural innovation, provide a new form of expression for network literature and network ecology. The rise of micro-short dramas has not only enriched the types of online audiovisual content, but also injected new vitality into the development of online culture. For example, "Life Has Been Doing It to Me" demonstrates the innovation of network culture through its vertical screen format and fast-paced plot. This cultural innovativeness of micro-short dramas makes them an indispensable part of the online audiovisual field and provides new impetus for the prosperity and development of online literature. Not only that, micro short drama also meets the modern audience's demand for fragmented and mobile viewing. In the fast-paced life, viewers are more and more inclined to get information and entertainment in fragmented time. The short duration and high narrative density of microshort

dramas are precisely adapted to this demand. Through high-density plot and emotional supply, micro-short dramas provide viewers with emotional resonance and cathartic channels for real-life anxieties. In modern society, people face various pressures and challenges, and micro-dramas provide a way for viewers to vent their emotions through their dramatized plots and emotional conflicts. For example, the emotional entanglements and rapid reversals in *Nian Nian Nian Wu Ming* provide an outlet for emotional catharsis. This function of emotional resonance and catharsis of micro-drama makes it a kind of psychological solace for the audience when facing the pressure of life.

China's micro-dramas not only have certain social significance, but also have a certain cultural impact on traditional film and television culture and aesthetic trends. The rise of micro-drama has deconstructed and subverted the traditional film and television art forms, and promoted the innovation and development of the film and television industry. The short duration and high narrative density of micro-dramas break the narrative rhythm and structure of traditional film and television dramas, providing new viewing experiences for the audience. micro-dramas also lead a new aesthetic trend through their unique emotional structure and audiovisual style, emphasizing individual experience and the pursuit of pleasure. The moralized aesthetics of micro-short dramas not only reflects the society's concern for morality and ethics, but also provides viewers with references for value judgments and behavioral choices. For example, the concern for empty-nesting elderly people in *Me and My Landlord's Grandma* conveys society's care and respect for the elderly group through the form of micro skits. Not only that, in terms of technology and industry model, the development of micro-dramas promotes the industry model of PGC and UGC coexisting, which brings new business models and economic opportunities for the online audiovisual industry. The flexible economic models of micro-dramas, such as platform customization, sharing, advertising and e-commerce, provide new possibilities for the commercialization of the audiovisual industry. For example, the "Photosynthesis Program" and "Star Mango Program" of Shutterstock not only provide support for the creation of micro-sketch dramas, but also provide new ideas for the innovation of business models in the audiovisual industry.

4 Conclusion

In the future, the development trend of micro-dramas will pay more attention to the quality and innovation of content, as well as the integration with traditional film and television art. With the further development of the market and the improvement of users' demand, micro short drama is expected to occupy a more important position in the network audiovisual industry and become a new force to promote the development of the industry. Meanwhile, with the advancement of technology and the improvement of market environment, the content production and production level of micro-short dramas will also continue to improve, so as to better satisfy the audience's aesthetic demand and cultural consumption needs.

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