A Study on the Impact of Subcultural Capital on the Management of Chinese Official Media

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Abstract: China's official media business model transformation pressure is increasing day by day. The contradiction of the binary system business model is becoming increasingly prominent. Official media need to take into account the goals of ideological propaganda, commercial operation, and improving profitability. Against this background, subcultural capital has become the favored breakthrough of traditional media. Cultural capital and subcultural capital, as a kind of resource that can be invested in and reproduced, reveal the internal logic of the subculture industry and provide a new perspective for people to study the effect of subcultures on the operation of official media. This paper uses the economic management model SWOT-PEST mode analysis model to explore the impact of subcultures communication on the operation of China's official media, as well as the advantages, disadvantages, opportunities, and threats brought by cultural communication in the political, economic, technological, and social environment. This paper tentatively puts forward the concept of "mainstreaming of subculture" and probes into the contradiction between official media's subcultural capital investment and the development path of subculture itself.

Keywords: subcultural capital, chinese official media, media management, SWOT-PEST model

1.   Introduction

The development of information technology has brought a new format to the Chinese media industry, and the transformation pressure of traditional media has also followed. The official media in China needs to be more and more in line with market-oriented management while maintaining political purity. The dual mission of commercial and political makes China's official media must find a new management mode, and the culture diffusion based on subculture has become a new breakthrough for official media. The political nature of Chinese official media is the foundation of its existence. Firstly, the official media, the real "party property", is deeply influenced by the Marxist press theory. The Chinese official media adopts the "P-F-E" modal of propaganda, that is, P: Policies of party and government; F: specific and typical fact; E: explanation of facts according to the policies [1]. Secondly, Chinese official media has a strong results-oriented feature, and cultural officials believe that the uncertainty needs to be eliminated. Despite the continuous streamlining of policies in recent years, an internet principle of "rule by detectives" rather than "rule by lows" has taken shape. Low-level detectives have become the media's code of conduct, leading to the arbitrariness of today's Internet management [2]. Therefore, the nature of Chinese official media determines its conservative

management style and the principle of politics first. The profit model of Chinese official media is relatively simple. In view of the development of new media, some scholars conclude that traditional media are supposed to execute the management reform from three aspects: profit model, operation mode, and audience service [3]. As a result, official media tend to establish their media image, thereby enriching invisible assets and expanding influence. At the same time, under the stimulation of cultural policies, it is easier to preset "positive energy" content with network nationalism and combine the business logic of fan economy with official discourse to achieve the objectives of ideological propaganda and management model transformation [4]. Henan satellite TV, for example, has launched a series of high-quality song and dance performances featuring traditional Chinese culture during the spring festival and other important Chinese festivals. Henan satellite TV successfully established a youthful, entertaining, and humanistic media image of "Chinese style", which has become a model for media transformation. Chinese official media generally adopt the binary system of hybrid form between the administrative system and industrial system, and the ideological part of media function is endowed with the administrative system. Part of the cultural industry has been given to industrial operation [5]. However, with the impact of new media, the contradictions of the binary system are further reflected, and the middle zone continues to shrink. In this context, subcultural capital has become the official media-favored breakthrough.

2. Cultural Capital and Subcultural Capital

Cultural capital is a concept put forward by Pierre Bourdieu. It is a kind of capital that can expand reproduction and can be converted into economic capital under certain conditions. It is institutionalized because of the formation of educational qualifications. In earlier research, some economists have introduced the operation logic of capital into the cultural field, thus finding the relationship between cultural investment and economic investment. The economic and social benefits of educational qualifications also depend on social capital, which is inherited and can be used to support people to obtain that kind of income [6]. Bourdieu further linked cultural capital with capital reproduction strategies, pointing out that the accumulation of cultural capital delivered by family education can produce huge reproduction capacity and such habits instilled by families cannot be easily imitated, so family cultural capital can be inherited from generation to generation [7]. Therefore, the amount of cultural capital accumulated is positively correlated with people's social class. Pierre Bourdieu divided cultural capital into three types: embodied, objective and institutional. The embodied cultural capital needs the investor to do it personally, and in order to acquire the embodied culture needs the investor's massive labor force, so we can understand those tend to complex and abstract culture have become the leisure class-exclusive, and often the public sneer at. Cultural capital can be obtained through society and social classes in different degrees and stages, without careful planning, so cultural capital is acquired unconsciously. If the embodied cultural capital is unmarketable and difficult to obtain, then the objective cultural capital can be rapidly circulated through the form of goods, presented in material form by media. In this way, the cultural commodity can not only present the material side but also symbolically, it carries the double presupposition of the economic capital and the cultural capital [6]. Based on Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, Sarah Thornton proposed the concept of "subcultural capital" in the book Club Cultures: Music, Media, and Subcultural Capital, Thornton believes that, just like cultural capital, the embodied and objective subcultural capital becomes a symbol to show the status of young people. The embodiment of subcultural capital is manifested in whether it is "in the know" but does not delve too much into it at the same time, showing a kind of innate and freely used feature [8]. Thus, "hipness" becomes a form of subcultural capital. Members of the hip are often on top of subcultural structures, while those who have "confusing coolness" are on the bottom. The relationship between media and subcultural capital is quite different from cultural capital. Subculture always faces the risk of being incorporated into

mainstream culture, and the media will penetrate into the development of the subculture. Thornton believes that the investigation of media consumption is the key to understanding the distinctions between youth groups. Media is no longer a symbolic good or a mark of difference, but a network involved in the definition and distribution of subcultures [8]. With the development of media technology, the right to definition and diffusion of subculture will be seized by the media. The popularity of subculture and the amount of subcultural capital are closely related to the way it is reported and exhibited. When the subculture is brought into the mass market by means of commercialization and visualization, those identities based on opposing the mainstream will experience the explicit or implicit liquidation of subcultural capital [9]. Under the new media environment, the change of communication mode has brought about the transition of subcultural capital with economic capital and social capital, and subculture has gained the attention of mainstream culture.

3. Cooperation and Confrontation Between Subcultural Capital and Mainstream Ideology

3.1. SWOT-PEST Model

In view of the industrial management trend of Chinese official media, this paper attempts to use the SWOT-PEST model to explore the impact of subcultural capital on Chinese official media management and put forward targeted development strategies. SWOT analysis model mainly contains four dimensions closely related to the research object, namely Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats; the PEST model is to analyze the research objects from four macro-environmental factors: Politics, Economy, Society, and Technology. The SWOT-PEST model (see Table 1) systematically integrates the internal microenvironment and external macro environment of the research object to construct a more comprehensive analysis matrix.

Table 1: SWOT-PEST model.

	Politics(P)	Economy(E)	Society(S)	Technology(T)
Strengths(S)	SP	SE	SS	ST
Weaknesses(W)	WP	WE	WS	WT
Opportunities(O)	OP	OE	OS	OT
Threats(T)	TP	TE	TS	TT

In addition to strategic guidance for profit-oriented social enterprises, the SWOT-PEST analysis method is also suitable for systematic analysis of the development environment of public service institutions such as national government departments and public institutions, so as to judge whether the research object has broad development prospects, which is a research method with solving practical problems as the core[10].

3.2. Technology: From Physical Space to Digital Space

Subcultural capital enters the Internet field, and new media technology helps embodied subcultural capital to carry out all-around visualization; At the same time, it also provides an instant interaction channel for objective subcultural capital. The development of Internet technology has brought a new growth point for subcultural capital. Official media has a long history and profound cultural communication resources, and after years of media integration and all-media matrix construction, it still occupies an unshakable and important position in the current information communication pattern. On the one hand, the cooperation between the subculture and the official media can make the subculture spread at an unprecedented speed. On the other hand, it contains the hidden danger that

the spread right of subculture is deprived. As mentioned above, the consumption of media plays a crucial role in understanding the change of subculture. In the era of new media, visibility has become a significant means for communication activists. Practical cooperation with official media and enhancing the visibility effect of social media has become the central task of subculture diffusion. With the integration and development of official media in full flow, mainstream media can almost cover the whole process of cultural communication. However, because of the ambiguous nature of visibility, visualization brings about two closely intertwine outcomes cognition and control, both of which can occur simultaneously and transform into each other [11]. In other words, visualization can not only enhance the awareness of subcultures but also become the monitoring and control of subcultures. With the improvement of exposure and visualization, subcultures in the digital space tend to enter a stage of rapid expansion, in which the public's awareness of subcultures is constantly rising, and more and more people continue to invest in acquiring subcultural capital. The three-dimensional diffusion mode makes the embodied characteristics of subcultural capital prominent, and the objective entity bearing subcultural capital complement each other. Therefore, the operation of cultural diffusion is often supported by commercial behaviors.

3.3. Economy: From Cultural Capital to Economic Capital

As capitalism enters a new phase of flexible accumulation, the turnover of goods accelerates and the information glut spawns an attention economy. As a result, businesses and advertisers know that young people need unique marketing tools, and youth subcultures are favored by media and merchants. The commercialization of music, images, and celebrities of the youth subculture presents an authentic, cutting-edge, and cool cultural commodity to young people, and constantly commercialize the characteristics and styles of the subculture so that the subcultural capital continues to increase [9]. Under the intentional allocation and promotion of commercial logic, the subculture usually develops rapidly in this process. The expansion of subcultural capital is a kind of cultural recycling. With the promotion of media, the accumulation of subcultural capital tends to become an irrational consumption process rather than a scientific accumulation process. Cultural recycling provides knowledge for everyone who does not want to be left out, alienated, or disqualified so that people can find the right materials in the cultural market [12]. The fashioned subculture contains fashion recycling within cultural recycling. Everyone should keep up with the "fashion trend" and recycle their embodied and objective subcultural capital in each renewal cycle. If you do not do so, you will not be a real member of the subculture, and this continuous progress is a long accumulation of subcultural capital. Besides, the failure to follow a loop of the cycle will affect the subsequent accumulation. The weight of embodied subcultural capital as the admittance standard of subcultural is decreasing continuously, and the consumption behavior of subcultural capital becomes the direct standard to measure the amount of subcultural capital, and subcultural capital and economic capital can be exchanged almost instantly. The relationship between subculture and business logic is not a rigid resistance, nor is its integration to death, but a relationship full of interdependence and tension, mutual confrontation, and cooperation in the interaction [13].

3.4. Society: From Grassroot Activists to Mainstream Rookie

Subculture's deconstruction of mainstream ideology cannot be eliminated. Subcultures tend to downplay or even ignore social problems and class attitudes. Post-subculture studies almost unanimously rejected the view that Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) explained subculture youth identity based on class theory [14]. Whether it is flaunting the subculture as the resistance of the mainstream ideology or the official media ends to participate in the spread of it, which is to give the subculture the grand narrative. Both the Bohemian lifestyle and maverick

behavior contain deep logic of desocialization. However, after gaining the attention of academic circles, political circles, and the press, a subculture has to be brought back to the relationship of socialization, which shows that subculture and socialization are contrary.

Lifestyle theory is an important concept in the postmodern interpretation of subculture. It is the subcultural consumerism that has enabled young people to build diverse lifestyles through a range of local and global strategies, in this strategic environment to use, appropriate, and transform cultural commodities to prove their authenticity [15]. commodities have an indoctrination effect, they promote a false consciousness, and this false consciousness is to avoid their own false. As these products are used by more people in more social classes, their function is not indoctrination and propaganda but a way of life [16]. The significance of the mainstream ideology is written into the sub-cultural commodity, and the youth groups rely on the cultural commodity to practice their own significance and existence.

Although subculture is desocialized, it is social differentiation that leads to the formation and development of the subculture. In the research on disadvantaged young women, the operation of subcultural capital provides a conceptual framework for understanding their cultural currencies and recognizes the way they obtain capital resources and the method of resource investment [17]. This also explains why the subculture advocated by the official media can become the social focus in a short time because people regard this subcultural capital as a cultural currency to hedge the ideal cultural spectacle their class lacks.

3.5. Politics: From Autonomy to Power Dependency

Weber believes that any power is necessary to defend its legitimacy. From Weber's thinking, authority is the power based on legitimacy, the so-called ideal type is to abstract and summarize the basic characteristics of a phenomenon, which is for the purpose of analyzing concepts [18]. Official media, as an important institution to help the regime establish legitimacy and authority, is also the top priority of propaganda management. The representation of the official media on the spectacle is also demonstrated in the spectacle theory. The spectacle is an uninterrupted discourse maintained by the current order on its own, and there is a law that second nature seems to rule our environment together [19]. Thus, even if subcultures are intended to be depoliticized, there are still many who are keen to position them on the political spectrum. China is connected to the world mainly through three frameworks: exceptionalism, which positions China as an "Other" and emphasizes a unique discourse with "Chinese characteristics"; Maieutic, this framework argues that the more China is integrated into the world system, the better it will be able to advance its technology; Whataboutism, the framework refutes any criticism of China, consider such criticism to be hypocritical [20]. In recent years, with a series of "Chinese-style" initiatives, political forces have chosen appropriate subcultures as objects of appeasement, and official media have subsumed some of the rights of diffusion and cultural definition, subcultures that have been given permission to spread are promoted on a massive scale by official media in a near-saturated way. Although the relationship between subculture and political power is complicated, it is undeniable that subcultural capital is needed by political power. Official media use subcultural capital to create communication content suitable for the low-context culture and reduce information loss in the process of encoding/decoding [21]. At this time, the core of subculture is no longer who should interpret, but who should be chosen as the spokesperson of subculture.

4. Conclusion

The convenience of communication technology and payment technology enables subculture to gain more people's attention and investment, and mainstream media constantly bring subculture to the

public's vision. Subcultures unique resources, and the official media establishes the order of mainstream culture by obtaining the right to explain subcultures. This paper used the SWOT-PEST model to analyze the official media management environment, summarized the current situation, and tentatively puts forward the concept of "mainstreaming of subculture", so as to interpret the capital investment and reproduction of subculture as a new social phenomenon, which is mainly manifested in the diversification of its communication mode, the commercialization of cultural symbols, the universalization of values and the magnification of political narrative. In this way, we can understand the behavior of official media's investment in subcultural capital and the reproduction of subcultural capital, and analyze the development, evolution, and extinction of subcultures in this process, which also reshapes the relationship between subcultural groups and official media. Technology explosion has become the starting point of the mainstreaming of subcultures, which means that people should understand the interactive relationship between the reproduction of subculture capital and official media from the perspective of data-driven information infrastructure and communication technology. Therefore, the mainstreaming process of subcultures is also the construction process of society spectacle in the digital age, just like the shadows of objects distorted by lights in Plato's allegory of the cave. In the relevant studies of materialistic phenomenology, it is the technology-based intermediation process that constitutes the elements and components of social consciousness, while the change of the reproduction mode of subcultural capital helps the construction of cultural hegemony to some extent, and the subcultures empowered by technology becomes one of the components of the foundation of social operation, cultural hegemony. If the world we are exposed to is constructed through mediative communication, how on can we understand the relationship between the "truth" of conceptual space and social reality? What choice should subcultures make at the crossroads of development? As mentioned above, subcultures that desocialized are placed in social networks to be observed and emulated by people, which is exactly the dilemma of the digital age that needs to be noted: We strive to maintain a satisfactory social order by mediating communication but at the cost of increasingly complex social forms and structures. Official media recursively organizes subculture communication in social construction and tries to create a media-isolated system, which seems to give us a glimpse of the "law of increasing entropy" of communication.

In the process of investing subcultural capital, a set of antinomies will be formed. On the one hand, the audience takes the subcultures as the sustenance beyond the real society; On the other hand, each subculture forms its own "neo-tribe" and "lifestyle" for re-socialization. The institutionalized feature of the subcultural capital endowed by the official media has an irreconcilable contradiction with the nature of subcultures deviating from the mainstream society, but it also facilitates the re-socialization trend of the development of the subculture, thus presenting a tangled social phenomenon of the mainstreaming of the subculture.

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