

Portray of Chinese Culture and TV Production Techniques in Chinese Reality TV Show: A Case Study of “New Year 2020” on CCTV

Xin Fan¹, Salas Supalakwatchana²

¹ School of Communication Arts, Bangkok University, Pathum Thani, Thailand

² School of Communication Arts, Bangkok University, Pathum Thani, Thailand

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Corresponding Author:

Xin Fan

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Abstract

This study investigates the portrayal of Chinese culture in children's reality television, using the "New Year 2020" program on CCTV as a case study. Employing qualitative approach, textual analysis, it examines seven episodes to explore how cultural values are communicated through innovative production techniques and interactive formats. The findings reveal that "New Year 2020" integrates traditional Chinese cultural elements, such as idioms, food games, and kung fu experiences, within modern entertainment frameworks to educate and engage young audiences. The study also highlights significant shifts in Chinese reality TV production, including reduced reliance on celebrity appearances, a focus on authenticity, and the use of localized cultural narratives to foster relatability. These innovations, coupled with cross-platform engagement strategies, positioned the program as a benchmark for cultural education and audience interaction. Furthermore, the study discusses the program's unique success during the pre-COVID-19 era when children's reality shows faced significant disruptions. By situating "New Year 2020" within broader media representation and cultural studies, this research contributes to understanding television's role in cultural transmission, audience engagement, and national identity formation. The findings offer practical implications for producers aiming to balance cultural integrity with evolving viewer preferences in a rapidly changing media landscape.

1. Introduction

In recent years, reality TV programs in China have gained immense popularity. After years of market cultivation, "phenomenal" programs have emerged across platforms such as Zhejiang TV, Hunan TV, Tencent, and iQiyi. These platforms have established themselves as key players in the reality TV market, driven by the growth of paid subscribers and niche audience groups. The sustained interest in these programs has resulted in some achieving over 100 million hits, a testament to the immense potential of the reality TV market in China. This evolution reflects both the adaptability of the format and its capacity to resonate with diverse audiences, making it a pivotal component of China's contemporary entertainment landscape.

Since 2014, CCTV Children's Channel has aired the special Spring Festival program Chinese New Year for seven consecutive years, establishing itself as a prominent cultural brand in China (CCTV, 2020, January 18). The program has become a visual feast for younger audiences nationwide, combining brilliance and entertainment with creative upgrades. The program, New Year 2020, continued the program's core appeal while innovatively integrating traditional Chinese culture with interactive games. This approach allowed audiences to experience the origins of Chinese culture through a blend of laughter, critical thinking, and learning (CCTV, 2020, January 18).

With an overarching focus on Childishness Gathering in the Chinese New Year, New Year 2020 introduced a novel interactive experience by embedding traditional cultural elements into each episode. Through the comprehensive CCTV media matrix, the program has become a benchmark for reality TV, exemplifying CCTV's mission in advancing children's variety shows. The program also serves as a valuable resource, providing insights and references for the future development and evolution of reality TV formats.

Moreover, CCTV Children's Channel's Celebrating the Chinese New Year offers children from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao the chance to explore and connect with the rich cultural heritage of their homeland, reinforcing the program's role in promoting cultural engagement and understanding (Zhang Xiaoyi, & Du Liang, 2020).

"New Year 2020" aired five years ago, its innovative integration of traditional Chinese culture with modern entertainment remains a benchmark in children's programming. The program's success is reflected in its cross-platform popularity. Following its broadcast, the show achieved an average rating of 1.07%. Interactive features like the "Shake It" activity attracted over 3 million participants and garnered 10 million page visits. On social media, the main hashtag for the program accumulated 34.09 million reads, while the "CCTV Children" WeChat account experienced rapid growth, increasing its subscribers from 200,000 to 740,000, with a record single-day increase of 119,300 users (Ma Ran, 2016).

The program's innovative "5+2" model—five special episodes and two animated New Year-themed films—combined with outdoor reality game fan events, attracted 190,000 online fans, marking a 300% growth compared to the previous year. These achievements underscore the program's ability to create a cross-platform celebratory experience that engaged children and families during the Spring Festival (Ma Ran, 2016).

Over the decades, the development of Chinese TV programs has seen continuous improvements in production standards, refined operational strategies, and clearer vertical segmentation. The evolution of the TV production market in China has progressed from the introduction of foreign models to the localized enhancement and TV production techniques of original programming.

Today, the TV production market is undergoing rapid transformation, particularly with the proliferation of reality TV programs and an expanding range of viewing options for audiences. The strong interest from advertisers, who are increasingly investing in reality TV programs, underscores their broad market appeal and popularity among viewers. In the context of a globalized media landscape, changing viewing habits and diverse viewing channels highlight the need to explore how reality TV programs can maintain their competitiveness while adapting to market demands and evolving audience expectations.

Despite these transformative changes in the industry, the enduring principle of "content is king" continues to serve as the cornerstone for the success of any program. Rather than being overshadowed or rendered obsolete by evolving market dynamics, this fundamental emphasis on the quality of content has only grown in importance. In an era marked by fierce competition, diverse audience preferences, and rapid technological advancements, content that resonates

deeply with audiences remains the driving force behind engagement and loyalty, proving that quality content is more crucial than ever in achieving sustained success.

On the other hand, audience interest in celebrities has led to a direct conversion of fan engagement into viewership data, which is subsequently monetized. This trend has influenced guest selection in reality TV programs, favoring high-profile, popular artists to attract viewers. However, this approach also significantly increases production costs. For programs without celebrity participation, meeting commercial demands while gaining market acceptance presents a unique challenge, requiring innovative approaches to capture audience interest and remain competitive.

Therefore, according to the problem statement and background mentioned above, this study aims to delve into the Portray of Chinese Culture and TV Production Techniques in Chinese Reality TV Show: A Case Study of “New Year 2020” on CCTV. Particularly, the researcher will focus on the following research questions: 1). How Chinese culture is portrayed in the children’s reality show? 2). What paradigm has changed in the Reality shows in China? Hence, the purpose of this study is to explore the TV production techniques and the portrayal of Chinese culture of reality TV programs in China, focusing on TV production techniques and dissemination. Using New Year 2020 as a case study, the research provides an in-depth analysis of the localization and innovative strategies employed in Chinese reality TV programming.

One of the primary contributions of this study is its exploration of how Chinese culture is portrayed in children's reality shows. The research highlights integrating traditional cultural elements with modern entertainment formats, particularly through the "New Year 2020" series aired on CCTV. By analyzing episodes that incorporate themes such as idioms, food games, and kung fu experiences, the study reveals how these programs serve as vehicles for cultural education and engagement among young audiences. This aspect is crucial as it demonstrates the role of media in shaping cultural identity and promoting understanding among diverse demographic groups within China.

The study also emphasizes the innovative approaches taken by Chinese reality television to adapt to changing audience preferences. It discusses how programs have shifted from relying predominantly on celebrity appearances to incorporating ordinary participants, thereby enhancing relatability and engagement. This transition reflects broader trends in the television industry where authenticity and audience connection are prioritized over traditional star power. The findings suggest that such TV production techniques not only cater to modern viewing habits but also contribute to a more inclusive representation of society.

As for the academic contributions, by employing qualitative research methods, textual analysis, this paper enriches academic discussions surrounding media studies, cultural studies, and communication theory. It provides a framework for understanding how televised content encodes cultural meanings through various representational codes, social, technical, and ideological. This analysis aligns with existing literature on media representation while offering new perspectives on the specific context of Chinese children’s programming.

The research bridges theoretical concepts with practical applications in the television industry. It illustrates how critical media theory can inform content creation strategies that resonate with contemporary audiences. The emphasis on localization and audience feedback highlights the importance of adapting content to meet viewer expectations while maintaining cultural integrity. This approach serves as a reference point for future studies on media production and consumption dynamics.

In terms of the contribution to the Television industry, the findings from this study have practical implications for television producers and marketers within the Chinese entertainment landscape. As reality television continues to gain popularity, understanding audience preferences becomes essential for program success. The study underscores the necessity for producers to

innovate content formats that reflect cultural values while also engaging viewers through interactive elements. This adaptability is crucial in a rapidly evolving media environment characterized by diverse viewing platforms and changing consumer behaviors.

Furthermore, by showcasing traditional Chinese culture through engaging formats, programs like "New Year 2020" play a pivotal role in promoting cultural heritage among younger generations. The integration of educational content within entertainment not only fosters learning but also instills a sense of national pride and identity among children. This dual function of entertainment and education positions reality TV as a significant tool for cultural transmission in modern society.

In summary, this study significantly contributes to both academic scholarship and practical applications within the television industry by exploring the portrayal of Chinese culture in children's reality shows. It highlights innovative programming strategies that reflect societal changes while fostering cultural engagement among young audiences. As reality television continues to evolve, insights from this research will be invaluable for scholars, media practitioners, and policymakers aiming to navigate the complexities of cultural representation in an increasingly globalized media landscape.

2. Literature Review

The way television is constructed using codes of representation that are invisible to viewers but that shape everything they see. A code is a rule-governed system of signs, whose rules and conventions are shared amongst members of a culture, and which is used to generate and circulate meanings in and for that culture. Codes are links between producers, texts, and audiences, and are the agents of intertextuality through which texts interrelate in a network of meanings that constitutes our cultural world. Televised events are encoded through a multi-layered process that integrates social, technical, and ideological codes to construct meaning and shape audience perception. At the first level, Reality, social codes govern the visible and audible elements such as appearance, dress, environment, behavior, speech, and sound, reflecting societal norms and expectations. These elements are then transformed at the second level, Representation, through technical codes including camera work, lighting, editing, music, and sound design. These technical choices shape representational conventions, influencing aspects such as narrative, conflict, character, dialogue, setting, and casting, which determine how stories are constructed and delivered. At the third level, Ideology, these representations are organized into coherent and socially acceptable messages through ideological codes such as individualism, patriarchy, race, class, materialism, and capitalism. These ideological frameworks guide how audiences interpret the content, embedding the program within dominant societal values and beliefs. Together, these levels demonstrate how television not only reflects reality but actively constructs and reinforces cultural and ideological norms (Fiske, 2010).

Recent studies examine the portrayal of Chinese culture in children's reality shows, highlighting the interplay between traditional values and modernization. These programs often promote nationalist and socialist ideologies, constructing a model of Chinese youth that embodies urban-rural dynamics and national identity (Lin Zhili, Lee, C., & Kaur, S. 2024). They emphasize collective success, legitimize competition, and underscore the importance of modernity for national progress (Chan Kara, & Chan Fanny, 2008). Some shows, like X-Change, aim to generate compassion for rural children while simultaneously empowering and disempowering them through a complex emotional repertoire (Dong Wei, 2023). This reflects China's hybridization strategies, balancing traditional authority with modernized values (Chan Kara, & Chan Fanny, 2008). Additionally, web-based reality shows explore urban societal transformations, offering insights into Chinese cultural imagination and the impact of consumer culture (Berg, 2011). These programs serve as platforms for debating authenticity, urban dreams, and

transcultural appropriation in a globalizing China. due to A TV program serves as an excellent resource for studying cultural differences, as it is a global medium that incorporates recognizable cultural elements, effectively conveying variations across cultures (Mishan, 2005).

Li Bingnan (2018) also identified that Chinese reality show exemplifies the evolution of Chinese reality TV, showcasing TV production techniquess like ordinary participants and shifting away from celebrity reliance. While praised for engaging audiences and reflecting cultural values, it faced criticism for commercializing children and potential mental health impacts, leading to a temporary ban and transition to online platforms. The program highlights the importance of localization and audience feedback in shaping Chinese reality TV while emphasizing the need for ethical and original content.

As Fan Xin and Komolsevin (2024) observed, foreign cultures are effectively portrayed in TV programs by focusing on relatable topics and social norms. This approach facilitates an easier understanding of foreign cultures and encourages viewers to connect with diverse perspectives. The programs also emphasize cultural sensitivity by employing effective communication techniques, such as active listening and appropriate pacing, which are essential for fostering successful intercultural exchanges.

Ouellette (2010) explain why reality TV appeals to audiences more than other genres, stating that its various formats are unified by their ability to offer viewers an "unmediated, voyeuristic, and often playful look into what might be called the 'entertaining real'". This concept of the "entertaining real" has inspired China and many other countries to produce or import reality TV shows in an attempt to replicate this unique appeal.

Compared to traditional institutionalized media audiences, who were primarily passive recipients of content, the evolving media audience now encompasses elements of "Interest," "Appreciation," "Engagement," and "Response." This shift reflects a more active and interactive relationship with media, where interactive content plays a crucial role in expanding the boundaries of information gathering and audience participation (Li Binnan, 2018).

Chinese reality television plays a significant role in shaping and adapting to the evolving nature of institutional media audiences. A scholar highlights the impact of audience evolution, suggesting that the traditional understanding of media audiences is gradually being replaced by alternative models that redefine how audiences are perceived and engaged in the media landscape (Napoli, 2011). But notably, in recent years, many Chinese TV stations have started to import South Korea's reality shows. The impact of the Korean wave has not only permeated popular culture but is also a measure of a positive lifestyle for many Asian people (Ryoo, 2009). Therefore, this study would like to analyze the development of Children's reality shows in China by the method mentioned above.

In terms of Theoretical Depth. this study within a robust theoretical framework, this research draws on key concepts from cultural studies and media representation theories. According to Fiske (2010), television encodes cultural meanings through social, technical, and ideological codes. This multi-layered process provides a lens to analyze how programs like "New Year 2020" blend traditional Chinese values with contemporary entertainment formats. Additionally, the study aligns with audience reception theories, which emphasize the active role of viewers in interpreting media content. These frameworks underpin the analysis of how children's reality shows serve as vehicles for cultural education and identity formation, addressing gaps in the literature on cultural transmission in media.

By incorporating these theories, the research highlights the broader academic discourse on the interplay between media, culture, and societal values. This theoretical foundation not only contextualizes the findings but also provides a rationale for the research questions and methods employed.

3. Methodology and Procedures

The study employs a qualitative textual analysis method, focusing on seven episodes of "New Year 2020." A coding sheet was developed to systematically analyze cultural elements and TV production techniques. This sheet included predefined categories such as language use, cultural games, guest participation, and narrative structure.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, children's reality shows faced significant disruptions. Productions halted, and new content struggled to reach similar levels of engagement. "New Year 2020" stands out as a pre-pandemic example of how cultural and educational programming can achieve widespread popularity and impact. Its integration of cultural themes, innovative engagement strategies, and cross-platform outreach make it an ideal case study for analyzing the evolving dynamics of Chinese reality television. Additionally, the study situates the program within the broader evolution of Chinese reality TV. By comparing its themes and techniques to current trends, the research underscores its relevance in addressing contemporary challenges in cultural representation and audience engagement.

To ensure credibility and reliability, two coders conducted the analysis. The primary researcher coded all seven episodes, while a second coder, an instructor from Bangkok University, School of Communication Arts, analyzed 30% of the episodes. The results of the two coders were compared to make sure the credibility. Discrepancies in coding were resolved through discussion, ensuring a consistent and objective analysis process. The methodology followed these steps: 1). Data Collection: Episodes were watched multiple times to ensure comprehensive observation of all elements. 2). Coding Framework Development: Categories were refined based on existing literature and pilot analysis. 3). Data Coding: Independent coding was conducted by both coders, followed by comparison and reconciliation of discrepancies.

As mentioned above, the research methodology for this study utilizing qualitative approach, textual analysis method. Tavallaei and Talib (2010), emphasizes the collection and analysis of textual or verbal data, enabling researchers to delve deeply into specific inquiries or real-life phenomena. Fan Xin (2022) further highlights how such methodologies allow for a more nuanced understanding of complex issues.

Table 1.1: Episodes of New Year 2020

Episode List	Episode Names
	EP1: Idiom Garden Party
	EP2: Chinese New Year Food Games



EP3: Kung Fu Fun Experience



EP4: Wonderful Chinese Words



EP5: Fun Childhood



EP6: Zodiac Culture Exploration



EP7: Happy Temple Fair

Sources: *New Year* (n.d.). CCTV. <https://tv.cctv.com/special/2020gnl/index.shtml>

This study focuses on the portrayal of Chinese culture in children's reality show in China, with a particular emphasis on New Year 2020 episodes 1–7 from CCTV, a sole national television network in China. The list of episodes is shown in Table 1.1. Given its prominent role, it symbolizes the significant transformations occurring within the Chinese television industry (Zhu Ying & Berry, 2009).

In terms of the procedures, the researchers first watch entire seven episodes of TV Program with a coding sheet to analyze the Chinese culture elements occurred in all episodes as well as the TV production techniques of the program. Textual analysis is employed to examine Chinese cultural elements occurred in the TV program such as scriptwriting and the design of cultural games. As Carley (1994) observed, "language is a window on culture," underscoring the critical role of linguistic aspects in understanding cultural representation. In reality TV, game design and scripts are integral to conveying the cultural essence and core themes, leveraging both verbal and non-verbal communication to engage audiences effectively.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings of this study reveal paradigm shifts in Chinese reality TV. Firstly, there is a shift from a reliance on humor to prioritizing cultural education, reflecting changing audience preferences. Secondly, the decreasing dependence on celebrity participants fosters relatability and deeper audience engagement. Finally, the program’s incorporation of localized cultural elements enhances authenticity, ensuring resonance with domestic audiences while appealing to broader markets. These findings highlight the dual role of reality TV as both an entertainment platform and a tool for cultural education. *New Year 2020* exemplifies how reality TV can balance cultural representation and audience satisfaction, positioning it as a significant case study in the evolution of Chinese media. The program *New Year 2020* is structured around three core aspects, each contributing to its unique appeal and cultural emphasis:

4.1 Program Structure and Live-Action Elements

New Year 2020 is divided into three distinct parts: Childishness Gathering for Chinese New Year, roller coaster and spinning cup segments, and special features like animated cartoons and panda series. The Childishness Gathering for Chinese New Year live-action segment accounts for about half of the program’s runtime, approximately 30 minutes per episode. In this segment, 16 hosts from CCTV Children's Channel team up with two randomly selected children in each episode to form the "Treasure Hunting Team." Together, they embark on a quest to find seven mysterious Chinese characters, unlocking a "New Year's Gift Pack" for the young viewers. Interwoven with engaging games, this segment incorporates traditional Chinese cultural elements, fostering both entertainment and education.

4.2 Integration of Traditional Chinese Culture

The seven episodes of the program are thematically tied to various aspects of traditional Chinese culture: Idioms Garden Party, Chinese New Year Food Games, Kung Fu Fun Experience, Wonderful Chinese Words, Fun Childhood, Chinese Zodiac Culture Exploration, and Temple Fair. These themes reflect idiom culture, Chinese food culture, kung fu culture, Chinese character culture, folk games, Chinese zodiac culture, and temple fair culture, effectively blending entertainment with a celebration of heritage.

4.3 Guest Selection and Non-Celebrity Focus

While many reality programs rely heavily on celebrities to attract viewership, *New Year 2020* takes a different approach. Each episode features children from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macau, alongside guests such as Wing Chun kung fu heirs, oceanarium keepers, and zoo keepers. These guests, with their unique stories and professional expertise, enrich the program with attributes that celebrities often lack. By shifting the focus from commercialized stardom to authentic storytelling and cultural exploration, the program emphasizes its educational and cultural mission.

In sum, *New Year 2020* stands out as a creative and culturally rich reality show, offering a blend of entertainment, education, and authentic cultural engagement that distinguishes it from conventional star-driven programming.

4.4 Textual analysis results

Table 1.2: Textual Analysis Results

No.	Episode Name	Game Scripts	Portray of Chinese Culture
1	Idiom Garden Party	Idiom challenges, writing idioms, and taking photos	This activity highlights the richness of the Chinese language, focusing on

		with animals that match idioms.	idioms as a cornerstone of traditional culture. It emphasizes linguistic heritage and the connection between idioms and their symbolic meanings.
2	Chinese New Year Food Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emu Race: Exploring traditional noodles and differentiating <i>yuanxiao</i> from <i>tangyuan</i>. - Pelican Race: Learning about the eight major Chinese cuisines, Tang Dynasty cuisine, and the Manchu-Han banquet. - Crazy Balloon: Featuring traditional Beijing snacks and provincial specialties. 	This segment celebrates China's diverse culinary heritage, exploring its historical and regional food traditions.
3	Kung Fu Fun Experience	Kung Fu challenges, including balance tests, single-plank bridges, and endurance exercises.	By engaging with martial arts such as Wing Chun, this segment showcases physical discipline and the philosophical underpinnings of traditional Chinese Kung Fu.
4	Wonderful Chinese Words	Collecting the character “福” (<i>fu</i>), traditional sports, and creating congratulatory phrases like 吉祥如意 (<i>ji xiang ru yi</i>).	This activity links language to artistic expressions, such as oracle bone scripts and Chinese patterns (e.g., red lanterns and paper cuts), reinforcing cultural symbolism.
5	Fun Childhood	Exploring childhood snacks, solving riddles on lanterns, and playing traditional games such as <i>duo sha bao</i> (sandbag tossing), jump rope, and rubber band skipping.	These tasks highlight traditional childhood pastimes and snacks, evoking nostalgia and a connection to simpler, communal lifestyles in Chinese history.
6	Zodiac Culture Exploration	Protecting dragon eggs, learning about the origins of the 12 zodiac signs, exploring zodiac-related stamps, and understanding the ancient Chinese calendar.	This segment explores the mythological and calendrical systems that are deeply ingrained in Chinese cultural identity.
7	Happy Temple Fair	Temple fair games like ribbon twirling, shuttlecock kicking, traditional archery, and ring tossing.	Temple fairs reflect festive traditions, communal celebrations, and the preservation of ancient recreational activities.

With the theme "Chinese New Year for Kids," the reality show segment of New Year 2020 divides its seven episodes into distinct cultural categories, with each episode featuring at least

three game segments tied to its theme. Despite the variety in themes, the presentation remains straightforward. For instance, the first episode, Idioms in the Garden, uses a "finding clues" format where participants undertake tasks issued by clue holders. The second episode, Food Games, adopts a "competition" format. The third episode, Kung Fu Fun Experience, incorporates a "pass card" mode, where participants must pass tests given by martial arts masters. Subsequent episodes explore other creative formats: Wonderful Words uses a "travelogue + game" approach, Childhood adopts a "catch and elimination" recording mode, Chinese Zodiac Culture exploration uses a "catch" format, and the final episode, The Temple Fair, employs an "excursions" narrative style. Despite the diversity, the creators aim to keep tasks simple and engaging within each episode.

For example, in episode two, Chinese New Year Food Games, the games include: 1) "Emu Race": Teams answer food-related questions, with correct answers reducing their running distance. 2) "Pelican Race": Teams answer questions, with correct answers earning additional feeds for pelican races. 3) "Crazy Balloon": Teams answer questions, with correct answers extending the time for inflating balloons.

The winning team from all three games is awarded the gourmet grand prize and a mysterious word. While the game rules vary within a category, the production maintains a cohesive storyline for each participant, combined with effective editing to prevent monotony. This ensures the narrative remains engaging and accessible to the audience, avoiding confusion or disengagement.

4.5 Discussion

The discussions in this research are categorized into two main parts. The first part focuses on findings from the reality TV industry, derived from an extensive literature review. The second part examines findings based on the current study, specifically through content analysis of New Year 2020.

Previously, Reality TV programs in China are often created to cater to market demands and audience preferences, heavily relying on celebrity appearances, exaggerated publicity, and, at times, poor content quality. While these programs attract significant viewership, they are criticized for prioritizing commercial value over meaningful or innovative content. Examples of such practices include the overuse of celebrity-driven narratives, which overshadow opportunities for genuine storytelling or cultural exploration.

This research addresses two primary questions:

- 1) How has TV production techniques in Chinese reality TV programs evolved?
- 2) What paradigm shifts have occurred in Chinese reality television?

As for the TV production techniques, four key aspects of TV production techniques in the genre were discovered in this study:

- 1) Script Focus on Intellectual Function: Scripts emphasize intellectual value, reinforcing educational and cultural themes while promoting meaningful content.
- 2) Transition from Celebrities to Normal Participants: Programs are increasingly featuring ordinary individuals over celebrities, enhancing relatability and the functional contributions of participants.
- 3) Clear Narrative and Simplified Tasks: Scripts maintain a straightforward storyline with clear and accessible tasks, ensuring audience engagement without unnecessary complexity.
- 4) Optimal Use of Filming Locations: Programs maximize the use of local resources and venues to enrich content with authentic and diverse settings.

In terms of the Paradigm Shifts in Chinese Reality Television, the textual analysis results illustrated several significant shifts in the TV Program production especially in the reality TV.

Firstly, there is a notable shift from comedy to a more cultural approach as the traditional comedic formats of the reality TV show are being replaced by content that prioritizes cultural dissemination, reflecting the changing preferences of younger audiences as seen in the scripts and game settings of the New Year 2020 program.

Secondly, there is less dependence on famous celebrities as the result showed a noticeable decline in the reliance on celebrity participants, which has allowed programs to achieve greater depth and refinement in their narratives. This shift fosters stronger audience engagement with the content itself, rather than the personalities involved.

Thirdly, there is a notable use of local models. The adaptation of reality TV formats to align with local culture and values has emerged as a critical factor in the industry's TV production techniques and transformation. Localization ensures that programs resonate more deeply with domestic audiences, strengthening their cultural relevance and appeal.

These findings underscore the dynamic evolution of Chinese reality TV, reflecting efforts to balance entertainment with cultural and intellectual contributions, while adapting to shifting audience demographics and market demands.

One of the primary findings is the effective integration of traditional Chinese cultural elements into modern entertainment formats. The "New Year 2020" series successfully incorporates themes such as idioms, food games, and martial arts experiences. This blend not only serves to entertain but also educates children about their cultural heritage. By framing these elements within engaging narratives and interactive formats, the program fosters a deeper understanding of Chinese traditions among young viewers. This approach aligns with broader trends in media where educational content is increasingly embedded in entertainment, thus enhancing cultural transmission.

The study highlights a notable shift in production techniques within Chinese reality television. Historically, many programs relied heavily on celebrity appearances to attract viewers. However, "New Year 2020" demonstrates a transition towards featuring ordinary participants, which enhances relatability and fosters a stronger connection with the audience. This change reflects a growing preference for authenticity over star power, allowing viewers to see themselves represented in the content. Such a shift not only caters to modern viewing habits but also promotes inclusivity, as it broadens the scope of representation within reality TV.

The findings underscore the role of children's reality shows as vehicles for cultural education and engagement. The incorporation of interactive games that revolve around traditional practices allows children to learn about their heritage in an enjoyable manner. This educational aspect is crucial as it instills a sense of national pride and identity among young audiences. Programs like "New Year 2020" serve as platforms for reinforcing cultural values while also addressing contemporary societal issues, thus bridging traditional norms with modern realities.

The research also sheds light on changing audience preferences and how these influence television production strategies. The increasing demand for relatable content has led producers to innovate programming formats that resonate with viewers' experiences. The study indicates that understanding audience expectations is essential for program success in a competitive media landscape characterized by diverse viewing options. As advertisers continue to invest heavily in reality TV, there is a clear indication that these programs hold significant market appeal.

Another critical finding pertains to the ethical implications of content creation within children's programming. While engaging narratives are essential for attracting viewership, there is a growing concern regarding the commercialization of children's media and its potential impact on mental health. The study highlights the need for producers to balance entertainment with ethical considerations, ensuring that content promotes positive values without exploiting young audiences.

From an academic perspective, this research contributes to ongoing discussions in media studies, cultural studies, and communication theory by providing a framework for understanding how televised content encodes cultural meanings through various representational codes—social, technical, and ideological. By employing qualitative methods, this study enriches existing literature on media representation while offering new insights into the specific context of Chinese children's programming.

The findings have practical implications for television producers and marketers operating within the Chinese entertainment landscape. As reality TV continues to gain traction, there is a pressing need for innovation in content formats that reflect cultural values while engaging viewers through interactive elements. The emphasis on localization and audience feedback underscores the importance of adapting content to meet viewer expectations while maintaining cultural integrity.

As a result, this research provides valuable insights into how children's reality shows like "New Year 2020" portray Chinese culture while evolving production techniques to meet contemporary audience demands. By integrating traditional elements into engaging formats and shifting away from celebrity reliance towards ordinary participants, these programs not only entertain but also educate young viewers about their cultural heritage. As reality television continues to evolve in China, understanding these dynamics will be essential for scholars, media practitioners, and policymakers aiming to navigate the complexities of cultural representation in an increasingly globalized media landscape.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

5.1 Conclusion

The analysis of "New Year 2020" demonstrates how children's reality shows can effectively integrate traditional Chinese cultural elements with contemporary entertainment formats. By embedding cultural themes such as idioms, food games, and kung fu experiences into its episodes, the program serves as a vehicle for cultural education, allowing young viewers to engage with their heritage in an entertaining manner. This approach aligns with the broader trend in Chinese media where there is a conscious effort to localize content and make it relatable to diverse audiences. The study's qualitative research methods, including textual analysis and comparative studies, enrich the discourse surrounding media representation and its implications for cultural identity among children.

Moreover, the findings indicate a shift in reality TV programming from a reliance on celebrity appearances to a focus on ordinary participants. This transition enhances relatability and fosters a deeper connection between the audience and the content. It reflects changing viewer preferences that prioritize authenticity and engagement over traditional star power. This evolution is crucial as it not only caters to modern viewing habits but also contributes to a more inclusive representation of society within media narratives.

The research also highlights the critical role of television producers in adapting content to meet audience expectations while maintaining cultural integrity. As reality television continues to gain popularity in China, understanding audience preferences becomes essential for program success. The emphasis on innovative content formats that reflect cultural values while engaging viewers through interactive elements is vital in a rapidly evolving media environment characterized by diverse viewing platforms and changing consumer behaviors.

5.2 Suggestion

Based on the findings from this study, several suggestions can be made for future research and television production strategies:

Academically, future studies could use these findings to further explore how different demographic groups within China perceive and engage with children's reality shows.

Understanding these perspectives can provide deeper insights into how media shapes cultural identities across various segments of society. Future research could also investigate how global trends in reality television impact local productions in China. Understanding these dynamics can help producers navigate the complexities of cultural representation in an increasingly globalized media landscape

As for the entertainment and TV industry, television producers could continue to integrate educational content within entertainment formats. Programs that blend learning with fun can foster national pride and identity among children while promoting cultural heritage. Producers could also develop strategies, using this study's findings, to enhance audience engagement through interactive elements such as viewer participation or feedback mechanisms. This could involve incorporating audience suggestions into show formats or creating companion digital content that allows for deeper interaction with the material. Embracing new technologies such as augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) could enhance viewer experience and engagement. These technologies offer innovative ways to present cultural narratives, making them more immersive and impactful for young audiences.

Collaborating with schools and educational organizations can create opportunities for children's programming to align more closely with educational objectives. Such partnerships could enhance the educational value of reality shows while reinforcing their role as tools for cultural transmission. In terms of ethical content creation, as concerns about the commercialization of children's programming grow, it is essential for producers to prioritize ethical considerations in content creation. This includes avoiding exploitative practices and ensuring that programs promote positive values and mental well-being among young viewers.

In summary, this study significantly contributes to both academic scholarship and practical applications within the television industry by exploring how Chinese culture is portrayed in children's reality shows. The insights gained from this research will be invaluable for scholars, media practitioners, and policymakers aiming to navigate the complexities of cultural representation in an increasingly globalized media landscape while fostering engagement among young audiences.

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