

Research on the Current Status and Optimization Strategies of Chinese Culture Dissemination under Cross-Cultural Backgrounds

Pei Wu

Lecturer, Nanjing University of Science and Technology, Zijin College, Nanjing, China
Email: woo_1015@163.com

Abstract

To analyze the current status of Chinese culture dissemination under a cross-cultural context, this study targeted African international students from a university, utilizing questionnaire surveys and interviews to investigate the channels through which they acquire knowledge of Chinese culture, their perceptions and identifications towards it. The research delves into the deficiencies in the dissemination of Chinese culture and proposes corresponding optimization strategies. It is found that issues such as teachers' lack of cross-cultural awareness, the monotony of school cultural activities, and low cultural identification among international students hinder the cross-cultural dissemination of Chinese culture. Consequently, optimizations can be made from three aspects: the communicators, communication channels, and communication content, thereby effectively promoting the dissemination of Chinese culture within a cross-cultural context.

Keywords: cross-culture; Chinese culture; dissemination status; African international students; optimization strategies.

1. Introduction

With the rapid economic development and the enhancement of China's comprehensive national strength, China has secured a prominent position on the international stage and holds a certain degree of discourse power. In this context, the number of foreigners learning Chinese has gradually increased, and the number of students studying in China has also risen significantly. In teaching Chinese as a foreign language, reflecting the current status of Chinese culture dissemination contributes to enhancing teaching effectiveness, while improving the level of teaching Chinese as a foreign language facilitates the overseas dissemination of Chinese culture. These two aspects complement each other and are intricately linked. Culture, as the spiritual force of a nation, plays a vital role in strengthening national cohesion, cultural soft power, and overall national strength [1]. Since the reform and opening-up, China has achieved

corresponding successes in the dissemination of its culture, and many scholars have intensified their research efforts in this area. Studies have pointed out that China's cultural dissemination capacity is primarily influenced by its economic and social development, and that the dissemination system lags behind. Other research argues that deficiencies in cultural resources and linguistic media have severely impacted the dissemination of Chinese culture. Using data analysis methods, one study analyzed China's cultural soft power and found that the current situation is not optimistic, with considerable room for improvement [2]. In terms of cultural dissemination strategies, some research has applied the "5W" theory to analyze problems encountered by international students studying in China and proposed targeted improvement measures from the perspectives of the government and education authorities, such as improving supporting policies and constructing an education management system [3]. Based on the current status of ancient and modern Chinese cultural dissemination, other studies have put forward targeted communication strategies, including enhancing cross-cultural communication capabilities and promoting industrialization [4]. Still, other research suggests that a shift from emphasizing "quantity" to emphasizing "quality" can achieve the goal of language and cultural dissemination [5]. From the existing research, there are relatively more studies on the current status of Chinese cultural dissemination overseas, but fewer studies on the current status of cultural dissemination among international students in China, and the research on dissemination methods is relatively weak.

Based on this, this paper selects African international students studying in a Chinese university as the research subjects to analyze the current status of Chinese cultural dissemination, delve into the problems encountered in the process of cultural dissemination, and propose targeted optimization strategies, with the aim of providing insights for the cross-cultural dissemination of Chinese culture.

2. Research Design

2.1 Survey Participants

The research focuses on African international students studying in a particular Chinese university, aiming to analyze the current status of Chinese cultural dissemination within a cross-cultural context through a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire distribution was primarily facilitated through the online platform Wenjuanxing. The questionnaire comprises two main sections: one section examines the channels through which international students acquire knowledge of Chinese culture, while the other primarily assesses their degree of identification with Chinese culture. Specifically, the level of identification with cultural activities is quantified using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). The average score is calculated, with higher scores indicating a higher level of identification among international students towards cultural activities. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed, and 99 valid questionnaires were retrieved, resulting in a response rate of 99%. The survey results were statistically analyzed using SPSS software.

2.2 Research Methods

2.2.1 Literature Review

Utilizing websites such as Wanfang Data and CNKI, relevant research findings were retrieved using keywords like "cross-culture," "Chinese culture," and "current status of dissemination." Valuable academic viewpoints from the literature were summarized and synthesized to provide theoretical support for the subsequent research.

2.2.2 Questionnaire Survey

A questionnaire survey was conducted to analyze the channels through which international students acquire knowledge of Chinese culture and their perceptions of Chinese culture.

2.2.3 Interview Method

A combination of offline interviews and voice calls was employed to delve deeper into international students' understanding and perspectives on select questions from the questionnaire. This approach served to supplement and enrich the findings obtained from the questionnaire survey [6].

3. Analysis of Questionnaire Statistics

3.1 Statistical Results on Channels for African International Students to Learn About Chinese Culture

To understand the channels through which African international students acquire knowledge of Chinese culture, a question "What are the main channels you use to learn about Chinese culture?" was included in the questionnaire. To reflect actual circumstances, the timeline was divided into two phases: one before coming to China for study and the other after arriving in China. The statistical results are presented in Figure 1.

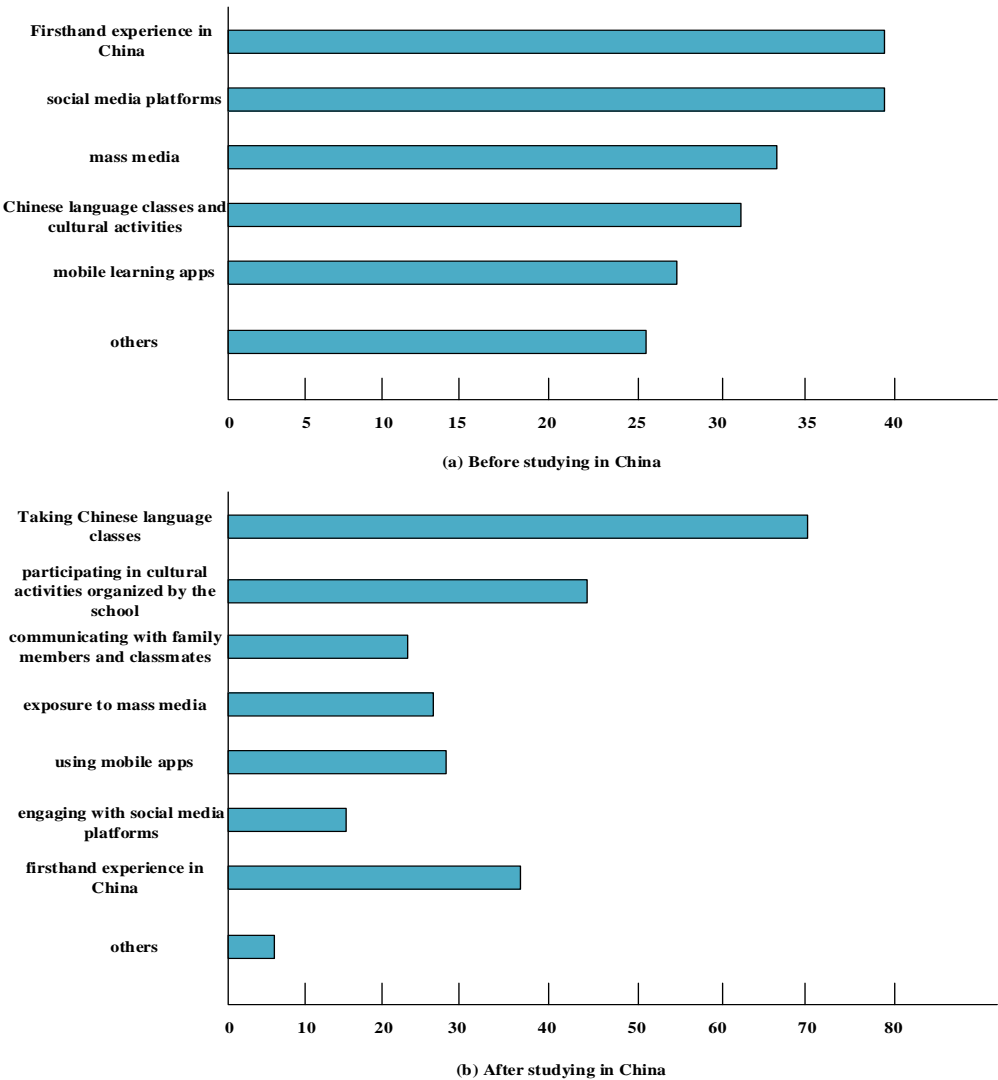


Figure 1: Channels for African International Students to Learn About Chinese Culture Before and After Studying in China

Figure 1(a) indicates that before studying in China, international students primarily relied on firsthand experience and social media platforms to learn about Chinese culture, with both channels accounting for an equal share of 37.37%. Additionally, 33.33% of students gained knowledge of Chinese culture through mass media.

Figure 1(b) reveals that after arriving in China, the primary channels for students to learn about Chinese culture shifted to attending Chinese language classes and participating in cultural activities organized by the school, with respective percentages of 66.67% and 44.44%.

3.2 Main Channels for African International Students to Learn About Chinese Culture in China

Based on the analysis of the aforementioned statistical results, it is evident that the primary channels for African international students to learn about Chinese culture in China are through classroom learning and cultural activities organized by the school. The details are as follows:

3.2.1 Classroom Instruction

After arriving in China for study, a relatively large proportion of international students acquire knowledge of Chinese culture through classroom instruction. Given the significance of classroom teaching in the dissemination of Chinese culture, understanding the needs of international students towards teachers and teaching methodologies is crucial. Consequently, this study conducted corresponding interviews with international students during the survey process.

During the interviews, Student A expressed a preference for gentle teachers who can befriend them;

Student B favored teachers who can create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere; Student C appreciated teachers with good oral proficiency and a dedicated teaching attitude; Student D (as C was mentioned twice, assuming a typographical error here) mentioned preferring Chinese teachers proficient in English, noting that their teacher was strong in various aspects but relatively weaker in English; Student E emphasized the importance of teachers encouraging frequent speaking and practice, possessing ample patience, and avoiding being overly strict during the teaching process.

In the classroom context, teachers are not only the imparters of Chinese language knowledge but also the disseminators of Chinese culture, serving as guides for classroom instruction and facilitators of cross-cultural communication. Their teaching behaviors directly influence international students' perceptions of Chinese culture. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to possess not only solid language proficiency and teaching abilities but also unique personal charisma, which plays a pivotal role in enhancing teaching effectiveness and promoting the cross-cultural dissemination of Chinese culture.

3.2.2 Cultural Activities Organized by the School

(1) Cultural Activity Statistics

Cultural activities are characterized by strong orderliness and purposefulness, and they play a vital role in facilitating cultural dissemination, particularly in the cross-cultural transmission of Chinese culture. For international students seeking to understand Chinese culture, the organization of cultural activities is particularly crucial. Currently, the university conducts a range of cultural activities tailored to African international students, including: competition-based events, cultural experience activities, lectures, and Chinese language learning support sessions (e.g., "Chinese Language Refueling Stations").

(2) International Students' Preferences for Cultural Activities

To evaluate the effectiveness of the cultural activities organized by the university, the study included a question in the questionnaire inquiring about "Which types of cultural activities do you enjoy the most?" The survey results are presented in Figure 2.

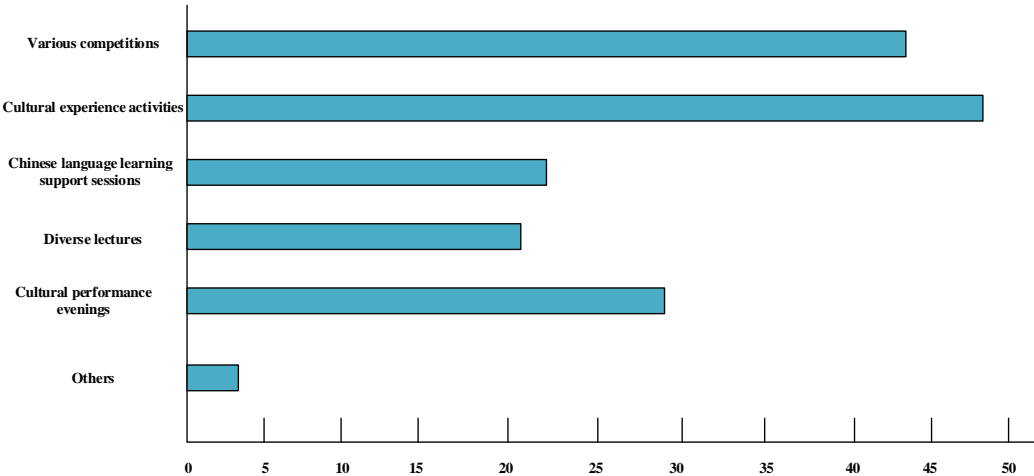


Figure 2 Types of Cultural Activities Most Preferred by International Students

As depicted in Figure 2, cultural experience activities account for a relatively large proportion of international students' preferences, reaching 46.46%, followed by competitive events such as calligraphy contests and writing competitions, which constitute 44.44% of the total.

(3) Participation Rate in Cultural Activities among International Students

Details regarding the participation of international students in cultural activities are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 Participation Rate of International Students in Cultural Activities

Activity Types	Number of Participants who Have Not Participated (persons)	Proportion (%)	Number of Participants who Have Participated (persons)	Proportion (%)
Experience-based	20	20.20	79	79.80
Competitive	22	22.22	77	77.78
Performance-oriented	20	20.20	79	79.80
Lecture-style	15	16.67	84	83.33

Analysis of Table 1 reveals that among the 9 questionnaires retrieved, the number of international students who indicated they had not participated in experience-based, competitive, performance-oriented, and lecture-style activities were 20, 22, 20, and 15 persons respectively, accounting for 20.20%, 22.22%, 20.20%, and 16.67% of the total. Notably, this segment of students was primarily comprised of freshmen. This suggests a relatively high level of engagement in cultural interactions among international students.

(4) International Students' Degree of Recognition for Cultural Activities
To understand the degree of recognition among African international students towards cultural activities in China, the questionnaire included the question, "How would you evaluate these cultural activities?" The survey results are presented in Figure 3.

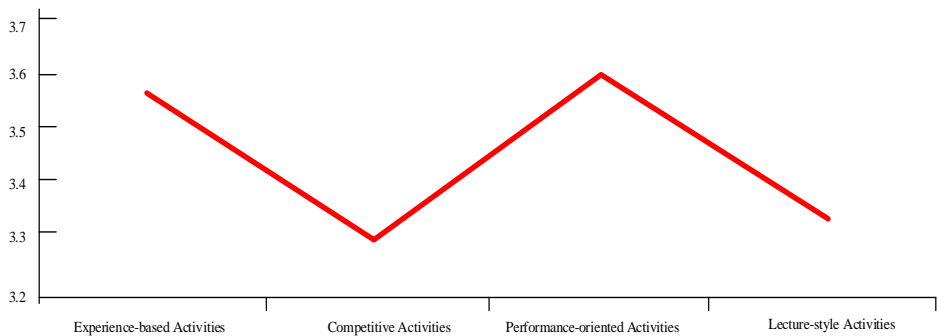


Figure 3 International Students' Degree of Recognition for Cultural Activities

As evident from Figure 3, performance-oriented activities received the highest rating of 3.62, while competitive activities scored the lowest with 3.31, with an average score of 3.45, indicating a neutral stance. This suggests that international students have a relatively low level of recognition towards the cultural activities organized by the school.

During the interview process, International Student B stated: "Overall, I feel quite positive about the cultural activities organized by the school. They help us understand and gain insight into Chinese culture. The school should hold more cultural events, such as Spring Festival celebrations."

International Student C remarked: "During the Mid-Autumn Festival, the school organized a gathering where international students ate and made mooncakes together. After participating in this activity, I learned about how to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival and what to do during the festival. For this year's Mid-Autumn Festival, I hope the school can teach us how to make mooncakes."

International Student D expressed the hope that the school could provide more time for them to prepare for competitive activities.

International Student E mentioned that during competitive events, calligraphy competitions were predominant. However, since they had not learned calligraphy before, they struggled to write well. If such interactions were to be organized, they suggested that the school should teach them how to write calligraphy.

The above interviews clearly identify the reasons behind the low recognition of competitive activities, emphasizing the need for the school to address this issue with due importance.

3.3 International Students' Perception of Chinese Culture

3.3.1 Overall Perception of Chinese Culture among International Students

The overall degree of recognition that international students have towards Chinese culture is detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 Overall Recognition of Chinese Culture among International Students

Options	Mean Value (on a scale of 5)	Standard Deviation
Chinese Culture is Attractive	3.90	1.040
Chinese Culture is Inclusive	3.60	1.010
Chinese Culture is Dynamic	3.70	.964
Chinese Culture is Splendid	3.88	.932
Chinese Culture is Diverse	3.60	1.092
Chinese Culture is Peace-loving	3.58	.915
Chinese Culture is Valuable	3.83	1.026
Chinese Culture is Innovative	3.80	1.026
Chinese Culture is Harmonious	3.90	1.060

Analysis of Table 2 reveals that the relatively higher scores were given to the statements "Chinese Culture is Attractive" and "Chinese Culture is Harmonious," indicating a tendency towards satisfaction. In contrast, lower scores were assigned to "Chinese Culture is Inclusive" and "Chinese Culture is Peace-loving." This suggests that while the majority of international students have a relatively low degree of recognition towards the peace-loving nature of Chinese culture, they tend to be satisfied overall, demonstrating a positive evaluation of Chinese culture.

During the interview, International Student B expressed that international students lack personal space in China. This refers primarily to the space within one's personal domain, which is significantly influenced by psychological factors and cultural differences. Foreigners perceive this space as the possession and maintenance of one's personal territory, whereas this understanding may not be shared domestically, leading to misunderstandings in interactions with foreigners. Additionally, Student B expressed reluctance for others to mention his privacy. Cross-cultural communication, being an interpersonal interaction, faces differences in customs, cultures, and more due to varying cultural backgrounds. Hence, when interacting with international students, it is advisable to avoid topics of privacy to prevent cultural conflicts and facilitate the cross-cultural dissemination of Chinese culture.

Regarding traditional Chinese festivals, they embody rich cultural connotations and reflect national spirit and emotions. In recent years, the inclusion of festivals such as Spring Festival and Qingming Festival in the intangible cultural heritage list underscores China's emphasis on traditional culture. Analyzing international students' awareness and preference for traditional Chinese festivals can indirectly reflect their overall perception of Chinese culture, as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3 International Students' Awareness and Preference for Chinese Festivals

Festival Names	Awareness (100%)	Favorability (on a scale of 5)
Spring Festival	97.01	4.11
Qingming Festival	95.98	3.84
Dragon Boat Festival	93.88	3.89

Analysis of Table 3 reveals that among the 99 questionnaires retrieved, the majority of students exhibited a relatively high degree of recognition and favorability towards Spring Festival, Qingming Festival, and Dragon Boat Festival. Interviews also confirmed that most international

students have experienced celebrating Spring Festival, further enhancing their understanding of traditional Chinese festivals.

3.3.2 Perception of Chinese Culture at Different Levels

In this study, we primarily utilized Chinese cultural symbols to reflect African international students' recognition and favorability towards Chinese culture, as detailed in Table 4.

Table 4 Recognition and Favorability of African International Students in China towards Chinese Cultural Symbols

Chinese Cultural Symbols	Awareness	Favorability	
	Mean Value (100%)	Mean Value (on a scale of 5)	Standard Deviation
The Great Wall	92.89	4.10	1.070
Dragon	94.88	3.84	1.110
Forbidden City	95.98	3.80	1.060
Chinese Cuisine	95.98	3.90	1.070
Chinese Kung Fu	97.99	4.10	1.020
Traditional Chinese Medicine	97.98	3.98	1.120
Chinese Calligraphy	96.98	4.01	1.140
Chinese Painting	96.06	3.80	1.097
Chinese Poetry	90.08	3.59	1.233
Wuju Opera	82.01	3.50	1.060
Confucianism	95.02	3.67	1.160
Mean Value	94.50	3.83	—

Analysis of Table 4 indicates that Chinese Kung Fu, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), and Chinese Calligraphy received the highest scores, while Wuju Opera scored relatively low. This suggests that these cultural elements are more representative and well-known among international students, whereas Wuju Opera, being a local cultural feature, is less familiar to them. This phenomenon also implies that the propaganda efforts of universities in promoting unique cultural aspects are relatively weak, making it difficult to effectively introduce and disseminate such cultural heritages within the academic environment.

4. Deficiencies in the Process of Chinese Cultural Dissemination from a Cross-cultural Perspective

Based on the current status of Chinese cultural dissemination from a cross-cultural perspective, this study analyzes the deficiencies in the process of Chinese cultural dissemination from the following three aspects:

4.1 Deficiencies in the Dissemination Subjects

As revealed by the above analysis, African international students in China primarily learn about Chinese culture through classroom learning and participation in cultural activities organized by schools. As the primary disseminators, schools and teachers also exhibit corresponding shortcomings in classroom teaching and organizational planning [7].

During interviews, it was learned that most international students expressed a desire for teachers with better English proficiency, as the level of teachers' English directly impacts teaching quality and has a negative influence on enhancing teaching effectiveness. Additionally, teachers lack cross-cultural awareness in their teaching, leading to instances that may offend students. Particularly after the outbreak of COVID-19, the venues, attendance, and formats of university-organized activities have been significantly restricted, severely impacting teaching materials. Furthermore, most international students have a relatively low level of recognition towards Chinese culture, and the cultural activities organized by schools are also unsatisfactory.

4.2 Deficiencies in Dissemination Channels

The survey revealed that relatively few international students browse their university's official website and official accounts, and some even reported not knowing where to obtain information about school activities. This indicates significant issues in universities' dissemination channels for Chinese culture, failing to fully leverage the role of official websites and official accounts. As important online propaganda media for schools, they evidently lack sufficient attention.

4.3 Deficiencies in Dissemination Content

During the investigation, it was found that while most international students had relatively high evaluations of Chinese culture, they scored relatively low on the items "Chinese culture is peace-loving" and "Chinese culture is inclusive." Moreover, the dissemination status of material and behavioral cultural symbols is superior to that of spiritual cultural symbols. This suggests that the dissemination of Chinese culture rarely delves into the connotations of spiritual culture.

5. Optimization Pathways for Chinese Cultural Dissemination from a Cross-cultural Perspective

In response to the current deficiencies in the process of Chinese cultural dissemination, this paper proposes corresponding optimization strategies from the following aspects.

5.1 Optimization of Dissemination Subjects

Firstly, intensify training for novice teachers to continuously enhance their English proficiency and teaching capabilities. Teachers play a crucial role in the dissemination of Chinese culture. Simultaneously, it is essential to strengthen teachers' language knowledge and skills and foster cross-cultural awareness [8]. For teachers of Chinese as a foreign language, only after a profound understanding of both their own culture and the cultures of learners' countries can they discern the differences between different cultures and thereby eliminate misunderstandings arising from cultural collisions. Moreover, teachers can only help international students develop corresponding cross-cultural awareness after establishing their own cross-cultural consciousness. Therefore, universities need to provide teachers with appropriate professional learning and practical training environments, enhancing their teaching abilities while cultivating their autonomous learning awareness to continuously solidify their language foundations.

Secondly, increase the number and diversify the types of cultural activities. Universities should build digital exhibitions tailored to their specific circumstances and equip them with

corresponding translation services to facilitate student visits and learning. When selecting exhibition pieces, in addition to showcasing masterpieces, universities should also include works created by students. This approach allows international students to gain a profound understanding of the essence of traditional Chinese arts and crafts, further deepening their comprehension of Chinese culture [9].

Thirdly, fully embody the connotation of cultural activities. The core purpose of organizing cultural activities is to enable students to deepen their understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture through participation, genuinely appreciating the beauty of culture, rather than merely organizing events for their own sake. Therefore, when designing cultural activities, it is necessary to focus on elevating the cultural content conveyed to international students from the material and behavioral cultural levels to the spiritual cultural level. As one interviewee remarked, "After teaching me to make mooncakes in the first year, I hope to experience more profound cultural aspects in the second year." This indicates that when planning cultural activities, continuous innovation and enrichment of content are required to provide international students with more opportunities to gain a deeper understanding and experience of the rich connotations and unique charm of Chinese culture.

5.2 Optimization of Dissemination Channels

Firstly, universities should prioritize the promotion of their official websites and official accounts, with a focus on the content disseminated. As vital channels for disseminating cultural knowledge and promoting Chinese culture, universities should attach great importance to the role of their official websites and official accounts [10]. Therefore, universities need to intensify the promotion efforts of their official websites and official accounts, emphasizing the dissemination of outstanding Chinese culture in the selection of content. Meanwhile, content that resonates with international students' preferences can be selected. In terms of content depth, emphasis should be placed on introducing the meanings of Chinese history, customs, etc. When necessary, explanations in foreign languages can be provided to enable beginners of Chinese to gain a deeper understanding of Chinese culture.

Secondly, create thematic cultural events. Universities can introduce Chinese traditional festivals to international students during festivals and holidays, comparing them with cultural festivals in their home countries to find commonalities, thereby helping international students better understand Chinese festival culture and customs. This will enable them to compare and distinguish Chinese culture from their own national cultures, promoting cross-cultural communication.

5.3 Optimization of Dissemination Content

Firstly, start from commonalities to convey a harmonious and friendly Chinese culture. To deepen international students' understanding of Chinese culture, one can begin with the similarities between the two cultures. For instance, during the explanation of traditional Chinese culture, comparisons can be made between Chinese culture and foreign cultures, highlighting their similarities to enable students to fully grasp the essence of the cultures. After the explanation, students can be encouraged to present the culture of their own countries and point

out the similarities, motivating international students to explore the connotation of Chinese culture with a learning task in mind.

Secondly, pay attention to learners' native cultures to avoid one-way cultural dissemination. In the process of Chinese cultural dissemination, special attention should be given to African cultures, and Chinese culture should be presented from an objective perspective to evoke emotional resonance among international students during their learning process [11].

Thirdly, structure teaching content in layers, eventually transitioning to the spiritual cultural level. For international students at the beginner and intermediate levels of Chinese, their understanding of Chinese culture is often superficial. As their Chinese proficiency improves, the focus should gradually shift to deeper cultural aspects. For example, during the Spring Festival, Chinese people prepare for the new year, have reunion dinners, and give red envelopes with money, among other traditions. Here, red envelopes and reunion dinners belong to material culture, while pasting Spring Festival couplets and giving red envelopes involve behavioral culture, both of which embody spiritual culture. By integrating the profound cultural connotations of festivals with superficial cultural products and customs in the teaching process, international students can gradually develop an identity with Chinese culture.

6. Conclusion:

With the deepening of globalization, cultural exchange and dissemination have emerged as crucial factors in fostering mutual understanding and harmonious coexistence among nations. As one of the major cultural powers in the world, the dissemination of Chinese culture in a cross-cultural context is particularly significant. To this end, this paper takes African international students studying in a Chinese university as an example to analyze the current status and optimization strategies of the cross-cultural dissemination of Chinese culture. The research findings are as follows:

- (1) African students primarily gain an understanding of Chinese culture through participating in classroom learning and cultural activities organized by the university.
- (2) While African students generally recognize and appreciate Chinese culture as a whole, there is a need to strengthen the dissemination of its "peace-loving" and "inclusive" aspects.
- (3) The dissemination of Chinese culture is primarily influenced by three factors: the communicator, communication channels, and communication content. Corresponding optimizations are necessary based on these factors to effectively promote the cross-cultural dissemination of Chinese culture.

While this study has yielded relevant conclusions, the research theme is relatively narrow and may not fully encapsulate the current state of Chinese cultural dissemination. In future studies, it is essential to continually expand the research scope and make corresponding contributions to the dissemination of Chinese culture.

WORKS CITED

- Ruan Jing. Chinese Cultural Symbols and the Dissemination of Chinese Culture [J]. *Journal of South-Central University for Nationalities (Humanities and Social Sciences Edition)*, 2023, 43(1): 82-90.
- Wang M. The Current Situation and Improvement Research on the Dissemination of Chinese Culture in College English Education in China [J]. *Education, Society and Human Studies*, 2024, 5(1): 09-12.
- Zha Qingping, Hua Lijun, Niu Hui. Analysis of the Implications of Chinese Cultural Dissemination in the Context of the Beijing Winter Olympics [J]. *Hefei University Journal*, 2024, 41(3): 94-98.
- Mei Y, Ngoi G. Research on the Current Situation and Countermeasures of the External Communication of Chinese Traditional Culture in the New Era [J]. *Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Science*, 2024, 8(2): 82-90.
- Jia Zhongyuan. Research on the Dissemination of Chinese Culture in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language [J]. *Journal of Xingtai Polytechnic College*, 2023, 40(1): 14-17.
- Fu Benjing. Path Selection for the Dissemination of Chinese Culture in the Context of Globalization [J]. *Journal of Harbin Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 2023, 50(3): 144-148.
- Ren Y, Yao M. A Study of Cultural Inheritance and National Image Dissemination in Chinese Film and Television Productions [J]. *Media and Communication Research*, 2023, 4(8): 45-47.
- Chen Caizhen. The Application of Crowdsourced Translation in the Dissemination of Chinese Culture [J]. *Overseas English (Upper)*, 2020(11): 159-160.
- Wang Yiping. Cultivating Chinese Cultural Communication Abilities among English Majors [J]. *Journal of Anshan Normal University*, 2024, 26(1): 53-58, 80.
- Li Yanni. An Analysis of the Dissemination Channels of Chinese Culture Based on the China Daily WeChat Official Account [J]. *Journal of Lanzhou Institute of Technology*, 2024, 31(3): 131-133.
- Wu Zenghui. New Changes in the International Environment and Strategies for the Dissemination of Chinese Culture [J]. *Journal of Taiyuan University (Social Science Edition)*, 2022, 23(6): 83-90.