Research on the Influence of Japanese Anime on Chinese College Students' Consumption Habits in Haikyu

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Abstract: With the popularity of Japanese anime in China, the behavior of Chinese college students consuming Japanese anime derivatives has received widespread attention. In the existing research, there is a lack of discussion on the consumption of anime animation cultural products by Chinese college students. Therefore, this study takes *Haikyu* as an example to analyze the impact of Japanese action anime (with friendship, effort, and desire to win) on the consumption habits of Chinese college students. Analysis shows that the emotional resonance between such Japanese action anime and Chinese college students, as well as the love of Chinese college students for anime characters, affects the demand psychology, purchase motivation, and consumption willingness of college students in terms of consumption habits. Meanwhile, Chinese college students are becoming more rational in their consumption of peripheral products from Japanese anime. Based on this, this study provides a detailed explanation of the two factors that influence the consumption habits of Chinese college students, including themes such as friendship, youth, and dreams in Japanese anime, as well as their love for characters portrayed in anime.

Keywords: Japanese Anime, Consumption Habits, Cultural Globalization

1. Introduction

With the acceleration of cultural globalization, action anime(with friendship, effort, and desire to win) produced under the specific cultural background of Japan has spread in China and has become popular among Chinese college students. Furthermore, it has also led to the rapid development of China's anime peripheral derivative products market, and the phenomenon of peripheral product consumption has become common among Chinese college student groups.

Strouhal proposed the theory of cultural proximity by analyzing the acceptance of TV programs in disparate cultural contexts by several social classes in Latin America [1]. He presented that audiences are more inclined to accept the content of the programs that are closer to them, based on their familiarity with the local culture, language, and customs [1]. Domestic scholars have also made systematic studies on the consumption of pop culture and two-dimensional (2D) products, but the

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analysis from the perspective of cultural globalization is still absent, and there is little research on the consumption of 2D animation products by Chinese college students. Therefore, this study provides a new perspective on the field about the above aspects.

This study uses a questionnaire survey and interview methods, based on the theory of cultural proximity, to analyze the cultural and spiritual connotations of Japanese action anime, taking *Haikyu* as an example. Through analysis, the system elaborates on how the spread of Japanese action anime to China has affected the consumption habits of Chinese university students, which has played a certain role in improving the understanding of the surrounding aspects of Chinese university students' consumption of anime.

2. Method

2.1. Qusetionnaire

The questionnaire design of this study is based on the consideration of the research context, aiming to understand the reality of the topic selection from a broader group of Chinese university students. The setting of questions in the questionnaire is mainly aimed at consumption habits and cultural globalization, so two pieces of important background information can be obtained: the average consumption-ability of Chinese university students and the opportunity to be exposed to Japanese anime.

To fit the research logic, the questionnaire is divided into four parts: basic information, personal consumption habits, animation exposure, and peripheral product consumption. To understand the basic consumption-ability of college students and screen out the required research objects, i.e. those who have consumption behavior of animation peripheral products, a triage question is set at the end of the first part of the basic information. Ultimately, the questionnaire was filled in 106 times, and the number of people who would buy animation peripheral products was 77. The second part of the personal consumption habits includes the direction of consumption, willingness to consume, consumption planning, and other aspects. From the cost of living expenses of college students, it can be understood that interest in investment does not affect their daily lives. The third part of the question set is based on the perspective of cultural globalization, and the results can reflect the reasons why Japanese anime, or Japanese pop culture, at a deeper level, is accepted by Chinese college students. The fourth part is the implementation of the research questions to investigate the motivation and specific consumption behavior of college students towards peripheral products, and the final data reflects that Chinese college students have a strong consumption-ability of such products. Furthermore, most of them can plan their consumption behavior more rationally under the comprehensive education of consumption concepts.

2.2. Interview

The design of the interview questions in this study is based on the research background, to conduct focused interviews with college students who have watched *Haikyu* understand the more concrete reality of the topic selection. The questions in the interview mainly revolve around why they appreciate hot-blooded anime like *Haikyu* and the consumption and purchasing habits of anime peripherals. From this, two important realities can be learned: the resonance of Chinese college students with Japanese hot-blooded anime and the consumption methods and habits they choose to treat their favorite anime peripherals.

To fit the topic, the content of the focus interview is not significantly different from the questionnaire setting. A concentrated focus interview was conducted on 5 college students, divided into four parts: basic personal information, Japanese anime-related, *Haikyu-related*, and personal consumption habits. The five interviewees involved in the first part of personal basic information are

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naturally college students who have a minimum of 1000 and a maximum of 5000 living expenses, which also reflects that Chinese college students can consume in anime-related fields. The second part about Japanese anime includes opportunities for exposure to Japanese anime, viewing frequency, social methods, etc., from which people can understand the dissemination and popularity of Japanese anime among college students. The third part about *Haikyu* includes reasons for love, meeting like-minded people, and purchasing habits around *Haikyu*, reflecting the overall situation through concrete examples. The fourth part reflects that although Chinese college students love Japanese anime and have a desire to consume it, they can still consume it rationally and not blindly.

3. Results

3.1. Present Situation

3.1.1. The Dissemination of Japanese Anime Among College Students in China

To understand the dissemination of Japanese anime among Chinese university students, this study set a topic on the opportunities for exposure to Japanese anime. As shown in Table 1, 73.68% of college students are attracted to finding Japanese anime by excellent Japanese anime works 53.95% of college students are exposed to Japanese anime through "friend recommendations". Most college students are exposed to Japanese anime because of the dissemination of their anime works, and excellent Japanese anime-themed content has attracted Chinese college students. It can be seen from this that the development of Japanese anime is mature, with a large number of excellent anime works exported as culture to other countries, with great influence. Interpersonal communication through communication and sharing is also a popular way for Japanese anime to spread among college students. Japanese anime has become a part of social topics among college students and is widely spread among them.

Table 1: Opportunities for exposure to Japanese anime.

Options	Quantity	Percentage(%)
Recommended by friends	41	53.95%
The influence of surrounding Japanese culture	25	32.89%
Attracted by excellent Japanese anime works	56	73.68%
A sense of belonging brought by Japanese anime	10	13.16%
other	7	9.21%

3.1.2. Daily Consumption Allocation for College Students

To understand whether college students will have an impact on their quality of life due to purchasing peripheral products, a question about monthly living expenses allocation has been set. The proportion of college students spending on food expenses, other expenses, leisure and entertainment, and daily necessities is as high as 80.26%. The main expenses are food and entertainment, and there will be no reduction in living expenses due to purchasing peripheral products.

3.1.3. Reasons for College Students to Purchase Peripheral Products

To understand the impact of Japanese anime on the consumption habits of college students, this study set a question on the reasons why purchase peripheral products. As shown in Table 2, 72.37% of college students purchase peripheral products due to their love for specific anime characters. 67.11%

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of college students purchase merchandise due to their love for this anime. 60.53% of college students make purchases due to the aesthetics of the peripheral products. 42.11% of college students make purchases due to the happiness and satisfaction brought about by consuming peripheral behaviors. The portrayal of characters in Japanese anime has led to a higher level of identification among college students, which in turn has increased and influenced the consumption of peripheral products related to Japanese anime. With consumption, there will be a market. In character consumption, the original meaning of a character is not the most important. People value more the personal needs, emotional satisfaction, or entertainment functions that individuals obtain. Meanwhile, a popular anime work has made college students willing to consume its derivative peripheral products, continuing their love for anime. It affects the purchasing motivation and willingness of college students to consume.

Table 2: The reasons for promoting the purchase of anime peripherals.

Options	Quantity	Percentage(%)
Practicality	11	14.47%
Aesthetics	46	60.53%
Likes this anime	51	67.11%
Purchasing related peripherals makes me very happy and satisfied	32	42.11%
Likes a character in anime	55	72.37%
other	1	1.32%

3.2. Analyze the Reasons

3.2.1. Emotional Resonance in *Haikyu*

There are generally similar answers to the survey on the reasons for liking *Haikyu* in the interview. All 5 interviewees mentioned their love for the passionate theme and spirit in *Haikyu*, as well as their love for character portrayal in anime and similarities with their hobbies and experiences. After Japanese anime entered China, Chinese university students developed a certain degree of identification with this similar culture through cross-cultural communication. As a neighboring country, Japan has similarities in most traditional cultures with China, which are also reflected in daily scenes and props in anime, making it better accepted by the Chinese college student community. Moreover, the themes of friendship, youth, and the pursuit of dreams expressed in the Japanese action anime *Haikyu* resonate with the past experiences, current states, and spiritual needs of Chinese university students. The traditional Japanese cultural ideology of "spiritual power above all else" expressed in the classic Japanese traditional cultural works The Chrysanthemum and The Sword is also reflected in many passionate Japanese action anime. When facing setbacks, the protagonist's firm and fearless determination coincides with the traditional Chinese cultural education of overcoming difficulties. People are attracted by passionate anime emotionally and spiritually, which affects the consumption habits of college students in purchasing peripheral products. Under the influence of cultural globalization, Japanese action anime collides with the thoughts of Chinese university students, meeting their spiritual needs. There are various types of peripheral products in Japanese anime, but most of them are centered around characters, and the consumption of peripheral products is also mostly centered around the worship and love of characters by consumers. For Japanese anime, allowing viewers to empathize and even transcend real emotions is the key to shaping the emotional expression of the characters themselves [2]. The emotional resonance of Chinese college students towards anime and the transfer of their love for characters to the consumption of peripheral products

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have generated a positive willingness to consume, thereby affecting their purchasing psychology and motivation.

3.2.2. Buy the Concept of Consumption Around Japanese Comics

An in-depth interview was conducted with 5 college students who bought Japanese anime. The interviewees all said didn't advance consumption. Meanwhile, interviewees said that Japanese anime doesn't match its net value and has exceeded consumption expectations. The interview found that the Chinese college student group is not blindly overconsuming in the consumption of Japanese anime peripherals, but is moderate in their purchases of peripherals. Chinese college students have a certain rational consumption concept towards the peripheral products from Japanese anime, which is related to the improvement of their consumption concept and the consolidation of cultural confidence. At the same time, there is a phenomenon of price gouging in the Japanese anime peripheral market, which has also become a factor for college students to consider peripheral consumption. In the environment of the developed internet, the concept of advanced consumption has become popular. Unlike the existing understanding that teenagers have not established a sound consumption concept and may excessively consume peripheral products, this study found that although the added value of Japanese anime peripheral products is high and the price level is high. However, the disposable income level of Chinese college students is limited, mostly provided by their parents for living expenses, and guided by education on consumption concepts in universities. The college student population tends to be more rational in their consumption of peripheral products [3].

4. Discussion

The study shows that action anime produced in Japan under its specific cultural background is introduced into China in the process of cultural globalization, and then accepted by Chinese college students through localized dissemination and the integration of Chinese and Japanese cultural cores. The emotional identification of those students with this kind of anime, as well as their empathy and love for the cartoon characters, make them willing to buy anime peripherals and influence their consumption habits.

With entertainment as its main function, popular culture is widely preferred and accepted by the general public, and so has its unique commercial value. In Yingying Sun's study on the influence of pop culture on college students' consumption behavior, she pointed out that under the market economy system, the production and manufacture of pop culture nowadays pay more attention to economic rather than social benefits, and take profit as the ultimate goal [4]. At present, the main allocation of social resources depends on market selection, and due to the unprecedented development of communication technology since the 21st century, the speed and scope of popular culture dissemination have been accelerated. International dissemination has also become a new direction of popular culture, making it occupy an increasing market share. For example, the rise of the anime and cartoon industry in Japan in the 1980s was a breakthrough in the globalization of culture, which had long been centered on the United States of America, and also formed the world's second cultural center.

With the extension of the Japanese anime industry chain in China, it occupies a special share of the Chinese market, and Chinese consumers also show the characteristics of large quantity, high consumption willingness, and strong consumption ability. In comparison, the Chinese animation industry has always been in a weak position in international dissemination, and the trade deficit brought about by the import of foreign animation works has continuously squeezed the development space of China's animation industry [5]. To achieve a wider range of international dissemination of

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Chinese animation, the successful experience of Japanese anime in China can be learned from the following aspects.

Firstly, from the perspective of Chinese locals, it is necessary to change the stereotypical conception of animation. Due to the Chinese cultural context, animation in traditional cognition is limited to children and carries the role of indoctrination, resulting in the imperfect talent training system of China's animation industry. It still lacks high-quality IP with a broad age-appropriate scope, which weakens the commercial value of animation as an important part of popular culture [6]. In response to the above situation, it can improve in the following aspects. Firstly, anime aimed at the public is more convenient to go abroad and be accepted internationally. For example, the setting of anime story themes is in line with the interests of both Chinese and overseas friends. Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen the cultivation of talents in the animation industry and call for fresh blood to join the development and promotion of the animation industry, such as school enterprise cooperation, lecture promotion, and other strategies to attract new ideas, to develop more age appropriate and widespread anime works [7].

Secondly, in the international market, a cultural proximity strategy can be used for communication. Japanese anime has a wide audience in China because it adopts Chinese cultural elements. Moreover, in the process of exporting to foreign countries, it first takes its neighboring areas as the target of dissemination and then expands to China, Southeast Asia, and other places [8]. Through partial research on Japanese anime, it can be seen that most Japanese anime focuses on the commonality of cultural core, using human warmth to resonate with viewers, and delicately portraying a flesh and blood character through emotional portrayal [9]. Chinese comics can draw inspiration from such methods to make character portrayal more anthropomorphic and vivid, combined with the rendering of traditional Chinese culture. This not only enhances the cultural confidence of Chinese people, enhances their recognition of Chinese culture, but also promotes traditional Chinese culture to the world.

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Thirdly, from the perspective of Chinese animation itself, it can be found that although with the support of the Chinese government, Chinese animation has shown promising development prospects in recent years, it still lacks originality. This is mainly reflected in the fact that the popular anime in China nowadays is mostly based on well-known mythological themes, with clearly recorded historical stories and well-known anime big IPs such as Xiong Chu Mo, Xiyang Yang, and Grey Wolf, which are relatively young works. These materials limit the innovation of anime content creation, leading to audience aesthetic fatigue towards such anime. In this regard, it should deeply explore and expand traditional Chinese culture, appropriately integrate Chinese and ethnic styles, establish original brands, and embark on the path of original Chinese animation [10].

5. Conclusion

Through the research, this paper found the emotional resonance between warm-blooded Japanese animation and Chinese college students by taking the *Haikyu* as an example. In this case, the shaping of cartoon characters has influenced the consumption habits of Chinese college students, collegiate consumption habits of demand psychology, purchase motivation, and consumption willingness. Though Chinese and Japanese different social backgrounds, but resulting feelings are similar. *Haikyu*

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is a kind of warm-blooded animation set up with friendship, effort, and desire to win, so people connect emotionally. Then different from social cognition, Chinese college students' consumption of Japanese animation has tended to be rational. At the same time education of students on rational consumption has been improved in universities, then let the consumption of college students become more rational.

This study discusses the influence of Japanese animation on Chinese college students' consumption behavior. It is helpful to improve the cognition of Chinese college students' consumption of animation and provide a theoretical basis for the development of China's animation industry. In the following research, the scope of data analysis can be further expanded, to obtain more views on the consumption of peripheral products and understand the psychology of consumers, to facilitate more in-depth exploration and discussion.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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