



## Original Research Article

## Persuasion of War Documentary Films and Communication Technology Impact on Northeast Chinese Audience's Behavior

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## ARTICLE INFO

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## ABSTRACT

This article aimed to explore the communication value of war documentary films, the key factors affecting audience behavior, the impact of communication technology, and the role of war documentary films in enhancing ethnic community awareness.

War documentary films are a witness to history and a carrier of national memory. Through in-depth exploration of historical events and characters, they guide the audience to think about social and historical issues, and stimulate national consciousness and patriotism. With the booming development of China's film and television industry, war documentary films should become an important way to influence Chinese audiences. However, with the explosive growth of internet information, the quality of war documentary films varies.

This study uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Through in-depth interviews with 8 film directors, producers and audience members, and a questionnaire survey with 400 audience members in Northeast China as an overall sample, the study aims to understand the communication value of war documentary films, the key factors affecting audience behavior, the impact of communication technology, and the role of war documentary films in enhancing ethnic community awareness.

The research results show that most audiences believe that the dissemination of war documentary films in China has important value, which can guide audiences to understand and remember history, trigger deep thinking, stimulate patriotic emotions, and strengthen the sense of national community. To play the role of war documentary films, it is necessary to base on history, culture and authenticity, and reasonably apply persuasion and communication techniques. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen supervision and policy support to promote the production and dissemination of war documentary films.

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## Introduction

In today's prosperous film and television industry, documentary films, as a unique art form, not only record true historical events, but also convey profound cultural connotations and social values through image language. Among them, Chinese war documentary films, as one of the important documentary genres, have a profound impact on audiences with their unique themes and creative techniques. Especially in northeastern China, due to its special historical background and geographical location, the information and values conveyed by war documentary films have a significant impact on the behavior of local audiences. In war documentary films, the behavior of the audience is not a simple information-receiving process, but a complex activity involving multiple levels of cognition, emotion, and behavior. During the viewing process, the audience not only receives the information conveyed by the film, but also interprets and recreates it through their own thinking and emotional experience. This initiative and participation enable the audience to play a more active role in the viewing process. As a special cultural product, Chinese war documentary films not only consider the artistic and ornamental value of the film during the dissemination process, but also pay attention to its social value and historical responsibility. The historical events and characters portrayed in the film are not only records and memories of the past, but also enlightenment and reflection on the current society. This profound theme and social significance make Chinese war documentary films have a more extensive influence and appeal in the dissemination process. In northeastern China, due to its special historical background and geographical location, audiences may have different perceptions and acceptance of war documentary films. They are more concerned about topics and content related to their own cultural and historical background, and are more sensitive and concerned about the historical events and characters portrayed in the film.

This research analyzes and summarizes the key factors that enhance the influence and persuasiveness of war documentary film, as well as the background of the production and dissemination of war documentary film in China through literature research, interviews, and surveys of war documentary directors, producers, and Chinese war documentary viewers. The research results will play an important role in promoting the high-quality dissemination of Chinese war documentary film.

## Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The literature review and related studies in this study are as follows:

1) Documentary film film: Documentary is an artistic form that emerged with the emergence of film, and it is an objective record of the social situation at that time, which can be regarded as the earliest documentary. Later, with the vigorous development of the film industry, various forms of films such as feature films, science fiction films, and literary films emerged, and documentary films were also separated from them, eventually forming a film or television art form that uses real life as the creative material, uses real people and real events as the performance object, and carries out artistic processing and display to show the essence of reality, and uses reality to trigger people's thinking.

Documentary film is a form of film or television art, which is based on real life, takes real people and events as the object of performance, and pursues to show the true nature of life. At its core lies authenticity, using elements of reality to construct descriptions of life and events, and claiming or implicitly claiming authenticity. Documentary film makers and filmmakers seek to recreate a social historical world based on reality by researching subjects in depth and

verifying the identities of witnesses. Documentary and authenticity are the focus of documentary, from the aesthetic point of view, with artistic techniques to elaborate and show the objective truth, enhance the documentary film's enjoyment. However, the realism of documentary requires the harmonious unity of appreciation and authenticity. The creation should be based on the principle of documentary and reasonably grasp the scale of "unreal". The life of documentary lies in the real and objective record, and its aesthetic basis is also objective and real. In documentary film, authenticity is the reality under subjective initiative, not the reality of real life. The intervention of subjective initiative is one of the important manifestations of documentary creation, which must be followed no matter traditional or contemporary art forms. The truth of the image itself makes the content perceived by the audience to be true and credible, which is also the reason why the documentary is rich in ideas and aesthetics. On the other hand, the organic combination of artistic expression and artistic technique is the key to improve the artistic appeal of documentary. Excellent documentary film can make it easier for the audience to understand the reality through the display of art, and the reality behind the reality can appear on the screen through the subjective thinking of the creator. The unity of documentary art subjective initiative and authenticity makes the audience observe, hear and feel more real.

Nichols classified documentary film to be six modes. In Chinese war documentary film, participatory documentary film are everywhere. Filmmakers interact with the subject through questioning or prompting to dig deeper into the traces of war. For example, in "Red Memory", the dialogue between the director and the old Red Army soldier stimulates the expression of the theme and deepens the audience's understanding of history. Participatory documentary film not only provide deeper historical details, but also make history more vivid and warm. Reflective documentary film also play an important role in Chinese war documentary film. Filmmakers reflect on the profound impact of war on individuals and society through self-reflection and self-disclosure. For example, in "The Cost of War", the director criticizes war from his own perspective and self-examines the film production process. This reflection is not only a profound reflection on history, but also a self-reflection on the film production process. Summary: The application of participatory and reflective documentary film in Chinese war documentary film provides audiences with a richer perspective to understand history. These two documentary styles present history in a more authentic and profound way through their unique ways. The participation and self-reflection of filmmakers not only allow us to gain a deeper understanding of history, but also make audiences think about how to find the strength to move forward in history.

2) Chinese War Documentary Film: Since the end of the 20th century, war documentary has gradually emerged as an important branch of documentary literature, and this innovative concept has been widely accepted and developed in China. Chinese war documentary is a documentary literary record of contemporary history, which mainly describes the social events and living conditions at that time with documentary techniques. Such documentary film not only show the true face of China under certain historical circumstances, but also provide viewers with a window into key nodes in the development of Chinese society.

The concept and classification of Chinese documentary film refers to documentary film with Chinese themes, covering Chinese history, culture, society, and people, and is an important part of China's film and television industry. Chinese documentary film are mainly divided into

the following categories: Historical documentary film, Social documentary film, Cultural anthropology film, Natural Geography film, Biographical film.

3) Communication theory: Berlo's SMCR propagation model is a simple and widely used conceptual framework that Outlines the essential elements of the propagation process. This model, proposed by David Berlo in the 1960s, breaks down communication into four key components: source, message, channel, and receiver. Each component plays a different role in transferring information from one person to another. The acronym SMCR for this model represents the sequential flow of communication: the source encodes a message, which is transmitted over a selected channel to the receiver, who then decodes and interprets the message. While this model simplifies the complexity of real-world communication, it can serve as a basis for analyzing and improving communication strategies across a variety of contexts. The source is the initiator or sender of the communication and is responsible for encoding the intended message into a format that the receiver can understand. A message is information, idea, or content that the source wants to pass on to the recipient and can take many forms. A channel is a medium or means of transmitting a message from a source to a receiver, influencing the way information is perceived and understood. The receiver is the intended recipient of the communication and is responsible for decoding the message. In addition to these four elements, the SMCR model also takes into account the impact of noise, any interfering or distracting factor that can disrupt the communication process. The SMCR model offers several advantages as a simple and straightforward framework for understanding and analyzing communication processes. Its structure is easy to understand and can be a useful tool for introducing basic concepts of communication. Its simplicity allows the core elements involved in communication to be clearly and concisely presented. This model provides a basic understanding of the essential elements of communication, and this understanding is the starting point for a more in-depth discussion and analysis of communication dynamics. While the SMCR model offers several advantages, it is also important to recognize its limitations. It oversimplifies the complexities of real-world communication, such as feedback, context, cultural influence, and the dynamics of interactions.

Two-stage communication theory plays an important role in communication research, but there are some limitations and deficiencies. First, the theory does not fully consider the influence of cultural differences and contextual factors on communication. Due to different norms, values, and contexts in different cultures, people may interpret information differently, which affects the effectiveness of communication. In addition, the model does not fully consider the impact of noise on information transmission. Although noise is mentioned as a disturbing factor in some interpretations, it is not fully integrated into the theoretical framework. In real life, noise has a significant impact on the encoding, transmission and decoding of information, which can lead to misunderstandings. The model treats the audience as a passive recipient, decoding only the information. In reality, however, audiences actively interpret information based on their own experiences, beliefs, and perceptions. This model does not fully capture the dynamic nature of this process. It is worth noting that the theory was developed before the advent of modern communication technologies such as the Internet and social media. These technologies introduce new channels and complexities to communication, but the model does not adequately account for these changes.

In view of the differences between traditional media and new media, the SMCR model has the following limitations: First, limited contextualization: The model does not fully

consider the broader context of communication, such as social, psychological and historical factors, which have a significant impact on the way information is perceived and understood. Second, the linear characteristics are criticized: the linear characteristics of the model are criticized for not accurately representing the communication mode. Actual communication usually involves simultaneous coding and decoding processes, as well as the interplay of multiple channels and interactions. Despite its limitations, the SMCR model is still useful in some areas. For example, public speakers can use the model to organize their presentations, focus on clear message encoding, select appropriate communication channels (such as visual AIDS), and predict how their audience will decide their messages. In conflict resolution, understanding how information is interpreted by different parties can help mediate misunderstandings and improve communication. In a crisis or emergency, the SMCR model guides communication strategies, ensuring that critical information is accurately coded and delivered to stakeholders through appropriate channels.

In the age of digital communication, the model of information transmission has broken through the traditional mode of communication, and the role of technology is becoming more and more important. There needs to be a deep understanding of how technology shapes and influences the delivery of information, not just a simple framework limited to the sender and receiver. As a tool and technical means to realize the flow of information, the concept of communication technology covers all kinds of media and communication equipment. As a discipline that studies human information communication activities and their rules, communication science provides guidance for people to understand and improve communication technology. The concept of behavior analysis was put forward by the American psychologist Hunter, which broadened the research scope of psychology to the exploration of human objective behavior. Behavioral Design, on the other hand, proposes four factors that produce pleasurable experiences: joy, recognition, honor, and connection. These elements form a closed loop of the persuasion process. Various behavioral design models, such as Cue-Action-Reward (CAR) models and "HOOK models", aim to explain the process of habit formation. Among these theories, the "FBM" theory proposed by BJ Fogg is the most widely circulated. The factors that affect behavior can be summarized as internal needs and external environment. Intrinsic needs such as emotion, cognition, hobbies and other psychological and physiological factors, of which the direct dominant significance is motivation. The external environment, such as consumption concept, social culture, products and natural environment, plays a fuse role. Kurt Lewin summarized the motivation of human behavior into these two parts. The essence of persuasion is to anticipate, satisfy and evaluate the needs of users. In his book *Influence*, Robert B. Caldini proposes six factors that influence behavior change: reciprocity, commitment and conformity, social approval, authority, preference, and scarcity. The scholar BJ Fogg put forward the behavioral motivation model and seven persuasion strategies: reduce, adjust, tailor, suggest, self-monitor, monitor and regulate. These theories provide guidance for people to understand and improve communication technology. Social cognitive theory explains how people understand, predict, and influence the behavior of others. The theory emphasizes how people's social experiences, beliefs, expectations, and behaviors influence and interact with each other. It includes three main components: social cognition, emotion and motivation, and self-regulation. Social cognitive theory is widely used in various fields, such as education, organizational behavior, psychology, sociology and so on. In terms of film communication, the audience's cognitive process mainly involves two aspects: perception and evaluation of the film information content. Li Yanbo and He Yajuan pointed out

that the cognitive activities of moviegoers are divided into perception stage and judgment stage, and pointed out that moviegoers' understanding of movie information, judgment and reflection are three stages. This provides guidance for people to understand and improve the effect of film communication. Paul Learfield's "Limited Effect" pointed out that information asymmetry caused "limited effect", that is, when people have two choices, if one person says that the first choice is bad and the second choice is good, people will tend to choose the second choice. This theory provides guidance for people to understand and improve the effect of information transmission.

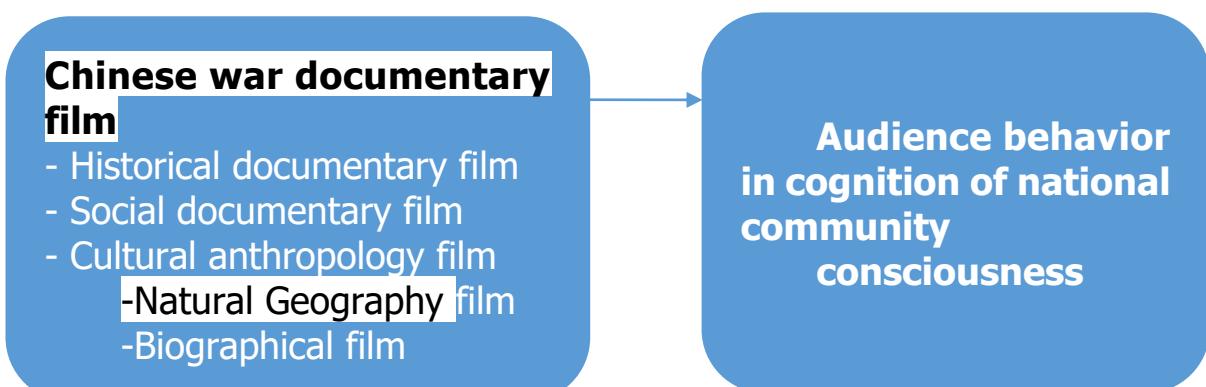
4) National Community Consciousness Nations are cultural and political communities derived from common historical, linguistic, religious and cultural traditions. The state is the prerequisite for the existence of the ethnic community, and the maintenance of the ethnic community is to ensure the unity and integrity of the country, which is in line with the "one China policy". Cultural identity is the basic mechanism of the formation, cohesion, consolidation and development of the national community, and the strength of cultural characteristics and cultural identity affects the maintenance and development of the national community. Culture, as the most basic carrier of coexistence and sharing, carries the connotation and characteristics of the nation and lays the tone and background for the formation of other dimensions. Symbols have special significance in ethnic group construction, and the "symbolization" of culture plays a driving role in the construction and consolidation of modern countries. The consciousness of national community is an important basis for realizing the pattern of national relations of "pluralistic unity" (the One-China policy). The concept of national community consciousness has profound historical basis and practical significance. The theoretical interpretation of national community consciousness should be based on the understanding and definition of national community consciousness. Value norm and positive will are the key words of national community consciousness, belonging to the category of human thinking and psychological cognition, which is consistent with Anderson's conclusion that "nation is imagined as a community".

The definitions of terms in this study are:

1) Chinese war documentary film: Is defined for the types of historical and cultural documentary film.

2) Audience behavior: Is defined for the cognize of northeastern Chinese people in the national community consciousness.

The research framework or conceptual frameworks shown below:



## **Objective**

There are a total of three research objectives.

- 1) Explore the development trend of Chinese war documentary film.
- 2) Analyze the influence of Chinese war documentary film on audience behavior in Northeast China.
- 3) Explore the mode of using Chinese war documentary film to strengthen the sense of consciousness national community.

## **Research Methodology**

This study uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Through in-depth interviews with 8 film directors, producers and audience members, and a questionnaire survey with 400 audience members in Northeast China as an overall sample, the study aims to understand the communication value of war documentary film, the key factors affecting audience behavior, the impact of communication technology, and the role of war documentary film in enhancing ethnic community awareness.

The in-depth expert interviews were conducted through online meetings, and the questionnaire survey was conducted through online questionnaire star. Program of online questionnaire survey available in China. Statistical data of frequency, percentage, mean value, and standard deviation (S.D.) were used, and the questionnaire data were analyzed by SPSS program.

## **Result**

Through in-depth interviews, some new knowledge was discovered:

The production and dissemination of Chinese war documentary film in the digital era are undergoing profound changes, involving the charm, artistic form, authenticity, theme and stance, cultural attributes, and other aspects of documentary film. Deeply studying and exploring these factors is of great significance for better understand and guide audience behavior.

The universal value of documentary film has been strengthened in the new digital age. documentary film, as an important form of media in modern society, have been provided with broader dissemination space through online platforms and social media channels. The impact of different types of war documentary film on the behavior of audiences in Northeast China varies. Therefore, in practical applications, it is necessary to consider factors such as the audience's personal preferences and background. Should pay attention to humanistic care. When telling war stories, in addition to paying attention to the bravery and heroism on the battlefield, should also pay attention to the impact and feelings of war on ordinary people. While ensuring the authenticity and depth of the documentary, it guides the audience to think about the essence and root causes of war through comprehensive analysis and presentation. Utilizing technological means to enhance audio-visual effects, adopting the latest shooting techniques and high-quality editing techniques to enhance the audience's sense of presence and visual impact. At the same time, should respect history and characters, and present their stories with the sincerest emotions and rigorous attitude. Diversified perspectives and content can present the full picture of war from multiple perspectives and levels, allowing the audience to have a deeper understanding of the stories of the characters of the times. In addition, diversified perspectives and content presentation are also effective means to enhance the attractiveness and influence of documentary film.

Enhancing the influence and persuasiveness of Chinese war documentary film requires the joint efforts of the production team and the audience. The production team should focus on authenticity, accuracy, and objectivity, improve production quality, enrich content, and reasonably apply persuasive elements and digital media for dissemination. The audience should have critical thinking and media literacy as well as diverse perspectives and information sources. Through the implementation of these measures and approaches, the positive role of war documentary film in inheriting history, promoting national spirit, and promoting social harmony and development can be better played.

Through the analysis of in-depth interviews and survey questionnaire results, found that audiences generally believe that war documentary film often use character narratives to restore historical facts. This approach allows audiences to gain a deeper understanding and feel the true face of history, enhancing their cognition and memory of history. Although Chinese war documentary film have value in many aspects, there are still some problems and challenges. In terms of patriotic education and cohesion of national community consciousness, war documentary film still needs to be further strengthened. In addition, there are individual differences in audiences' attitudes towards war documentary film, which may stem from their personal preferences, emotional reactions, thinking styles, and influence on other audiences. With the development of communication technology, the way of watching war documentary film has also changed. Fragmentation is becoming more common, and audiences may choose different times, places, and ways to watch war documentary film. This change in viewing behavior may affect the overall coherence and narrative structure of war documentary film, bringing new challenges to the production of documentary film. There is a significant correlation between historical narrative, cognitive construction, emotional values, social context, audience behavior, and communication technology. Among them, the standardized regression coefficients of historical narrative, cognitive construction, emotional values, and social context are all positive, indicating that these four independent variables have a positive impact on the cognitive behavior of northeastern audiences towards national community consciousness. This means that when producing war documentary film, these factors should be fully considered to better meet the cognitive needs and value orientation of audiences.

## Discussion

The discussion of this study mainly includes three aspects:

1) The background of the emergence and dissemination of Chinese war documentary film. The emergence of Chinese war documentary film is closely related to China's history in the 20th century. With the founding of the People's Republic of China and the promotion of reform and opening up, Chinese war documentary film have gained new vitality in communication. The support of national policies has enabled more film and television workers to devote themselves to the creation of war documentary film. At the same time, Chinese war documentary film have also benefited from the support of national policies and the continuous development of film and television technology. The production level of Chinese war documentary film has also been greatly improved, enabling them to be spread and accepted by a wider audience. Chinese war documentary film is a unique expression of the Chinese nation in a specific historical period, recording and reproducing the vicissitudes of China's war history in image.

2) How the Chinese war record affects the behavior of audiences in northeastern China. First, based on real events, the main content is the history of modern and contemporary Chinese wars. Second, the director or production team constructs a message with a specific intention by

selecting specific historical events and characters as material. Third, the widespread application of communication technology theory and persuasive design in Chinese war documentary film, including emotional responses to the themes and ideas conveyed by the film and subsequent behavioral manifestations.

3) Strategies to enhance the influence and persuasiveness of Chinese war documentary film. In the process of enhancing the influence and persuasiveness of Chinese war documentary film, should adhere to truthfulness and objectivity, deepen the theme exploration, innovate the communication channels and forms, use guided narration, and attach importance to audience feedback and interaction. Only in this way can better play the unique value of documentary film and let more people understand and reflect on the wars in Chinese history.

### **Conclusion**

Chinese war documentary film are not created out of thin air. They are formed and developed under the joint development of traditional Chinese culture and modern media technology. It not only shows viewers a form of image, but also recreates some historical events in images. It resonates with the audience through visual, auditory and other sensory experiences, reflecting on the deep-seated reasons behind those historical events. Chinese war documentary film not only remind us of history and cherish peace, but also make us aware of our own responsibilities and missions. The dissemination of Chinese war documentary film is undoubtedly beneficial to strengthening the sense of national community among the Chinese people, which is of great historical significance. Its existence is conducive to promoting China's development and social progress.

The influence of Chinese war documentary film on audiences in Northeast China is complex and multidimensional. They have a profound impact on the behavior of Northeast audiences by enhancing historical cognition and understanding, stimulating patriotism, conveying war lessons and warnings, promoting cross-cultural communication and understanding, and inspiring audience reflection and thinking. These influences not only involve the audience's understanding and cognition of historical events, but also their attitudes and behaviors towards the country, nation, society, and humanity. The dissemination of excellent Chinese war documentary film is of great significance for strengthening the sense of national community among the Chinese people. It not only helps to promote personal growth and development, but also helps to stimulate the progress and development of the country and nation. In the future, should pay more attention to the creation and dissemination of war documentary film, making them an important carrier for inheriting national culture and promoting national spirit.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Policy Recommendations:**

1) Specifications and standards for war documentary film should be formulated to ensure their professionalism and accuracy.

2) Establish a special agency to provide guidance and supervision. In

terms of funding, increase support and encourage social capital to enter, reduce costs. In addition, strengthen cooperation and exchanges with international organizations, improve production levels and expand international influence. At the same time, strengthen supervision to ensure content is legal and compliant.

3) Encourage all sectors of society to participate in production and dissemination, and enhance diversity and richness. Through these measures, the overall level of Chinese war documentary film can be improved, and history can be better passed down and displayed.

Practice Recommendations:

- 1) Ensure the authenticity of Chinese war documentary film.
- 2) Enrich the content of Chinese war documentary film and maintain accuracy.
- 3) Rationally apply persuasion elements.
- 4) Improve the production quality of Chinese war documentary film.
- 5) Make rational use of digital media to disseminate Chinese war documentary film.
- 6) Audience should have critical thinking and media literacy.

Recommendations for future researchers:

- 1) Deeply explore and implement the principle of "authenticity".
- 2) Broaden the content and form of Chinese war documentary film
- 3) Improve the application of persuasive design in Chinese war documentary film.
- 4) Pay attention to improving the quality of Chinese war documentary production.
- 5) Strengthen digital media communication strategies.

6) Integrate Chinese war documentary film with other types of educational content, such as history courses, community activities, patriotic education, etc., to build a more complete educational system.

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