Analysis of the High-Quality Spiritual Food for Netizens in the New Era

-- A Case Study of a Network Entertainment Show named I CAN I BB

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Abstract. According to the Report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, it is necessary to get comprehensive nutrition from various good shows, strengthen supervision, ensure quality, and continuously supply excellent cultural products, so as to fully meet the new needs of the people pursuing a better life. In order to explore one of the most popular cultural products at present, that is, the positive psychological impact of network entertainment shows on the audience, this paper focuses on the positive psychological reaction of the audience watching the phenomenal network entertainment show named I CAN I BB through in-depth interviews. After exploring the positive emotional experience, positive emotional identity, and positive behavior construction of the audience up against the meaningful entertainment media, this paper concludes that network entertainment shows can enhance the audience's positive experience, reshape their positive attitudes, and construct their positive behaviors.

Keywords: Positive Psychology; Network Entertainment Show; I CAN I BB.

1. Introduction

According to the 50th Statistical Report of China Internet Network Information Center, the number of users in Chinese mobile networks exceeded 1.051 billion in 2022.With the rapid advancement of information technology, the Internet has been in a deeper integration into economic and social development and people's lives, turning into the common spiritual home of hundreds of millions of people. Therefore, it is particularly important to tell stories and release products with positive energies on the Internet platform. As the main user source of the video platform, the huge scale of Internet users also provides an audience base for the vigorous development of network entertainment shows. According to the data from a database named Endata, the network entertainment shows accounted for 66.7% of China's distribution of head entertainment shows in 2021, dominating more than half of the entertainment shows' market. By 2022, such a proportion will decline but still far exceeds 50%.

Positive psychology, as a crucial domain of psychology, mainly takes subjective well-being as the center to carry out related research. The happiness here is similar to the positive values that the current network media need to convey to users. On this basis, the researchers focus on the positive psychological reaction of the audience watching typical network entertainment shows, so as to fill the gap of interdisciplinary integration in this field, promote the positive development of network entertainment shows, and encourage the academia to see the positive psychological reaction of the media to the audience in perspective.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Perspectives of Positive Psychological

Since positive psychology was put forward in 1997, it has adopted scientific principles and methods to study happiness and advocated the positive orientation of psychology. Meanwhile, it also studied the positive psychological quality of human beings and paid attention to the health, happiness, and harmonious development of human beings. [1] According to Christopher Peterson, an American positive psychologist, "Psychological research should not only emphasize diseases but also human

strength; It is necessary to repair damaged places and build beautiful things in life. In addition to devoting ourselves to treating the depression trauma, we also need to help healthy people realize the life value." [2] Kennon M. Sheldon and Laura King's definition shows the essential characteristics of positive psychology: positive psychology is a science dedicated to studying the vitality and virtue of ordinary people. [3]

At present, domestic applied research from the perspective of positive psychology can be divided into the following major research paths. First, the research of public psychology under public events. For example, Xi Juzhe and others proposed that the psychological intervention methods used by the public against COVID-19 include mindfulness meditation and positive quality intervention. [4] However, some interventions mentioned in the study are difficult for the general public to implement. Second, the research on the psychological shaping of specific people. Scholar Hu Yue studies the job burnout of college English teachers. [5] Zhu Xun and Chen Jiao took higher vocational students as the main research subjects to explore the cultivation methods of the craftsman spirit. [6] Due to the limitation of research subjects, this research is still not universal and easy to operate for the general public.

Generally speaking, positive psychology has the possibility of an interdisciplinary combination, which can provide a perspective of interdisciplinary reference for media audience analysis. However, its current research results are still limited in audience acceptance such as the difficulty of psychological intervention methods and the small scope of users in specific groups.

2.2 Network Entertainment Shows

The network entertainment show, which was bred and grew up in the digital, networked, and mobile soil, is a video program on video websites that develops, produces, and broadcasts based on Internet ecology mainly for network users, which is regarded as a new form of entertainment show under Internet thinking. [7] At present, the domestic literature on online entertainment shows can be roughly divided into the following three categories. The first studies the characteristics or psychology of the audience. For example, Feng Xue and Shen Guohua studied the audience's psychology when watching shows about marriage and love relationships. The second studies the types and characteristics of entertainment shows. Scholar Wen Weihua analyzed the development and main characteristics of Chinese online entertainment shows every year from 2016 to 2021. Deng Ken and Lu Nanxi summarized the development process and optimized path of domestic reasoning shows from four dimensions, including program status, innovation, development dilemma, and solutions. [8] The third category refers to typical programs that reflect the overall characteristics of the network entertainment shows' development. For example, Hao Yifei explored the success of the language program Rock & Roast. [9] By analyzing Who is the Murderer, a network entertainment show featuring the reasoning, Fang Ting and Luzhe figured out its innovation path. [10]

To sum up, most scholars analyze the success and optimization of a network entertainment show itself from various aspects. However, they seldom make a detailed analysis of its positive role as a media to the audience. For example, Feng Xue and Shen Guohua occasionally mentioned in their papers that the audience can get inspiration from the programs, but they never jumped out of the media critical perspective of "entertainment to death", failing to clarify the positive psychological impact of programs about marriage and love relationships on the audience. [11]

2.3 Positive Psychology and Network Entertainment Shows

As for their correlation, some domestic scholars have proposed the impact of TV shows on the audience's positive psychology, but few take the rapid development of network entertainment shows as the entry point. Chen Deqiang explained that entertainment shows as meaningful mediums have a positive role in shaping the audience's positive psychology. [12] Han Ying [13], Niu Mengyan, and Yan Huan [14] all mentioned the experiences of program players and their positive personality traits can be used as positive factors in the media to leave a positive impact on the audience.

By summarizing the above research related to positive psychology and online entertainment shows, we can find that there is still a gap for the general public to study from the perspective of positive psychology, with the daily possibility of operation and applicable range of the population in the improvement. When studying network entertainment shows, scholars frequently choose to analyze the shows from the perspective of their development but fail to deeply discuss their social significance as media to the shaping of the audience's positive psychological. As for the current research on their correlation, domestic scholars have tried to analyze the positive significance of TV shows to audience psychology from the perspective of positive evaluation. However, the research subjects chosen are mainly limited to macro narratives with obvious touching factors. Few network entertainment shows with huge audience groups are mentioned.

In a nutshell, in addition to selecting a network entertainment show with high public popularity, this paper focuses on the positive psychological reaction of the audience and explores the positive significance of positive factors in the shows to the audience and society from the perspective of positive evaluation, in order to provide experience for follow-up scholars.

3. Research Subject and Method

3.1 Research Subject

I CAN I BB is a network entertainment show of language debate produced by iQiyi and Mi Wei, aiming at finding the most talkative person with unique views and outstanding eloquence in the Chinese-speaking world. On February 15, 2015, its first season ended with 230 million broadcasts, with the total broadcast volume reaching 620 million in the second season. As of 2016, its total hits in the first two seasons have exceeded 1.1 billion and the total investment in the third quarter has exceeded 300 million, which is a phenomenal online self-made entertainment show. Its great success has self-evident enlightenment to the development of online self-made entertainment shows. [15]

Taking the show I CAN I BB as the research content, this study selects two fragments that are close in time and highly loved by the audience as the lead-in before the interview, including Li Dan choosing to save the cat and Zhan Qingyun abandoning love.This paper focuses on the positive psychological reaction of the audience watching the program through in-depth interviews.

3.2 Research Method

Taking the positive psychological reaction of the audience watching I CAN I BB as an example, this paper discusses the influence of network entertainment shows on the audience's positive psychology. Through in-depth and online interviews, the interviewees are interviewed for 30-60 minutes from three aspects, that is, population information, program viewing, and positive psychological reaction.

When selecting interviewees, this paper adopts the method of purposeful sampling. First of all, the scope of respondents as the main audience groups of network entertainment shows are determined, that is, the people born after 1995 s and 2000s. Then, a recruitment post was put in the Douban lovers' group of I CAN I BB, so as to find its loyal fans and ensure the density and intensity of the interview content. Finally, according to the principle of interview saturation, eight interviewees as shown in Table 1 were selected, and 73,480 words of speech-to-text content were obtained. The interview content was coded and analyzed.

Table 1. Information Profile of Interviewees

Number	Gender	Age	Job	Area	Media Usage Habits and Frequency	Mental Health Status	Seasons Have Watched	Interview Time
F1	Female	19	Students	Jiangxi	Long and short video software; 2 to 8 hours per day	Occasional depression	Only Season 5	33min
F2	Female	26	Work	Shandong	Long and short video software; Minutes/hours	Have experienced depression	Seasons 5-7	39min
F3	Female	22	Work	Shandong	Long and short video software; 4-7h per day	Pressured but no depression	Partial content of Seasons 1-7	31min
F4	Female	23	Students	Yunnan	Web pages, long video software; 1h each time	Irritability but no depression	Seasons 6 and 7 mainly	30min
F5	Female	21	Students	Chongqing	Long and short video software; 3-5h per day	Normal	Seasons 5-7	30min
M6	Male	27	Resign	Shandong	Web pages/long and short videos Software; 1h each time	Suffered depression two years ago	Seasons 1, 5, 6, 7	40min
M7	Male	23	Students	Shaanxi	Long and short video software; 3-4h per day	Normal	Basically all Seasons	50min
F8	Female	32	Stay-at-home mom	Jiangxi	Long and short video software; 1-7h per day	Stress is relatively high but there is no depression	Partial content of Seasons 1-7	43min

4. Enlightenment and Discussion

4.1 Positive Emotional Experience: Sensory Pleasure and Emotional Catharsis

Zillmann's emotional management theory holds that emotional state will affect an individual's media choice. Its main assumption is that people tend to pursue happiness to reduce their negative emotions. In this case, people will adjust their environment, and such an adjustment includes the choice of media, such as the relaxing and happy media chosen to release stress and relieve depression, or media content reflecting own situation to vent emotions.As a network entertainment show, I CAN I BB focuses on a relaxing and happy style. Its humorous language features, fancy and lively decorations, and the expression of uncanny guests all provide countless laughs for the audience who can pursue happiness to reduce their negative emotions. This has become one of the main reasons why many audiences choose to watch it. Interviewee F2 has just entered the career for three years, with her pressure in the workplace once depressing her. Watching I CAN I BB is a process of decompression and healing for her.

"Entertainment show itself is relaxing. When you are stressed, you can watch it to relax, and then you will escape from work or life pressure for a while, immersing yourself in a debate. It is also a process of enjoying hobby, where you can feel a sense of healing." (F2)

Respondent F3 has just joined the workplace for a short time, and the maladjustment of role change makes her over-stressed. In this case, she chose to release the pressure by watching I CAN I BB.

"When I have a rare rest, I will watch it in a relaxed and entertaining mood. After that, I will be happier. Whenever I am unhappy and stressed, I also tend to feel leisured and happy to watch this show." (F3)

"Mouth replacement" (zui ti) is a top ten online buzzwords selected by Language and Words Weekly in 2022, which refers to people who can perfectly express the aspirations of netizens on the Internet. In the show I CAN I BB, some guests represented by Ma Weiwei and Fu Shouer have sharp eloquence and outstanding styles. Skillfully capturing and summarizing the common ideas of certain groups in society, they can get the point and follow the hot trends directly with their expressions, thus arousing resonance and being called "the mouth replacement on the Internet" by a large number of netizens. Respondent F8 is a full-time mother who has no income. The living condition of taking care of her children at home kicks her under great income pressure. At the same time, the household chores also make her feel bitter and sorrowful. She believes that watching Fu Shouer's performance can help her express the disappointments in her life happily, releasing her pressure and bad emotions.

"When I am upset and depressed, I will go to watch this show to get better. Fu Shouer's way of speaking makes you feel that she is expressing what I'm eager to say, leaving me a sense of happiness and venting. Sometimes I will cry while watching it. After crying, I may not be so angry." (F8)

4.2 Leisure can improve personal health, relieve mental stress, provide social support, and then bring happiness to individuals. [16]

This coincides with the central view of positive psychology in studying human happiness. "Humorous entertainment", as the fundamental feature of the entertainment show I CAN I BB, has attracted many audiences to watch it as a way of leisure and entertainment to pursue happiness, release pressure, and relieve negative emotions in life. Combined with the interview content, it shows that I CAN I BB as an entertainment medium can help the audience gain a positive emotional experience, give their sensory pleasure, and release their emotional rubbish.

Mary Beth Oliver, a professor of media psychology, first put forward the concept of "meaningful entertainment". She believes that although entertainment is often described as enjoyment and happiness in hedonistic terms, it has an extra meaning—it refers to the behavior of thinking, considering, or meditating. [17]

As an outstanding network entertainment show characterized by debates, I CAN I BB has unique features in the selection of debate topics. Before the topic selection, I CAN I BB fully relies on the powerful big data support of Baidu Engine to accurately locate the audience's needs. For example, when contemporary young people are puzzled about whether they should choose a big city or a small city to live in, the debate topic "You choose to sleep on a small bed in a big city or a big room in a small city" hits the key points, making the audience both bystanders and stakeholders in the show where they both laugh and think in entertainment. [18] These thoughts are the positive influence brought by it as a meaningful entertainment medium to the audience, that is, psychological enjoyment beyond the senses.

Almost all the interviewees said that when watching the show, they will have a dynamic process of psychological changes from leisure and relaxation to meditation or thinking-positive optimism. Interviewee F1 is a 19-year-old debate enthusiast who often substitutes herself into the debate in the show.

"It will be easy at first because of its funniness. However, after watching the whole show, you may feel heavy. That's because everyone tends to have a biased holder in their hearts. As the debaters speak, their thoughts will favor different debaters... But in the end, you will still get positive reactions for a lot of knowledge you gain." (F1)

Interviewee M7 is a big fan and watched all the seasons.

"It will be relatively easy to watch the show at first, and then learn from, fight against, and communicate with their views. After watching it, I will feel empathy and sometimes the joy of being recognized. These emotions will affect me to be happier, more relaxed, or relieved." (M7)

Taking off its "funny" surface, I CAN I BB is a thought-provoking show. From the responses of the interviewees, we can see that it not only brings sensory pleasure and satisfaction to the audience, but also psychological enjoyment beyond the senses when helping the audience to establish a positive emotional experience. Moreover, this kind of psychological enjoyment provides an endogenous positive motivation for the audience, which will have a far-reaching impact on their positive emotions.

4.3 Positive Emotional Identity: Emphasizing the Self-Importance

Scholar Diana Reieger and others put forward that the second dimension of entertainment experience is closely related to happiness (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Keyes, 1995), but it also emphasizes the importance of self-determined behavior and psychological growth. [19] Given the relationship between narrative and self, scholar Michael Slater and others position the self as the core component of the entertainment experience. They believe that entertainment provides an opportunity for us to reduce the burden of self-regulation and identity management, liberating ourselves from the personal identity that may be self-restriction. [20]

Due to the differences in the interviewees' subjective selves, the polarized positive emotional identity appeared in the interview. One kind of identity is due to its great relevance with itself, that is, related to positive emotional identity. For example, when talking about their favorite debate types, F3, F5, and M6 will explain the relevance between the debate and themselves according to their employment situation, family relationship, and personal personality.

"I am most interested in the topics about workplace because it is more relevant to myself." (F3)

"I'm into the family questions because my relationship with my parents is a bit stiff." (F5)

"My favorite is emotional topics about affection and love. I am more sensitive than others, so I hope to hear these topics to find resonance in many places. There will be an overlapping part or the same experience as you." (M6)

The other identity is just the opposite. The reason why respondents F1 and F2 like a debater is due to the difference between the other party and themselves. Differential positive emotional identity is as follows:

"I will like the way of speaking that is polarized from mine, that is, the academic and rational one like Xiong Hao, Huang Zhizhong, and Ming Chen." (F1)

"I also like Xiaohei's way of speaking very much. His thinking is always changing. I can't be such a person like him in my life. When I see someone completely different from me, I will be attracted to him." (F2)

Both related and differential positive emotional identity shows us that positive psychology has certain subjective initiative and emphasizes self-importance. People can resonate with the show's content through the recognition of their identity, emotional identity, and value identity. However, self-positioning is still the core of the entertainment experience.

4.4 Construction of Positive Behavior: Proper Significance of Media Communication

In the communication of meaningful entertainment media, the interaction between the sender and the receiver realizes the conscious dissemination of virtue, which not only manifests itself in the texts of meaningful entertainment media that pursues modernized virtue content, but also in the subjects consciously seeking the experience of modern virtue and virtue personality. [21]

In the process of communication, the construction of the audience's positive behavior by the meaningful entertainment media I CAN I BB can be roughly divided into the following two paths.

First, the program content has a delayed positive impact on the audience. Many interviewees mentioned that the thoughts caused by the show usually exert a subtle influence on their lives, and they may fail to retell the show's contents completely. However, if they encounter a certain scene and

need to make a choice, the perspective provided in the show will suddenly appear. Respondent M7 is a senior student who is approaching undergraduate graduation. He admits that when faced with career choices, he thought of an opinion in the debate topic "996 or 886?"—"Labor is not the ultimate goal of human beings", so he decisively gave up the work featuring "996".

"I was most impressed by this debate. When I encountered a job choice, I was very entangled, but I came to a conclusion after combining the viewpoint in the show and mine. Now I can't say which sentence or fragment in the show impressed me, but it did affect me subtly and touchingly in the form of language. My values about the world, life, and career are all unconsciously shaped by it. I believe it will also change my way of living in the future." (M7)

Secondly, the program content helps the audience to construct learned positive behaviors. Seligman, an American psychologist, put forward "learned optimism" which can be obtained through acquired learning. It is also manifested as the subject's positive experience, perception, and control of life. [22] Both F1 and F8 respondents have said in interviews that they are often stressed in their lives recently, and even occasionally feel depressed. However, when watching I CAN I BB, interviewee F1 learned how to analyze his depression through the sharing of player Ma Weiwei, while interviewee F8 reshaped his attitude of "boldly looking forward" through the program content. Both of them constructed learned positive behaviors through the narrative of meaningful media, getting rid of the negative emotions to a certain extent.

"Ma Weiwei told the story of her depression. She said that she finally recovered because she repeatedly and constantly analyzed this matter. When I face some sad things now, I also learn to objectively analyze the problems I encounter, and then slowly come out from the troubles to be more optimistic." (F1)

"What has been said on the show makes you feel that you are not alone and there are many people like you who are all working hard to live. After watching this show, I turn more open-minded and look forward boldly, instead of thinking too much." (F8)

It can be seen that I CAN I BB can construct the audience's positive behavior in a subtle way with a delayed positive impact on their lives. This kind of media communication mode, which conveys positive power to the audience and guides them to live actively, also provides people with more sense of gain and happiness, meeting people's growing needs for a better life. Thus, it is worth learning.

5. Research Limitations

This paper focuses on the positive psychological reaction of the audience watching I CAN I BB through qualitative research methods. On the one hand, it fills the interdisciplinary gap of positive psychology combined with the research on network entertainment shows. On the other hand, as for the audience, the conclusions are practical, easy to operate, and find their applications in dispelling negative emotions. However, this study still has the following limitations.

First of all, the research subject I CAN I BB is not released recently. It has maintained a broadcast frequency of one season a year from 2014 to 2020. However, it has not been updated since 2020. Although this paper sets up lead-in before the interview, it may also lead to research errors due to the audience's vague memory of the show.

Secondly, the research method is an in-depth interview, which lacks quantitative support. Although the eight interviewees selected according to the principle of interview saturation have their own characteristics in terms of region, job, and program-watching experience with a certain significance of reference, they are relatively short of empirical data. Thus, the corresponding quantitative research needs to be supplemented in the follow-up.

Thirdly, the research lasted for a short time and could not take into account the future extensibility. As a product of the Internet, the update speed of network entertainment shows is extremely fast. According to the database of Endata, the newly launched entertainment shows accounted for 73.3% of the top shows in 2022.Therefore, the interpretation of the audience's positive psychology based on I CAN I BB in this study may change with the continuous development of entertainment shows. Thus,

the research need to be optimized in the future based on the development status of entertainment shows at evolving stages.

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