

Emotional and Cultural Fulfillment in Dance Learning: A Qualitative Study of Youth Users on Douyin

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Abstract:

Social media has profoundly changed the way information is disseminated and communicated in various fields in the contemporary digital environment, including dance teaching. However, there is still a knowledge gap blindness in the academic research on what emotional and cultural needs youth users gain from dance teaching content disseminated through social media. Therefore, this study draws on use and gratification and constructivism theory to conduct the analysis to fill that research gap. In this study, we interviewed 12 youth users of Douyin who are 18-25 years old and not majoring in dance through the semi-structured in-depth interview method. It was found that the youth users gained six major emotional and cultural needs through learning dance on Douyin, namely “shame and longing, urgency and freedom, loneliness and strength reconstruction, fear and release, low self-esteem and self-improvement, cultural identity and self-confidence reconstruction”. This study innovatively explores how Douyin meets the emotional needs of economically limited users by lowering the cost of learning, which enriches the application of the use and gratification theory, and demonstrates how social media can optimize the learning experience of users in terms of economy, time, and psychological comfort. At the same time, it expands the application of constructivist learning theory by emphasizing the importance of Douyin in supporting personalized learning, cultural identity, and motivation enhancement, which provides new theoretical support for

understanding user needs and psychological constructs in digital educational environments.

Keywords: Dance teaching; Douyin; Uses and gratifications; Constructivism; Youth users; Emotion and culture

1. Introduction

Traditional dance education relies on face-to-face interaction, live demonstrations, and on-site guidance, which facilitate immediate feedback, foster personal connections, and ensure experiential learning. However, the limitations of this traditional approach often stem from constraints of time and space, restricting the availability of teaching resources and the reach to audiences. In recent years, the widespread use of platforms such as Instagram, Douyin, and YouTube has enabled dance educators to transcend geographical boundaries and connect with a global audience. In the era of social media, cultural communication channels have become more diverse, with the advantages of platforms like Douyin becoming increasingly prominent (Ye & Yang, 2023). This has provided a valuable approach for the dissemination of Chinese dance education culture. These platforms enable educators to share teaching content, showcase students' work, and provide real-time feedback in more flexible and innovative ways (Liu, 2020). Moreover, social media platforms like Douyin not only promote collaborative opportunities beyond the confines of traditional educational settings, offering students a wider range of interactions and learning experiences, but also create a more engaging and concrete learning environment. This enhances students' enthusiasm for learning and significantly advances the reform and development of dance education (Zhang, 2015). The use of Douyin in dance teaching promotes students' development of digital literacy and media skills. These abilities not only allow students to promote themselves but also enable them to build networks within the industry and access a wider range of learning resources. In summary, the introduction of social media platforms like Douyin has brought revolutionary changes to dance education. They not only provide abundant learning resources and flexible learning methods but also promote the development of students' digital literacy and media skills. In the context of social media, dance needs to integrate the demands of contemporary development and

actively explore new forms of expression (Li, 2023). Dance educators need to deeply understand how to effectively integrate these digital tools into traditional teaching methods to enhance learning outcomes and adequately prepare students for modern professional environments. This integration not only expands the boundaries of teaching but also provides students with more extensive growth opportunities.

Even though Douyin is becoming more significant in various educational subjects, its application and research in dance teaching are still comparatively underdeveloped. Particularly, existing literature tends to neglect the utilization of social media platforms to fulfill the emotional and cultural demands of young users in dance teaching. To address this gap, this study aims to provide an emotional and cultural framework for integrating social media into dance education (Sööt & Viskus, 2014). It provided insights on how to effectively use social media to complement traditional dance teaching methods and enhance communication between educators and students, meeting students' emotional and cultural needs, thereby attracting more students to actively learn dance through platforms like Douyin (Duffy, 2020). The purpose of this study investigates the emotional and cultural satisfaction experienced by young users through their engagement with dance education on Douyin. The research question is to analyze from the perspective of young users which emotional and cultural needs are met by Douyin. Focusing on the young users of Douyin, this study utilized semi-structured in-depth interviews with 12 Chinese participants aged 18 to 25, employing thematic analysis to identify themes regarding emotional and cultural needs, thus resolving the research question. This research innovatively examined how social media addresses the emotional needs of users with financial limitations by decreasing learning costs, thus broadening the application of the uses and gratifications theory and demonstrating how social media enhances users' learning experiences regarding economic, time, and psychological comfort. Additionally, it broadened the application of constructivist learning theory, highlighting the role of social media in facilitating personalized learning, cultural identity, and motivation, which offered new theoretical insights into user needs and psychological frameworks in the context of digital education.

2.Literature Review

The literature review includes relevant theories in communication studies, the impact of social media on dance education, and the current applications of digital tools in dance teaching.

2.1 The Role of Douyin in Dance Education

In the context of traditional dance education, which was once at a standstill, the emergence of the social media age represents both a chance and a challenge. The convergence and evolution of media have offered greater opportunities for innovation in Video dance, creating new growth spaces for dance teaching that had stagnated (Yang, 2020). Existing literature also reveals the multiple roles of Douyin in dance education, including the enrichment of teaching methods, the diversification of learning resources, and the promotion of cross-cultural communication.

First, social media platforms like Douyin have transformed traditional dance teaching methods. “Social media platforms like Douyin and Instagram break the constraints of time and space, allowing learners to access diverse dance teaching content anytime and anywhere ”(Loring & Pentz, 2021).“The rise of distance dance is more than a reaction to the pandemic, it also reflects proactive innovations in dance art regarding creation concepts, forms of expression, and performance spaces, driven by the trend of media convergence in contemporary times” (Cai & Peng, 2022).This self-directed learning approach caters to the needs of busy modern students and presents opportunities for learners who cannot afford the fees associated with traditional classroom settings (Petrachenko, 2024).

Furthermore, Douyin and other social media have provided a wealth of learning resources. Numerous esteemed dance teachers and professional dancers have taken advantage of social media to disseminate teaching videos and excerpts of performances. This has not only assisted beginners in getting started but has also provided advanced training materials for experienced dancers. In addition, user-generated content (UGC) on social media has developed into an abundant library of dance resources. “Students are able to engage with dances from different styles, genres, and cultural contexts” (Harrington, 2020). This open approach to resource acquisition has greatly enhanced the inclusivity and diversity of dance education. Furthermore, “social media has facilitated cross-cultural exchanges within dance culture, allowing dancers

from around the world to share and appreciate each other's dance styles, thus facilitating cultural integration” (Hudson, 2012). However, due to the lack of face-to-face professional guidance, many learners may develop incorrect physical habits while self-learning dance through social media platforms like Douyin, leading to improper techniques and even injuries (Heller, 2013). Moreover, an excessive reliance on social media platforms like Douyin may weaken the creative autonomy of dance learners, as they tend to depend more on imitation rather than independent exploration (Hartley, n.d.). To conclude, Douyin is taking on a progressively vital role in dance teaching, enriching educational resources, fostering intercultural communication, and providing additional opportunities for learners restricted by time and financial circumstances. However, when utilizing social media for dance learning, it is also essential to be aware of its potential impacts on learning outcomes and physical health, and to balance online learning with in-person guidance.

2.2 Fulfilling the Requirements of Dance Instruction Through Social Media

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) presents a persuasive framework for exploring how social media satisfies diverse needs in dance teaching. UGT emphasizes the transition from understanding media's influence on individuals to recognizing how individuals engage with media to fulfill specific wants, illustrating why learners and educators turn to platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Douyin to enrich their educational and personal lives. Especially in the field of dance education, the impact of social media on dance teaching has become increasingly significant. Existing literature primarily explored the roles and limitations of social media in dance education from several perspectives. Firstly, social media can fulfill a wide range of dance learning needs. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Douyin provide users with a wealth of dance video content, covering a variety of dance styles. They also help learners master complex movements through creators' feedback and the step-by-step breakdown of instructional videos (Lambert, n.d.). Secondly, social media possesses strong interactivity, which fosters communication and feedback between learners and the dance community (Crow, 2021). This engagement helps students promptly correct their movements, enhance their skills, and strengthens their sense of self-efficacy as well as the continuity of

their dance learning. Furthermore, the community aspect of social media provides dancers with a space for mutual inspiration and support. However, there are certain limitations to dance instruction on social media. The quality of instructional content can vary widely, and the lack of a systematic teaching framework may result in learners failing to develop solid foundational skills or misunderstanding the essence of dance movements (Behrenbruch, 2012).

Different from offline teaching, social media platforms often lack attention to individual learner differences, making it difficult to provide personalized guidance. Moreover, relying too heavily on social media for dance learning might result in students depending on real-time feedback and visual imitation, overlooking the importance of fostering the internal feelings and artistic expression that dance encompasses. However, due to the vivid imagery and rich information characteristics of social media platforms like Douyin, the application of new media technology in dance education can facilitate the gradual popularization of dance art and create a more comprehensive educational system in both professional instruction and mass communication, enhancing the status of dance art in the aesthetic appreciation of the wider community (Qin, 2019). Overall, social media serves as an emerging tool for dance education, offering wide accessibility and interactivity that effectively meets the dance learning needs of diverse groups, especially under constraints of economic limitations and spatial distances. However, the shortcomings in teaching quality and personalized guidance also require further improvement and standardization.

2.3 The Construction and Interaction of Social Media and Dance Education

Constructivist theory, originating from the works of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, asserts that learning is an active social process in which individuals construct knowledge based on their experiences and interactions with their environment (Brau, n.d.). According to this theory, learners are not passive recipients of information; instead, they develop understanding through critical thinking, problem-solving, and cooperation (Duane & Satre, 2014). The use of social media in professional dance education is essential and important; educators in this field should take full advantage of new media technologies to improve the quality of dance teaching (Yang, 2021). Douyin embodies these principles by establishing an interactive, collaborative, and

independent learning environment for dance education. Users can engage with tutorials, practice at their own pace, and perform interpretations, thus enriching their understanding of the music. Vygotsky's concept of the "Zone of Proximal Development" emphasizes the benefits of interacting with more knowledgeable individuals, such as peers or mentors (Bell, 2005). Social media enhances collaborative learning by providing functionalities like peer feedback, group discussions, and mentorship. In the contemporary digital age, it has profoundly affected the construction and interactive dynamics of dance education. Firstly, platforms like Douyin provide dance learners and enthusiasts with extensive content-sharing channels, creating a global dance community. This interactive approach makes dance education not limited to specific locations and times, greatly expanding its accessibility and dissemination. Secondly, Douyin has also transformed the ways in which dance knowledge is imparted and dance creation is shared. On short video platforms, dance teaching tends to prioritize the transmission of fragmented skills, featuring brief instructional videos that highlight specific dance movements or sequences (Heyang & Martin, 2024). This visual and imitative teaching model effectively lowers the barriers to learning, making dance education more democratic (Vexler et al., 2024). However, this fragmented teaching approach may result in a lack of systematic training, making it difficult to meet the comprehensive demands for dance skills and physical conditioning found in traditional dance education (Grieshaber & Ryan, 2018). Moreover, social media enhances the interaction between dance and its audience. Dance teachers are able to engage directly with students via the platform, while students can give feedback on the teaching content through "likes," comments, and other interactions. This two-way interaction strengthens the immediacy of teaching and enhances the feeling of involvement (Hu & Wang, 2023). Especially during the pandemic, the combination of online dance instruction and social media became an important mode of dance learning, breaking spatial limitations and creating the concept of a "virtual classroom" (Collins, n.d.). In conclusion, social media platforms such as Douyin have emerged as vital tools in dance teaching, providing new opportunities by reducing learning costs, diversifying teaching methods, and enhancing interaction. However, the issues of fragmentation and lack of systematic coherence require careful consideration to

achieve a balance in future dance education and maximize their potential benefits. Confronted with problems such as the lack of quality and inefficiency in new media teaching, understanding the current development paths of dance education and devising the right planning strategies is of significant importance for advancing the field (Pan, 2024).

2.4 The Emotional and Cultural Aspects of Dance in Douyin's Dissemination

Under the growing influence of the Douyin platform, the emotional and cultural needs of young users are being expressed and met through new forms. Dance, as a cultural and artistic medium, has become an essential emotional refuge and a key aspect of cultural consumption for young users on social media. As a cultural art form, dance has become a vital emotional refuge and a key focus of cultural consumption for young users on social media. Douyin has not only changed the way dance is communicated but also significantly shaped the emotional experiences and cultural expectations of young users regarding dance. First of all, video-sharing platforms allow young users to engage with dance performances from across the globe at any time and place. This accessibility and wide-ranging content meet their demand for diversity in the dance arts (Boffone, 2021). Moreover, Douyin's interactive nature enables young users to take part in the creation and sharing of dance, which deepens their emotional investment in dance (Goldberg, 2020). Secondly, the way dance is presented on social media also reflects the cultural needs of young users. On Douyin, dance is not just a tool for personal expression but also an important means of cultural identity and community belonging. Many young users participate in dance challenges or share dance videos to express their identification with a particular culture or subculture (Goldberg, 2020). Platforms like Douyin serve not only as windows for presenting dance art but also as key platforms for cultural exchange and identity. Douyin and other social media platforms are not only windows for showcasing dance art but also important platforms for cultural exchange and identity. However, the dance content on social media may lead to the commercialization and superficialization of certain cultural phenomena (González, 2022). Such a phenomenon could result in the reduction of the depth and complexity of dance art, potentially diminishing its original cultural meaning (McKay et al., 2022).

The algorithmic recommendation system of social media platforms may lead to the formation of filter bubbles, causing young users to fall into certain biases or limitations when selecting dance content (Hennink et al., 2020). In conclusion, the process by which young users fulfill their emotional and cultural needs related to dance on Douyin is a complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon. Social media not only provides abundant dance content and interactive opportunities but also serves as a vital channel for cultural identity and emotional expression. However, this process also faces challenges such as commercialization and information bias. Future research could investigate how to strike a balance between the complexity of dance art and the influence of social media to better cater to the cultural demands of young users.

3. Research Methods and Process

3.1 In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are a qualitative research method used to explore participants' views, experiences, and attitudes in detail and comprehensively. This study will employ semi-structured interviews to better control the pace of the conversation and avoid digression. The advantage of in-depth interviews lies in uncovering detailed, context-rich information. The flexibility of this method enables researchers to probe deeper into participants' answers, adjust questions when new themes emerge, and pursue more profound insights.

3.2 Data Analysis Process

This study conducted 60-minute interviews with 12 Chinese Douyin users aged 18-25, who are not majoring in dance (Table 1). The age range of 18 to 25 is defined by the United Nations as the youth category. Additionally, Douyin's user base consists largely of individuals within this age group, making it an appropriate demographic for this study. The selection of twelve participants is based on the theory of data saturation, which suggests that by the time the 12th

participant was interviewed, the collected data were largely similar to that from the previous eleven, indicating that data saturation had been reached (Francis et al., 2010).

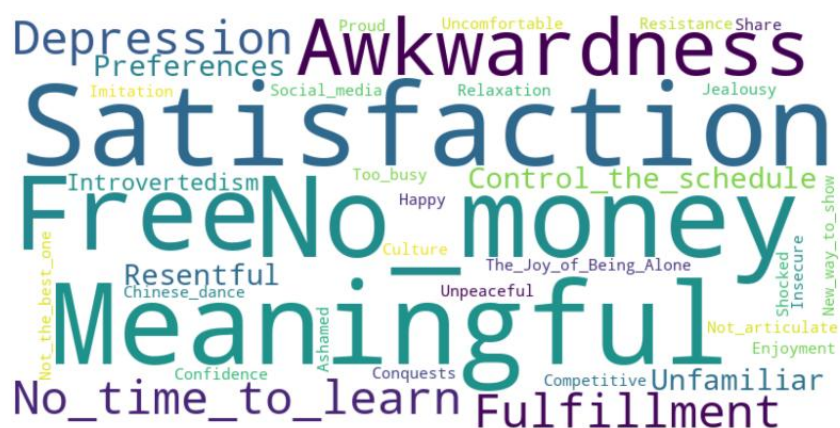
Table 1. Basic Information of Interviewees

No.	Name	Gender	Age (Years)	Status	Major	Length of video watching
1	A	Male	18	Freshman	Public Administration	6 months
2	B	Male	25	Financial professional	Financial Technology	2 months
3	C	Male	19	Sophomore	Marketing	3 months
4	D	Female	22	Graduate student, Year 1	Journalism and Communication	1.5 years
5	E	Female	23	Administrati ve assistant	Business Administration	8 months
6	F	Male	21	IT professional	Computer Science	9 months
7	G	Female	25	Sales representativ e	Marketing	1 year
8	H	Female	24	Graduate student, Year 3	Life Sciences	3 years
9	I	Female	25	Influencer	Physics	2 years
10	J	Male	24	Second-year doctoral student	Pharmaceutical Chemistry	1 month
11	K	Male	21	Junior	Digital Media Arts	2.5 years
12	L	Female	20	Sophomore	Communication Studies	4 months

In this study, the interview data were preliminarily analyzed by Nvivo software, and word cloud maps (Figure 1), code hierarchy maps (Figure 2), and word similarity clustering maps

(Figure 3) were generated. First, the word cloud map can help researchers quickly identify the most frequently occurring themes or keywords in the interview data, thus revealing the focus and concerns in the interviewees' discussions. Second, the code hierarchy map helps to clarify the structure and relationships among the themes, showing how different themes intertwine with each other. Finally, through word similarity clustering, the researcher can categorize similar words based on their semantic relationships, thus refining the underlying, implicit themes and patterns. These three methods not only help the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the respondents' sentiments and perspectives, but also improve the efficiency and accuracy of data analysis. Based on these initial analyses and generalizations, the research team further compiled a categorization of emotional themes (Table 2).

Figures 1 Word cloud maps



Figures 2 Code hierarchy maps

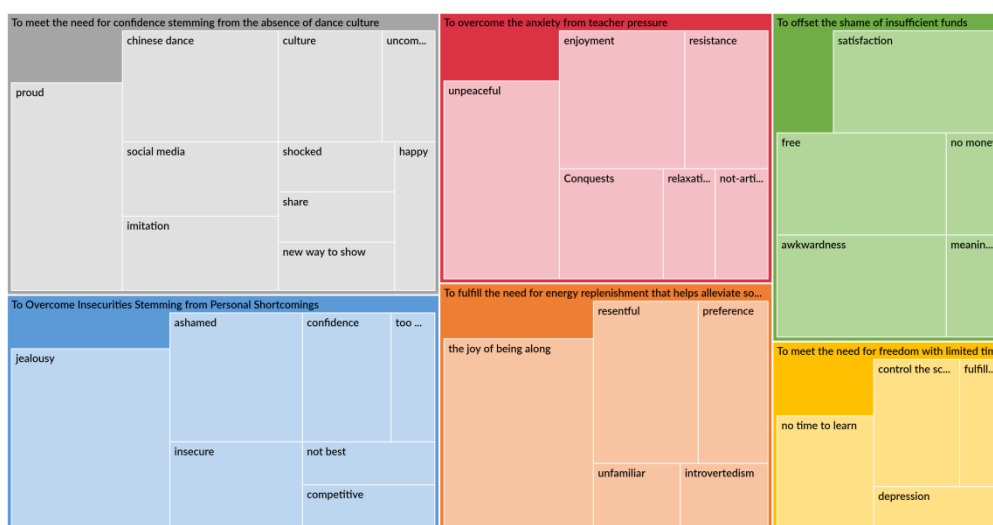


Figure 3. Word similarity clustering maps

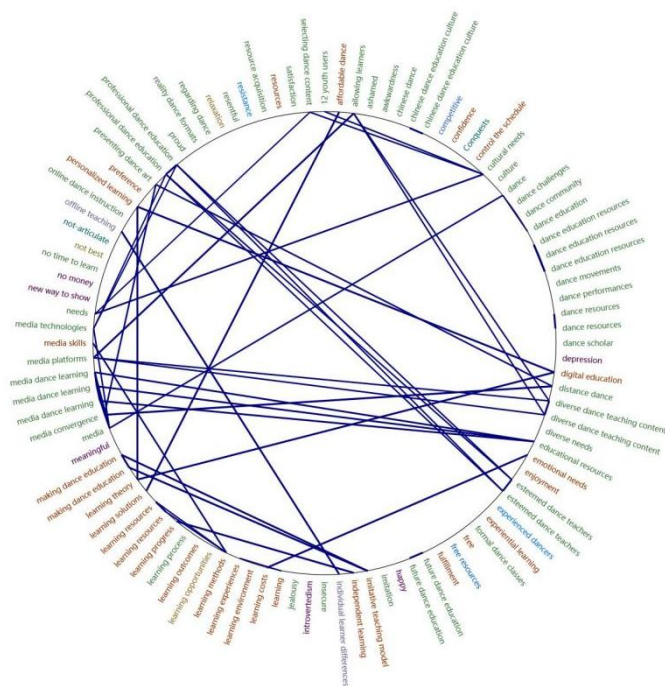


Table 2. Summary of Interview Data and Positive Emotional Themes

No.	Initial Emotional Themes	Core Codes
1	To offset the shame of insufficient funds	a. Satisfaction b. No money c. Meaningful d. Free

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|---|--|---------------------------|
| 2 | To meet the need for freedom with limited time | e. Awkwardness |
| | | a. No time to learn |
| | | b. Fulfillment |
| | | c. Depression |
| | | d. Control the schedule |
| 3 | To fulfill the need for energy replenishment that helps alleviate social anxiety | a. Unfamiliar |
| | | b. Resentful |
| | | c. Preferences |
| | | d. Introvertedism |
| 4 | To overcome the anxiety from teacher pressure | e. The Joy of Being Alone |
| | | a. Unpeaceful |
| | | b. Resistance |
| | | c. Relaxation |
| | | d. Conquests |
| | | e. Not-articulate |
| | | f. Enjoyment |
| 5 | To Overcome Insecurities Stemming from Personal Shortcomings | a. Too busy |
| | | b. Not the best one |
| | | c. Jealousy |
| | | d. Insecure |
| | | e. Confidence |
| | | f. Competitive |
| | | g. Ashamed |
| 6 | To meet the need for confidence stemming from the absence of dance culture | a. Uncomfortable |
| | | b. Social media |
| | | c. Shocked |
| | | d. Share |
| | | e. Proud |
| | | f. New way to show |
| | | g. Imitation |
| | | h. Happy |
| | | i. Culture |
| | | j. Chinese dance |
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Subsequently, through further induction and analysis of the initial emotional themes,

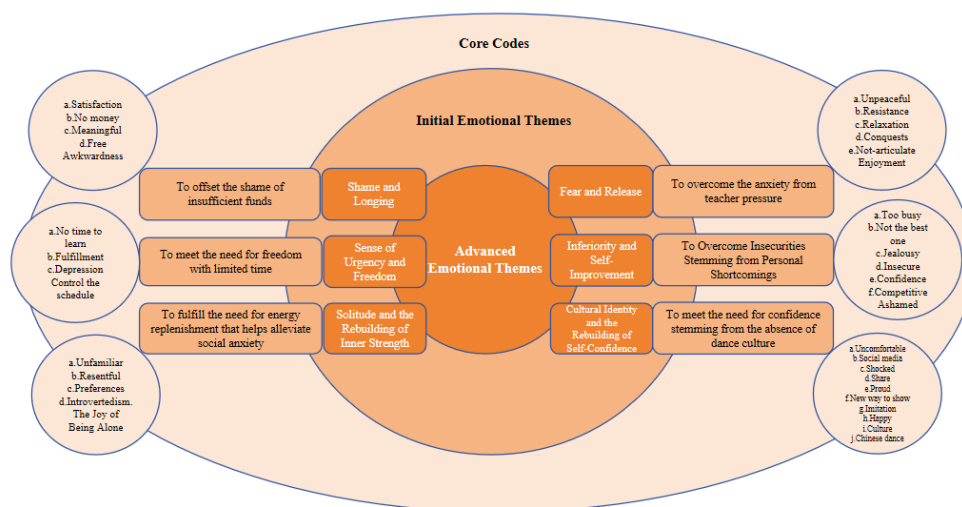
advanced emotional themes were finally extracted and accompanied by detailed explanations (Table 3). Additionally, to present the results more clearly, a interconnected themes diagram was also created (Figure 4).

Table 3. Analysis of Advanced Emotional Themes

N	Advanced Emotional Themes	Initial Emotional Themes	Emotional Needs Analysis
1	Shame and Longing	To offset the shame of insufficient funds	Due to the lack of financial needs and cannot face offline to follow the professional dance scholars to learn, but the emergence of social media gives them another choice of channels, so that they can not only spend less money to learn dance, but also so that they will not again due to the lack of money to enroll in classes and their own generated by the psychology of shame, free from suffering from their own internal generated by the lack of money of the shame of the state of mind, but also free from the outside world to suffer from the discomfort of the white eye Psychology.
2	Sense of Urgency and Freedom	To meet the need for freedom with limited time	Modern young users' time is occupied by school, work, socializing, this time if they make time to participate in extracurricular class learning, will increase their pressure, as if extracurricular class learning is like a task indicator, must be completed on time and on time clock, otherwise the rest cannot be very comfortable. The emergence of social media dance instructional videos satisfies their need for freedom to learn when they want to and put it aside when they don't want to, and then learn again when they have the energy to do so. This is also less likely to sap the enthusiasm of young users for dance.
3	Solitude and the Rebuilding of Inner Strength	To fulfill the need for energy replenishment that helps	Many young users resist socializing because they feel it puts pressure on them. This also directly leads to the fact that they find the process of enrolling in classes and dealing with others very tiring. Social media as a communication channel for dance teaching allows them to

		alleviate social anxiety	learn dance on their own without interacting with others and to replenish their mental energy.
4	Fear and Release	To overcome the anxiety from teacher pressure	Through interviews, we learned that some young users are afraid of the profession of “teacher”. Because they have been punished by their teachers in their childhood, they are resistant to learning for fear that they will be punished or disliked by their teachers if they don't learn well. However, the emergence of social media allows them to learn dance skills without face-to-face interaction, and if there are any points they do not understand, they can also ask others online, which reduces their fear and meets their pressure needs.
5	Inferiority and Self-Improvement	To Overcome Insecurities Stemming from Personal Shortcomings	Some young users they feel that they are not good enough to dance beautifully or handsomely. If they enroll in offline classes, they feel inferior compared to other students. But learning how to dance through dance instruction videos on social media makes them much more relaxed. And they will also feel that a lot of people who learn to dance and then dance it out will make themselves better.
6	Cultural Identity and the Rebuilding of Self-Confidence	To meet the need for confidence stemming from the absence of dance culture	Most of the young users said that they used to see dance videos dominated by Westerners or Koreans, but with the growing power of China and the deepening of Chinese culture, dances with Chinese characteristics and cultural heritage have gradually gained the recognition of young users. Their recognition is also a manifestation of their recognition of Chinese culture.

Figure 4. Interconnected themes diagram



Through the above analysis methods and processes, it can be observed how dance educators, by utilizing the Douyin platform, fulfill the emotional and cultural needs of young users. Furthermore, it offers dance instructors a framework on how to effectively use social media to distribute dance tutorials in a way that better addresses the emotional and cultural expectations of young audiences.

4. Finding and Discussion

This study utilizes the Uses and Gratifications Theory and Constructivist Theory to further analyze and summarize the emotional themes, thereby addressing the research question: "From the perspective of young users, what emotional and cultural needs does Douyin fulfill for them?"

4.1 Shame and Longing

Firstly, the financial burden of traditional dance learning. In a traditional dance learning environment, course fees are often high, particularly in prestigious or well-known dance academies and training programs. For users with limited financial means, these costs can be a significant burden. Due to financial difficulties, many potential dance enthusiasts may be forced to give up learning opportunities because they cannot afford the fees. This economic

barrier not only limits their access to dance education but may also trigger feelings of shame and social comparison.

Male A (18 years old): "Financial limitations make it difficult for me to afford the fees for dance training classes. Given my financial situation, I feel a bit embarrassed about signing up for professional courses. In contrast, using free resources like Douyin allows me to continue pursuing my passion within a limited budget. Although this method has its shortcomings, it enables me to follow my interests without adding financial strain."

Secondly, the formation of shame. A lack of funds may cause users to feel inferior or ashamed when comparing themselves to their peers or others. They may feel that, due to their financial situation, they cannot enjoy the same learning opportunities as others, leading to feelings of self-deprecation. Additionally, societal sensitivity to financial conditions may make them feel embarrassed or ashamed when discussing or participating in social activities.

Female D (22 years old): "I'm aware that dance classes typically charge high fees, which seem accessible only to people with financial resources. I feel somewhat uneasy and embarrassed when I'm around these confident dance lovers. That's why I prefer exploring my own dance space on platforms like Douyin."

Moreover, the cost-effectiveness of social media. Platforms such as Douyin or other social media outlets offer dance tutorial videos at a low cost, providing users with a feasible alternative to traditional dance education. Users can access free or inexpensive content, avoiding the high fees of traditional courses. This allows them to engage in dance education without financial stress, effectively alleviating the psychological burden caused by their financial situation and reducing anxiety and shame related to economic concerns. In addition, users have the autonomy to choose their learning content. On social media platforms, they can select dance lessons that best fit their needs and pace, enhancing their sense of control over their learning experience.

Female L (20 years old): "I feel like I can choose the dance videos I like without any financial pressure, and that makes me feel just like the students attending in-person classes."

Additionally, the sense of control and psychological relief. This autonomy and sense of control help reduce feelings of inferiority and shame caused by financial limitations. Users no longer view economic constraints as a reflection of personal ability but rather as a factor in choosing their learning path. In this way, users can approach dance learning with a more positive mindset, free from the burden of financial concerns.

Lastly, cognitive restructuring. Social media dance learning has led to a shift in users' perceptions of dance education. Users are gradually realizing that learning dance does not necessarily require high costs or specific learning environments, but can be achieved through more flexible and affordable means. This shift in understanding helps users redefine their role and values in the learning process, allowing them to participate in dance education with greater confidence and positivity.

Male C (19 years old): "I always thought dancing was really expensive, which made me too shy to express my interest in learning. But after discovering Douyin, I realized that even people with limited finances can learn to dance."

In conclusion, the affordable dance learning solutions offered by social media not only relieve the shame associated with financial pressures but also promote a positive transformation in users' understanding of dance education by giving them more autonomy and a stronger sense of control. This method significantly reduces the psychological stress caused by financial constraints, enabling users to approach learning with greater openness and confidence.

4.2 Sense of Urgency and Freedom

Modern young people are often under multiple pressures, such as academics, work, and social activities. These pressures frequently lead to tight and complicated schedules. In such cases, traditional offline dance classes, which require a set time commitment, can add to their time burden, making dance learning an additional source of stress. The fixed schedules of offline classes may conflict with their other responsibilities, potentially causing anxiety and frustration. This situation not only increases the difficulty of attending the class but may also impact their learning effectiveness and interest in dance.

Male B (25 years old): "If I have time to rest, I prefer to stay home and relax. So I switched to learning dance online, which allows me to learn anytime and anywhere, and it's much more convenient."

Compared to traditional classes, Douyin's dance tutorial videos provide exceptional flexibility. These videos can be paused and replayed at any time, allowing users to practice repeatedly at their own pace. This flexible approach reduces the anxiety that comes with time constraints, turning dance learning into a self-adjustable process that seamlessly fits into their daily routines. Furthermore, the dance tutorials on Douyin allow users to choose topics and difficulty levels based on their own interests. This enables users to learn according to their personal preferences and needs, without being constrained by the pace or requirements of a fixed course, which helps increase motivation and persistence in learning.

Female H (24 years old): "I can choose the dance style and difficulty level I like. Each dance tutorial is clear and simple, so it's easy to pick up. I can learn according to my schedule, without the pressure of feeling like I'm checking off tasks, haha."

The dance learning provided by Douyin creates a highly individualized learning environment for users. They have the freedom to select their learning content and adjust the pace according to their personal time and energy. This flexible and self-regulated approach allows users to engage with learning during their preferred times, thus increasing motivation and proactive participation. This concept aligns with the principles of constructivist theory, which centers on active learning and learner autonomy.

Male A (18 years old): "With this self-controlled learning method, I can flexibly adjust my schedule and make full use of my free time or when I have the mental energy to practice dance. This helps me avoid a decrease in learning performance caused by academic stress or exhaustion."

In this personalized learning environment, users can reflect and adjust at their own pace, continuously optimizing their learning strategies. This self-regulated process not only enhances their sense of control over the learning process but also promotes deep learning and the formation of long-term memory. Constructivism views learning as an active process of

construction, where learners build knowledge and understanding based on their experiences and needs. In Douyin's learning environment, users can adjust their learning techniques based on their own experiences and feedback, leading to the internalization of knowledge and the improvement of skills. This process improves their dance proficiency while boosting their confidence and satisfaction with learning. In conclusion, Douyin's flexible learning approach complements constructivist learning theory, offering users an environment that promotes autonomy and personalization. Through this system, users can actively engage in learning with reduced time pressure, enhancing both motivation and long-term commitment.

4.3 Solitude and the Rebuilding of Inner Strength

Many young people struggle with social anxiety, which greatly influences their motivation and involvement in learning. Social anxiety may stem from a fear of being judged, unfamiliarity with social situations, or self-doubt in performance. In offline dance classes, students not only have to perform and participate but also manage face-to-face interactions with peers and instructors, which can add to their psychological burden. Douyin offers an alternative learning experience that differs from traditional offline classes by reducing the need for direct social interaction. Users can learn in a more isolated environment, allowing them to advance at their own pace without the pressures of immediate social interactions or evaluations. Additionally, Douyin's dance lessons often include interactive feedback features, such as comment sections and online discussions, enabling users to seek support when necessary, without the pressure of direct social confrontation. This helps to further reduce the effects of social anxiety.

Male K (21 years old): "I have some social anxiety, and I especially feel anxious when interacting with strangers. That's why I choose to learn dance slowly on my own through Douyin. This way, I can avoid the nervousness of face-to-face interaction while still enjoying the pleasure of dancing in a safe and comfortable environment."

In this self-guided learning environment, users have the ability to set their own learning goals and develop strategies, which increases their intrinsic motivation and engagement with the learning process. This environment aids in building a strong sense of self-efficacy, where users believe they are capable of learning and mastering dance techniques effectively. By

repeatedly watching instructional videos and gradually refining their moves, users receive indirect and progressive feedback, which helps reduce anxiety from immediate or direct evaluations. The constructivist approach, which advocates for step-by-step learning, is well demonstrated by Douyin users. Additionally, the interactive features on social media (such as likes, comments, and shares) provide social support while maintaining a certain degree of privacy, further reinforcing users' confidence and self-efficacy in learning.

Female I (25 years old): "I can learn at my own pace and in the way I prefer, and practicing like this every day doesn't make me feel tired or reluctant. On the contrary, I receive positive feedback, which makes me very happy."

In conclusion, social media provides users with a low-pressure, flexible learning platform that enables them to learn effectively while minimizing the impact of social anxiety. Through a personalized learning environment and self-directed learning methods, this platform helps users develop intrinsic motivation and a sense of self-efficacy, thereby improving the overall learning experience and fostering personal growth.

4.4 Fear and Release

For some young users, the traditional teacher-student relationship often brings about negative impacts associated with authority and punishment. This sense of intimidation can arise from two aspects: First, the influence of authority. In traditional educational settings, teachers are often seen as the authority on knowledge and as evaluators, whose opinions and assessments directly affect the students' learning experience. This fear creates pressure and anxiety, which may lead to resistance and unease regarding the learning content. Second, past experiences of punishment. Previous experiences of punishment can also heighten this sense of fear.

Female D (22 years old): "I have been criticized or even punished for failing or not performing well, and these negative experiences have had a long-term impact on my attitude toward learning, making me feel nervous and fearful when facing teachers."

Social media dance learning platforms, by offering video tutorials, online courses, and virtual interactions, avoid the face-to-face interactions typical of traditional teacher-student relationships. This approach allows users to learn in an environment with less pressure, free

from the direct supervision or evaluation of a teacher. Users can watch tutorials at their own pace, practice dance moves, and seek help through informal channels such as comment sections or online forums when needed, thereby reducing the anxiety associated with face-to-face communication.

Male F (21 years old): "I feel uneasy whenever someone points out my dance mistakes, so I decided to learn dance on Douyin. It helps me relieve the pressure, and I don't have to deal with the stress of having a teacher around."

The Douyin platform offers an environment that allows users to construct knowledge and skills independently. This environment helps users overcome their fear of teachers in several key ways. First, users have the autonomy to choose what to learn and at what pace, without the constraints of traditional class schedules and lesson plans. This sense of control fosters greater confidence in learning, reducing the psychological burden caused by teacher authority. Second, progressive learning. By repeatedly watching and practicing tutorial videos, users can gradually acquire dance skills. This incremental learning process builds self-efficacy and fosters a positive learning attitude. Third, informal feedback and support. On social media, users can seek feedback through comments, private messages, or discussion groups. This informal feedback mechanism avoids the formal evaluations and direct criticism often seen in traditional classes, helping users feel supported without the tension of face-to-face interactions. Lastly, community support. Users can connect with other learners to share experiences and receive encouragement, creating a supportive learning community. This community strengthens their motivation and confidence, allowing them to overcome difficulties without direct teacher oversight.

Male B (25 years old): "I often send the dance videos I'm practicing to my Douyin friends for their feedback. Honestly, it's not much different from getting feedback from an instructor at a physical studio, haha, and I don't have to feel so nervous."

Through this approach, social media dance learning platforms not only provide users with an environment for independent learning but also help them build a positive learning attitude and confidence while reducing the sense of intimidation typically associated with traditional

teaching. In this supportive and informal learning environment, users can gradually overcome their fear of teachers and achieve more effective self-improvement.

4.5 Inferiority and Self-Improvement

People tend to assess their abilities and standing through comparisons with others. In traditional offline dance classes, students often compare their own conditions or skill levels to those of others, which can result in feelings of inferiority.

Male F (21 years old): "Whenever I walk into the classroom and see the other students, who are all tall and handsome, I feel very inferior, like I don't deserve to stand beside them. I realize that learning dance just by watching videos isn't up to professional standards, but it's really hard for me to find the courage to perform with others."

Furthermore, private learning offers significant advantages. Social media dance tutorials allow users to learn in a more private setting, where direct social comparisons are minimized. Users can practice and study in their personal space without worrying about judgment or comparison from others. This private learning environment helps learners concentrate on their own progress, rather than focusing on others, which reduces feelings of inferiority.

Female H (24 years old): "Whenever I went to dance class with my classmates, I always felt inadequate when I saw their figures. So, I decided to study by myself at home, and I feel like I've made more progress."

Douyin provides users with an environment that supports independent learning, allowing them to choose content based on their learning progress and interests. Constructivism typically emphasizes that learning is an active process of constructing knowledge rather than passively receiving information. This environment enables users to learn at their own pace. This personalized learning approach allows users to explore and master dance techniques without the pressure of competition. Building a positive self-perception is crucial. In a non-competitive learning environment, users can develop a more positive self-image. By practicing continuously and gradually improving their skills, users can experience their own growth and progress. This positive feedback and sense of accomplishment help boost users' confidence,

reduce feelings of inferiority, and promote autonomous learning and personal growth. Ultimately, it helps them overcome inferiority and build a more positive self-image.

Female I (25 years old): "If I attended a class and saw other students or teachers with great figures, I would feel both envious and inferior. But when I learn by myself at home through social media, I feel like it works just as well, haha."

Through these comprehensive analyses, we can gain a deeper understanding of how social media, by providing a private learning environment and self-directed learning methods, helps users reduce feelings of inferiority and fosters the development of their self-awareness and confidence.

4.6 Cultural Identity and the Rebuilding of Self-Confidence

In the traditional dance education system, many teachers have backgrounds in studying abroad, and much of the dance theory is grounded in Western thought. This can potentially undermine users' sense of cultural identity. For some users, especially young non-professional dancers, they may not have enough knowledge of dance culture, and when they engage with the art of dance, they may feel a lack of representation of their own culture and experience a sense of cultural marginalization. This cultural void not only affects their interest in learning but may also diminish their confidence, particularly when they feel a lack of cultural identity during performance and participation in dance.

Male K (21 years old): "During my exchange in France, I gained a deep understanding of how modern French people take pride in their national dance culture. Their dance has not only undergone a long historical influence but also maintains a strong cultural presence in society. Our dance, on the other hand, seems to lean more toward Western styles and struggles to fully express our own identity."

The emergence of Douyin has provided users with a diverse range of dance education resources, including a vast collection of videos featuring Chinese traditional dance. Through these videos, users can not only learn the techniques and styles of Chinese traditional dance but also gain a deeper understanding of the cultural and historical background of China. This cultural diversity helps users connect more deeply with their own culture, strengthening their

sense of cultural identity. As they practice and perform, users can experience the core of their local culture and feel a stronger connection to it. Learning Chinese dance forms not only improves their technical skills but, more importantly, strengthens their sense of belonging to their native culture. By learning and sharing Chinese dances on social media, users can gain confidence through cultural identity. Mastering and presenting these dance forms allows them to improve both their dance abilities and their understanding and appreciation of their own culture. This heightened sense of identity and confidence fosters a positive self-image and stronger self-confidence within social and cultural contexts.

Male J (24 years old): "In these works, we can see elements of classical modern dance, folk dance, and traditional opera. They not only preserve the essence of traditional culture but also incorporate popular dance styles, giving new life to traditional culture in the context of globalization. Every time I watch these dances, I can see the profound depth and unique charm of Chinese culture, as if I can witness the roots of our culture in modern society."

Moreover, Douyin offers users an open and flexible learning environment, where they can independently choose and learn traditional Chinese dances. This self-paced learning process allows users to acquire dance skills progressively, at a rhythm that aligns with their interests and preferences. Through this self-directed approach, users can adjust their learning content based on personal interests and cultural background, thus gradually constructing and deepening their understanding of their own culture throughout the learning process. Additionally, users can receive immediate feedback and encouragement, and this interaction helps enhance their self-efficacy and cultural confidence. This reflects the development towards a "multi-fusion" approach, which not only incorporates Western classical dance techniques but also actively explores the integration of Chinese dance elements, working towards the ultimate goal of creating a system that is distinctly Chinese (Liu, 2008).

Constructivism emphasizes that learning is a socially constructed process, and through culturally relevant learning activities, users not only accumulate dance skills but also continuously reconstruct their understanding and identification with their own culture. This cognitive construction process helps users gain positive experiences in terms of cultural

belonging and pride, thereby boosting their self-confidence. The dissemination and learning of Chinese dance on social media platforms create a community environment for cultural exchange and sharing. In this environment, users not only learn dance techniques but can also share and discuss with others who share a similar cultural background. These opportunities for cultural exchange help users strengthen their sense of belonging and pride in their native culture, while also enhancing their active participation and confidence in the learning process. Through this cultural interaction and sharing, users can experience the continuity and significance of their culture, thus establishing a stronger cultural identity and confidence in their self-perception.

Female L (20 years old): "Every time I watch these dances, I am constantly reshaping my understanding of Chinese culture, particularly how traditional arts are gaining new life and influence in modern Chinese society. This has inspired me to further explore Chinese traditional arts."

In summary, social media platforms not only expand users' cultural perspectives but also strengthen their cultural confidence and sense of belonging through the process of autonomous learning and cultural identification. These platforms provide users with an open, supportive environment where they can reconstruct their perception of their own culture, gain confidence, and achieve personal growth and cultural identification through the practice of dance.

5. Research Contributions

Firstly, from the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), this study expands the understanding of how social media platforms like Douyin meet users' needs. Traditionally, UGT focuses on how media satisfies users' needs for information, entertainment, and social interaction (Figure.5). However, this research innovatively explores how platforms like Douyin meet the emotional needs of users with limited financial resources by lowering learning costs. Specifically, Douyin provides a low-cost dance learning platform that allows users, who might otherwise be unable to afford traditional offline courses due to financial constraints, to access high-quality learning resources with minimal economic investment (Figure.6).

This approach not only alleviates the feelings of shame associated with financial limitations but also avoids the social comparison pressures brought about by economic challenges. Additionally, Douyin meets the time management needs of modern users who are juggling academic, work, and social pressures by offering flexible learning schedules. Users can learn according to their own time availability, without worrying about fixed course schedules interfering with their daily lives, thereby reducing the time pressure and anxiety associated with learning.

Furthermore, Douyin's non-face-to-face learning model effectively addresses users' social anxiety by avoiding direct social interaction, allowing users to learn in a stress-free environment. This not only eases social anxiety but also provides a space for mental energy replenishment. These innovations enrich the application of UGT, demonstrating how social media can optimize users' learning experiences in terms of economics, time, and psychological comfort.

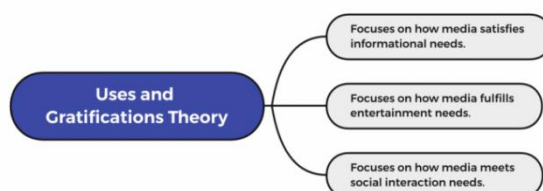


Figure 5. Conventional Uses and Gratifications Theory

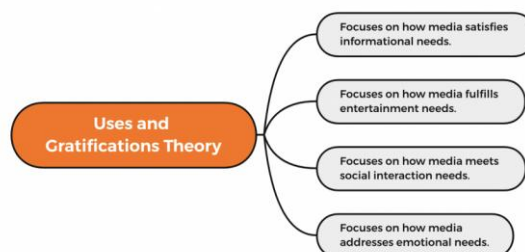


Figure 6. Innovative Uses and Gratifications Theory

Secondly, from the perspective of constructivist theory, this study demonstrates how social media supports personalized learning and the construction of cultural identity. Constructivist theory emphasizes that learners actively construct knowledge and meaning during the learning process, and social media, by offering self-selected learning content and pacing, supports the process of personalized knowledge construction. Users can learn at their own pace and according to their interests, avoiding the constraints of traditional classroom environments, which enhances their sense of control and autonomy over the learning process. Moreover, the wealth of cultural resources on social media expands users' learning horizons, with Chinese-themed dance content in particular aiding in the strengthening of cultural identity and self-confidence. Unlike traditional dance instruction, which often prioritizes Western or other regional styles, social media provides an opportunity for users to reconnect with and appreciate their native culture. This cultural identity construction not only increases users' pride in Chinese culture but also boosts their confidence during the learning process. Furthermore, the informal learning environment of social media reduces the pressures of traditional teaching, enabling users to approach learning with a more open mindset, which in turn enhances their motivation. These contributions extend the application of constructivist theory by emphasizing the role of social media in promoting personalized learning, cultural identity, and motivation enhancement, while providing new theoretical support for understanding user needs and cognitive development in digital learning environments.

6. Conclusion

Social media dance tutorial videos play a significant role in meeting users' various emotional needs. Firstly, by providing a low-cost learning method, it alleviates the shame caused by financial constraints, helping users avoid the negative impacts of economic pressure and social comparison. Secondly, social media allows users to flexibly arrange their study time, reducing the learning pressure caused by time constraints, and thereby increasing autonomy and motivation. In addition, the non-face-to-face learning model of social media meets the needs of those who feel exhausted by social interactions, helping them avoid the psychological

burden of interacting with others. For users who fear the authority of teachers, social media offers a learning environment free from face-to-face interactions, reducing psychological barriers in learning. Feelings of inferiority are also alleviated through the hidden learning mode of social media, allowing users to gradually improve themselves without external judgment, thus boosting self-confidence. Finally, the local Chinese dance content on social media helps users reestablish their sense of cultural identity, thereby enhancing their cultural confidence and sense of self-worth.

This study also has some limitations. It primarily focuses on short-term impacts and immediate feedback, potentially overlooking the long-term teaching outcomes. The long-term effects of social media on dance learning, such as skill retention and the professional development of learners, may not have been fully explored. Moreover, the study did not sufficiently account for individual differences, such as variations in learning styles, motivation, and technical expertise. These differences may influence how users engage with social media-based teaching and affect their learning outcomes.

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8. Disclosure statement

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