

Research on the Role and Impact of Video Games on the Development of the Tourism Industry: Take Black Myth Wukong as an Example

Yiwen Zhang

Liberal Arts Education and Art Media College, Xiamen Institute of Technology, Xiamen, Fujian, China

Keywords: Video Game, Tourist Trade, Trans-Culture Communication.

Abstract: With the advent of the era of digital culture, the role of video games as a medium for the integration of cultural communication and tourism has attracted wide attention. This paper takes Black Myth: Wukong as an example to explore the role and impact of video games on the development of the tourism industry. The results show that the game significantly promotes the players' interest in Chinese traditional culture through the communication of immersive cultural symbols; policy coordination and technological experience innovation can effectively drive tourism consumption, but the high cost of technological adaptation restricts the development. Based on this, it is suggested to improve cross-sectoral policy coordination, reduce technical costs, strengthen the cultural penetration of non-player groups, and establish a cultural audit mechanism to enhance the accuracy of communication.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In recent years, China has elevated its cultural confidence to a national strategic level, and since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the central government has attached great importance to promoting the "going out" of Chinese culture. It also proposed to promote the integration and development of E-sports and the game entertainment industry, emphasizing the "integration of culture and tourism". Encourage the dissemination of traditional culture through innovative forms such as games, film, and television (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2021). The national self-confidence and pride of the younger generation after 1990 and 2000 have been improved, and they are more and more interested in the traditional culture. Globally, with the promotion of China's international status and discourse power, international friends began to be curious about China. In developed countries, video games started to develop earlier, and well-made 3A games emerged in an endless stream, while in China, they are still in the stage of progress and development. However, with the advent of the electronic digital age, the game industry has gradually

become one of the important ways of cultural output (Cheng & Wang, 2025). The popularity of the Assassin's Creed series of games has led to a sharp rise in the search volume of Egypt, the scene of the game, which has led to the development of local tourism and verified the driving effect of the game on tourism (Shuhua, et al., 2024). In this context, the first 3A game in China, Black Myth: Wukong, relies on Unreal Engine 5, Frost Engine, and other technologies to promote the game centered on the Ming Dynasty novel Journey to the West. With its exquisite pictures and touching stories, it has become popular all over the world, and many players have even begun to make their golden hoop sticks, showing the unique charm and global influence of Chinese culture, and becoming a typical case of cultural communication and tourism innovation.

Games give new life to traditional culture and inject fresh blood. Integrating Chinese aesthetics into the virtual scene not only enhances the visual effect of the game, but also enhances the interest of players in traditional Chinese ancient buildings (Tan et al., 2022). Game has become an important means of "breaking the circle" of traditional culture, which proves that Chinese culture can be spread globally using digital means, and provides a new mode of "game-culture-flow-tourism-consumption" for the

linkage of "game + cultural tourism". Taking game IP as a flow incision, reshaping the image of travel destination, opening up the popularity of the destination, attracting young tourists, breaking the pain point of "static tourism" and the dilemma of "aging tourists", greatly promoting the tourism fever of the relevant areas and promoting the local economic development. Moreover, it also provides a new way for cultural heritage and dissemination. It has made China from a "big country of cultural resources" to a "powerful country of cultural export", and has enhanced China's international influence and discourse power. At the same time, it also provides a reference experience for other developing countries.

Combining video games with tourism is a relatively new theme, and the current policy of "game + cultural tourism" in China is still in the exploratory stage. Most of the existing studies focus on the cases of Europe, America, Japan, and South Korea, such as Japan's Monster Watch, which drives tourism growth by 15% through local linkage. Due to the late development of domestic 3A games, there is a lack of well-made games with a story core and beautiful and smooth pictures. As a result, the policy research on the localization mechanism of domestic games is insufficient, which leads to the lack of a theoretical basis for the introduction of policies. For the cultural communication mechanism of domestic games, the government, scenic spots, and game companies have coordinated policies, and the application potential of tourism paths and tourism VR technology is at a blank stage. But the emergence and rise of Black Myth: Goku has made up for this lack, with a 9.2 rating among overseas Steam players and a 9.0 rating on IGN, which proves that its spread effect overseas is extraordinary. At the same time, it provides a unique platform for research on how to jointly promote the development of tourism and economic growth with scenic spots.

Based on this, this study mainly takes "Black Myth: Wukong" as a case to explore the explosion of online games in the era of digital culture, the transformation of cultural symbols contained in them into global communication and tourism, the driving and limitations of government cross-sectoral coordination policies, and the development of tourism; The development and experience upgrade of AR technology is a framework to explore the role and impact of video games on the development of tourism industry.

2 METHOD & RESULT

2.1 Study Design

This study uses a questionnaire survey, case study, and literature study to analyze.

2.1.1 Questionnaire

At present, through the observation of the integration case in 2023, Su Jing and Yang Yifan know that under the background of the continuous progress of digital technology, the video game and the cultural tourism industry in the digital transformation will gradually cooperate and develop, forming an innovative integration path of "game + cultural tourism"; Taking "Original God" as an example, this paper discusses the game's role in enhancing the soft power of Chinese culture and the development of tourism, and finds that "Original God" not only enhances the soft power of Chinese culture. It also makes many players interested in Chinese culture and scenic spots, prompting them to visit on the spot (Skora, 2023). Based on the existing research, this paper uses the questionnaire survey method, takes the online platform as the channel, through the questionnaire star, the game forum, the traveling community collection investigation player community and the potential tourist to the game popularity, the participation, to the cultural element recognition which in the game covers, because the game produces traveling interest and so on. To analyze whether video games and their digital derivatives can promote the development of the tourism industry. In this study, the linear regression, frequency, and correlation of the common methods in the SPASS platform will be used for data analysis. Finally, 230 questionnaires were collected, 211 of which were valid, with an effective rate of 91. 7%. The results of the survey will provide an important basis for understanding how video games promote cultural communication and tourism development.

2.1.2 Case Study

This study chooses Xiaoxitian in Xixian County, one of the thirty-six scenes of Black Myth: Wukong, as a typical case to analyze the impact of Black Myth before and after its explosion. Xixian Xiaoxitian is a Zen Buddhist temple with a history of more than 400 years. It has great artistic value, but because it is located in the inland mountainous area, the traffic is relatively inconvenient, and the main source of tourists is pilgrims and a small number of cultural

enthusiasts from Shanxi Province and neighboring provinces. After the exposure of the suspected scene in the game from Xiaoxitian in Xixian County, the popularity of social media has soared, and the popularity has moved from the regional level to the national and international level. The explosion of "Black Myth: Wukong" has brought unprecedented opportunities for the development of Xiaoxitian tourism in Xixian County.

2.2 Study Results

2.2.1 Global Communication and Transformation of Tourism

According to the survey, the interest of players in Chinese culture has increased after experiencing Black Myth, and has been transformed into tourism consumption. 97.37% of the players said that after playing the game, their interest in Chinese culture has increased. Among them, 53.63% of the players expressed a significant increase in interest in Chinese culture. The players who have searched or learned about China's tourist attractions because of the game is as high as 87.89%. It shows that the popularity of the game has begun to translate into cultural flow.

Moreover, the number of players who plan to travel to China and whose destinations are related to games has reached 69.9%. According to the linear regression analysis of "whether your interest in Chinese mythological culture has increased after playing games?" And "whether you plan to travel to China in the next three years?", it can be seen that there is a positive correlation between the interest in mythology and the willingness to travel ($R = 0.129$, $p < 0.01$), and 54.55% of non-gamers said that even if they were not interested in the game, they still wanted to go to the scene of the game. It shows that the picture and story content of the game can stimulate the audience's desire to travel, and the attraction of the picture and story content to people has exceeded the game itself, and the popularity of the game has become a cultural flow (Cai et al., 2022).

According to Weibo's topic about the 300% increase in the number of visitors to # Black Myth locations and Sina News, Black Myth: Wukong has brought fire to many locations in Shanxi. Among them, Xixian Xiaoxitian is located in the inland mountainous area, with relatively inconvenient transportation, and its popularity is mainly limited to the surrounding areas. Tourist reception is maintained at a low level all year round, the structure of tourism income is single, mainly ticket income, the tourism industry chain is short, and the surrounding

supporting service facilities are not perfect. But because of a line in the game that "the land of Xiaoxitian is here to welcome the destiny of heaven", a large number of game players and cultural explorers came to admire it, and the number of visitors increased geometrically in a short time. The staff of the tourist center of the scenic spot said that the flow of people increased by 200% to 300% compared with last year. The flow brought by games for culture has begun to change to tourism consumption, and video games can drive the development of the tourism industry.

2.2.2 Driven by Coordinated Policies

There is a certain degree of correlation between the government's support policies for game-derived tourism and the promotion of players' interest in destination tourism (Sch Schönherr et al., 2023). This study uses the SPASS platform to test the Pearson correlation coefficient of the two dimensions of cultural tourism policy support and tourism interest promotion, and analyzes the strength of their correlation. The results show that the correlation coefficient between these two dimensions is 0.259, and showed a significant level of 0.01, thus indicating that there is a significant positive correlation between them. In addition, this study found that 90.91% of the respondents who had played Black Myth: Wukong knew about the relevant policies, while only 66.67% of the respondents who had not played it knew about them. It shows that players who understand the policy will be more willing to travel. Therefore, more perfect policy support will enhance the interest of players in tourism.

2.2.3 Innovation of Experience

The survey results show that innovative experiences can improve interest in tourism. 95.41% of the respondents said they wanted to experience the AR experience hall when traveling to the game destination. It shows that the AR experience hall has a high attraction in game destination travel and may become a highlight of future travel (Samaddar & Mondal, 2024). And 95.92% of the objects expressed their willingness to experience virtual tasks combined with AR, and developed the "Virtual Journey to the West" meta-universe platform. Players can exchange tickets or limited commodities for real scenic spots by completing tasks online (such as defeating the Yellow Wind Monster). The pilot data showed that the repurchase rate increased by 20%. It shows that the experience of combining games and realistic scenic

spots can enhance tourists' interest in mythological culture and tourism (Nuanmeesri, 2022).

3 EXISTING PROBLEMS

3.1 Lack of Representation and Cooperation

At present, the joint IP of scenic spots is mostly short-term cooperation with the current heat implementation. If it wants to use games to improve the popularity of scenic spots and implement sustainable development, it needs to unite games related to scenic spots to create a unique IP. Make the IP image deeply rooted in the hearts of the people and become the synonym of tourist attractions (Li & Wang, 2025). Of all respondents, 91.33% of the respondents chose to go to scenic spots with authorized development cooperation of game IP, and even among the respondents who played Black Myth: Wukong, the proportion reached 90.08%. It shows the importance of innovative IP in promoting the integration of games and tourism and enhancing the popularity of scenic spots. There is also a lack of linkage with other related locations that are also the scene of "Black Myth", such as the joint launch of "Journey to the West" by Japan and South Korea, which only stays at the stage of anticipation and has not been substantially pushed forward. The results of the questionnaire show that only 43.37% of the respondents support the policy of transnational cooperation, reflecting the lack of confidence in the market.

3.2 High Cost of Technology Adaptation

Scenic spots want to provide a better experience for tourists, but the cost of upgrading technology is a big problem. The survey results show that 52.94% of the respondents want to experience AR in the game destination. However, at present, it has not been fully popularized. If people want to use AR, people need to pay the cost of developers, art designers, testers, and operators; they need to buy AR glasses, cameras, sensors, etc. They need to maintain and upgrade the AR guide system and train the staff. It is difficult for small and medium-sized scenic spots to address the shortage of funds. At the same time, it also shows that the low coverage of the AR navigation system and the difficulty of technical implementation are the main obstacles.

3.3 Disclosure of Personal Privacy

There is a risk of personal information leakage when tourists use scanning code to buy tickets or voice guide service in scenic spots, such as stay time, location, WeChat and nickname (Wang, 2022). In the era of big data, there are endless incidents of profiting from the leakage of users' personal information, and users' personal information on the Internet is threatened. This kind of network security problem may cause tourists the fear of tourists, which is not conducive to the development of tourism.

3.4 Insufficient Cultural Penetration of Non-Player Groups

According to the survey data, the player group of Black Myth is 60.2%, and the non-player group is 39.8%. And 88.75% of non-players are interested in games because of game derivative content (such as short videos, community discussions). In the short video, 54.55% of the people who are interested in the scene of the game because of the pictures and story content of Black Myth are still not interested in the game. Because the path of comprehensive analysis of cultural penetration is incomplete, the existing policies mostly focus on how to convert player groups into traffic for tourism consumption, but do not analyze how to convert non-player groups (such as short video users) into tourists. If it only focuses on the transformation of players and ignores the non-player groups, so that the source of tourists is too single, the transformation and upgrading of the follow-up tourism industry may lack sustained momentum.

3.5 The Challenge of Cultural Transmission and Acceptance

According to the survey report, 87.76% of the respondents believed that "misunderstanding caused by cultural differences" was the main challenge of cross-border tourism cooperation. For example, the simplified adaptation of the image of "Yellow Wind Monster" in "Black Myth: Wukong" has caused controversy among some players, who believe that the image deviates from the original spirit of "Journey to the West". This kind of deviated communication may weaken the seriousness of cultural symbols and lead to the one-sided understanding of Chinese traditional culture by international audiences.

Despite the global attraction of symbols such as "Monkey King" and "Wuxing Mountain" in games, the questionnaire survey shows that the proportion of

interest in Chinese culture among groups who have not played games is 39.13%, which is significantly lower than that of players (60.33%), indicating that the acceptance of symbols by non-players depends on external media and lacks the motivation to explore culture actively.

4 COUNTERMEASURES

4.1 Policy Coordination and Optimization

First of all, it should pay attention to improving the top-level design, planning full-time responsible departments, issuing clear provisions of authority, and forming a more complete development path.

In addition, it should pay attention to the use of big data to form scientific construction. To help scenic spots establish a "Chinese tourism drama IP database", it is suggested that game companies synchronize the data into the database while updating the content of the game version and IP image, and share them with scenic spots. Let the game company and the scenic spot connect the destiny community, carry forward the traditional culture, and let the Chinese culture go to the world. To formulate and promulgate the Regulations on the Administration of Digital IP Authorization, standardize copyright protection and dispute resolution mechanisms, and protect the legitimate rights and interests of both parties.

Hold the "East Asian Cultural Tourism Seminar", establish the "Cultural Tourism the Belt and Road", establish a diversified financing system to provide financial support for project construction, strengthen cultural exchanges through people-to-people communication, enhance friendship and mutual understanding among peoples, lay a solid foundation of public opinion for cooperation, and promote common development and achieve win-win cooperation for common prosperity (Jing, 2024).

4.2 Reduce Technology Costs

Small and medium-sized scenic spots are facing key development opportunities, so they should seize the opportunity as soon as possible. Set up a special fund to provide free AR guides, encourage science and technology enterprises to transport free technicians, and solve technical problems. The fund will also help scenic spots cooperate with game companies, open up new profit points, and strengthen economic security. In addition, it should promote low-cost multi-

language adaptation schemes and use AI real-time translation plug-ins to open up major overseas markets such as Japan, Korea, and Britain, to enhance the international competitiveness of scenic spots.

4.3 Visitor Data Anonymization

It has promulgated a security policy on tourist data, forcing enterprises to anonymize tourist data and prohibiting the sale of information for profit. Every year, the Bureau of Culture and Tourism conducts random checks on the compliance and anonymity of the use of tourist data in scenic spots, such as dealing with violations according to law, to protect the rights and interests of tourists and promote the healthy development of tourism.

4.4 Strengthen the Cultural Penetration of Non-Player Groups

Launching "Black Myth" related story videos on popular short video social platforms such as TikTok and Station B can effectively reach potential audiences interested in Chinese culture, stimulate their interest with wonderful plots, and immerse them in it. The joint game scenic spot launched the "Tianming Interactive Stage Performance", which can attract this part of non-player groups to travel and consume, realize the transformation from content dissemination to cultural tourism consumption, improve the cultural penetration path, and help the wide dissemination of Chinese culture and game IP.

4.5 Improve the Correctness and Acceptance of Cultural Communication

To formulate policies related to the adaptation of historical and cultural figures in games, strictly regulate the direction of adaptation, protect the spirit of the original works, avoid arbitrary distortion of character settings, and ensure that history and culture are correctly presented in games. Set up a cross-domain "cultural elements audit team" to control the authenticity of the game content culture in an all-around way, and ensure that the game becomes a high-quality carrier for the dissemination of history and culture. Using tremolo, microblog, and other platforms to push the game analysis of "Black Myth", continuously stimulate the interest of non-players in the game and its cultural connotation, broaden the boundaries of cultural communication, and let more people feel the charm of Chinese culture.

5 CONCLUSION

This study takes Black Myth: Wukong as a case to explore the role and impact of video games on the development of the tourism industry. Its core value lies in transforming virtual symbols into real tourism flow through immersive experience, but it needs to solve the problems of policy coordination, high technology cost, and cultural communication audit mechanism. In the future, the synergy between games and tourism needs to shift from "short-term following hot spots" to "long-term ecological interaction", through the study of the universal design of cross-cultural symbols, the long-term adjustment of policy tools, and the sustainable path of technology integration, to promote Chinese cultural tourism to achieve a leap from "resource output" to "mode output" in global competition. At the same time, it provides theoretical support and a practical model for the global "game + cultural tourism" model.

This study deepens the theoretical understanding of games as a medium of cultural communication, provides practical strategies for the government, enterprises, and scenic spots through data and policy analysis, and promotes the economic growth of tourism. Video games are not only entertainment products, but also a milestone in the transformation of traditional culture to modern culture, a strategic tool for cultural dissemination, industrial upgrading, and national soft power enhancement, and a new business card for China to participate in global cultural competition.

REFERENCES

- Cai, X., Chen, Y., Mao, Y., & Cai, L. 2022. A study on the online game Genshin Impact and the dissemination of Chinese culture. In the International Conference on Computer Science and Education. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore 460-470.
- Cheng, Q., & Wang, L. 2025. Research on the international communication path of domestic games based on text mining--Taking Black Myth: Wukong and Genshin as examples. *Media Forum* 8(02): 4-8.
- Jing, D. 2024. Strategic Research on international cooperation and development of cultural tourism in Xinjiang from the perspective of "the Belt and Road". *Journal of Party School of Yili Prefecture Committee of the Communist Party of China* (01): 98-102.
- Li, S., & Wang, L. 2025. Practical research on the development of game IP enabling cultural tourism from the perspective of ternary space--Taking the IP of online game "Genshin" as an example. *Electronic Commerce Review* 14(1): 6.
- Ministry of Culture and Tourism. 2021. The 14th Five-Year Plan for the development of culture and tourism. China Convention and Exhibition (China Convention) (12): 26-29.
- Nuanmeesri, S. 2022. Development of community tourism enhancement in emerging cities using gamification and adaptive tourism recommendation. *Journal of King Saud University-Computer and Information Sciences* 34(10): 8549-8563.
- Samaddar, K., & Mondal, S. 2024. AR and VR-based travel: A responsible practice towards sustainable tourism. *International Journal of Tourism Cities* 10(1): 105-128.
- Schönherr, S., Peters, M., & Kuščer, K. 2023. Sustainable tourism policies: From crisis-related awareness to agendas towards measures. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management* 27: 100762.
- Shuhua, Y., Tianyi, C., & Chengcai, T. 2024. The impact of tourism destination factors in video games on players' intention to visit. *Journal of Resources and Ecology* 15(2): 474-483.
- Skora, P. P. 2023. Genshin Impact: Soft power and video games in the People's Republic of China. National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University.
- Tan, N., Anwar, S., & Jiang, W. 2022. Intangible cultural heritage listing and tourism growth in China. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 21(2): 188-206.
- Wang, N. 2022. Research on personal privacy protection in the age of big data from the perspective of communication. *News Outpost* (20): 75-76.