



05-4506832



pustaka.upsi.edu.my



Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun
Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



PustakaTBainun



ptbupsi

THE VIDEO CONTENT STRATEGY FOR CHINESE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIAL MEDIA



05-4506832



pustaka.upsi.edu.my



LIU LEGE
Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun
Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



PustakaTBainun



ptbupsi

SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2025



05-4506832



pustaka.upsi.edu.my



Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun
Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



PustakaTBainun



ptbupsi



05-4506832



pustaka.upsi.edu.my



Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun
Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



PustakaTBainun



ptbupsi

THE VIDEO CONTENT STRATEGY FOR CHINESE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIAL MEDIA

LIU LEGE



05-4506832



pustaka.upsi.edu.my



Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun
Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



PustakaTBainun



ptbupsi

THESIS PRESENTED TO QUALIFY
FOR A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

FACULTY OF ART, SUSTAINABILITY AND CREATIVE INDUSTRY
SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2025



05-4506832



pustaka.upsi.edu.my



Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun
Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



PustakaTBainun



ptbupsi



Please tick (✓)
Project Paper
Masters by Research
Master by Mixed Mode
PhD

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK

This declaration is made on the 9th day of September

i. Student's Declaration:

I, LIU LEGE,P20211002205,FACULTY OF ART,SUSTAINABILITY AND CREATIVE INDUSTRY (PLEASE INDICATE STUDENT'S NAME, MATRIC NO. AND FACULTY) hereby declare that the work entitled THE VIDEO CONTENT STRATEGY FOR CHINESE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIAL MEDIA is my original work. I have not copied from any other students' work or from any other sources except where due reference or acknowledgement is made explicitly in the text, nor has any part been written for me by another person.

刘乐格

Signature of the student

ii. Supervisor's Declaration:

I DR. NORSHAHILA BINTI IBRAHIM (SUPERVISOR'S NAME) hereby certifies that the work entitled (TITLE) THE VIDEO CONTENT STRATEGY FOR CHINESE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIAL MEDIA was prepared by the above named student, and was submitted to the Institute of Graduate Studies as a full fulfillment for the conferment of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PLEASE INDICATE THE DEGREE), and the aforementioned work, to the best of my knowledge, is the said student's work.

10th day of September, 2025

Date

[Signature]

Signature of the Supervisor
Dr. Norshahila Ibrahim
Pensyarah
Fakulti Komputeran dan Meta-Teknologi
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
35900 Tanjung Malim, Perak



**INSTITUT PENGAJIAN SISWAZAH /
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**BORANG PENGESAHAN PENYERAHAN TESIS/DISERTASI/LAPORAN KERTAS PROJEK
DECLARATION OF THESIS/DISSERTATION/PROJECT PAPER FORM**

Tajuk / Title: THE VIDEO CONTENT STRATEGY
FOR CHINESE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIAL MEDIA

No. Matrik / Matric's No.: P20211002205

Saya / I: LIU LEGE

(Nama pelajar / Student's Name)

mengaku membenarkan Tesis/Disertasi/Laporan Kertas Projek (Kedoktoran/Sarjana)* ini disimpan di Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun) dengan syarat-syarat kegunaan seperti berikut:-

acknowledged that Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (Tuanku Bainun Library) reserves the right as follows:-

1. Tesis/Disertasi/Laporan Kertas Projek ini adalah hak milik UPSI.
The thesis is the property of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
2. Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun dibenarkan membuat salinan untuk tujuan rujukan dan penyelidikan.
Tuanku Bainun Library has the right to make copies for the purpose of reference and research.
3. Perpustakaan dibenarkan membuat salinan Tesis/Disertasi ini sebagai bahan pertukaran antara Institusi Pengajian Tinggi.
The Library has the right to make copies of the thesis for academic exchange.

4. Silatandakan (✓) bagi pilihan kategori di bawah / Please tick (✓) for category below:-

SULIT/CONFIDENTIAL

Mengandungi maklumat yang berdarjah keselamatan atau kepentingan Malaysia seperti yang termaktub dalam Akta Rahsia Rasmi 1972. / Contains confidential information under the Official Secret Act 1972

TERHAD/RESTRICTED

Mengandungi maklumat terhad yang telah ditentukan oleh organisasi/badan di mana penyelidikan ini dijalankan. / Contains restricted information as specified by the organization where research was done.

TIDAK TERHAD / OPEN ACCESS

刘乐格

(Tandatangan Pelajar/ Signature)

Tarikh: 10th day of September, 2025

(Tandatangan Penyelia / Signature of Supervisor)
& (Nama & Cop Rasmi / Name & Official Stamp)

Dr. Hershahila Ibrahim

Pensyarah

Fakulti Komputeran dan Meta-Teknologi
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
35900 Tanjung Malim, Perak

Catatan: Jika Tesis/Disertasi ini **SULIT @ TERHAD**, sila lampirkan surat daripada pihak berkuasa/organisasi berkenaan dengan menyatakan sekali sebab dan tempoh laporan ini perlu dikelaskan sebagai **SULIT** dan **TERHAD**.

Notes: If the thesis is **CONFIDENTIAL** or **RESTRICTED**, please attach with the letter from the organization with period and reasons for confidentiality or restriction.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is hard to believe that my doctoral life is coming to an end. It has been a bumpy but unforgettable journey. The barrier of the epidemic, the difficulty of a new language, and the insufficient time of the mother of two children all made me want to give up once, but finally, I made it. I am especially grateful to everyone who supported me all the way forward. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisors: Norshahila binti Ibrahim, thanks for your professional and patient guidance on my thesis, and for your great help at every important moment of my research. Muhammad Abdul Malik Bin Saedon, thanks for your wit, humor, and love for the Chinese students. Thank you to all the examiners, your valuable comments greatly helped me to complete a relatively professional and rigorous thesis. Thanks to all the participants, your enthusiastic participation is an important force for me to complete the paper. Thanks to my doctoral classmates, it is from your encouragement and company that helped me through the darkest moment of my PhD study. I would like to thank my husband and mother-in-law for your tremendous efforts and support to provide me with the most solid backing. I would like to thank my daughter and son for your healthy and happy growth, which is my eternal motivation. Thank myself for my efforts, courage, and persistence, so that every day of my life is rich. Thanks to this doctoral career, I have the opportunity to feel the unique exotic charm of Malaysia and experience different cultural collisions. Thank UPSI for allowing me to be a student again, to learn again, and to start again.





ABSTRACT

Short video is a significant innovation in media communication. The arrival of the short video era has brought opportunities and challenges to the development of government media. Government media continue to need help generating content and improving user participation based on short video platforms. This study aims to design and validate a content strategy framework for Chinese government media to enhance engagement. This study adopts the mixed research method of explanatory sequential design and selects the techniques and strategies of content analysis and interview. Through content analysis of 1,000 posts from five government media accounts and interviews with 29 respondents, a content strategy based on the Douyin platform is proposed from the two dimensions of news value elements and content format. The results show that news-value elements positively affect audience participation, but the application of news-value elements by governmental media is insufficient. Governmental media should strengthen communication thinking, apply news value elements as a criterion, and provide interesting local livelihood information. Regarding content format, political media should grasp the rules of short video platforms, maintain moderate update frequency, and insist on releasing original vertical screen short videos in good time. Regarding audience engagement, political media should strengthen recognition, and interaction and provide value. This study plays a vital role in guiding the content operation practice of governmental media, improving audience engagement, and exploring the applicability value of news value theory in the practice of short videos in the Chinese governmental press.





STRATEGI KANDUNGAN VIDEO UNTUK MEDIA SOSIAL KERAJAAN TEMPATAN CINA

ABSTRAK

Video pendek adalah inovasi penting dalam komunikasi media. Kedatangan era video pendek telah membawa peluang dan cabaran kepada perkembangan media kerajaan. Media kerajaan terus memerlukan bantuan menjana kandungan dan meningkatkan penyertaan pengguna berdasarkan platform video pendek. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mereka bentuk dan mengesahkan rangka kerja strategi kandungan untuk media kerajaan China untuk meningkatkan penglibatan. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah penyelidikan campuran reka bentuk jujukan penjelasan dan memilih teknik dan strategi analisis kandungan dan temu bual. Melalui analisis kandungan 1,000 siaran daripada lima akaun media kerajaan dan temu bual dengan 29 responden, strategi kandungan berdasarkan platform Douyin dicadangkan daripada dua dimensi elemen nilai berita dan format kandungan. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa unsur nilai berita memberi kesan positif terhadap penyertaan khalayak, tetapi penerapan unsur nilai berita oleh media kerajaan tidak mencukupi. Media kerajaan harus mengukuhkan pemikiran komunikasi, menerapkan elemen nilai berita sebagai kriteria, dan menyediakan maklumat mata pencarian tempatan yang menarik. Mengenai format kandungan, media politik harus memahami peraturan platform video pendek, mengekalkan kekerapan kemas kini yang sederhana dan berkeras untuk mengeluarkan video pendek skrin menegak asal dalam masa yang sesuai. Mengenai penglibatan khalayak, media politik harus mengukuhkan pengiktirafan, dan interaksi serta memberikan nilai. Kajian ini memainkan peranan penting dalam membimbing amalan pengendalian kandungan media kerajaan, meningkatkan penglibatan khalayak, dan meneroka nilai kebolegunaan teori nilai berita dalam amalan video pendek dalam akhbar kerajaan China.



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
DEDECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK	ii
DECLARATION OF THESIS	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ABSTRAK	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xv
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
APPENDIX LIST	xviii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	



1.1	Research Background	1
1.1.1	Social Media Use in Government	2
1.1.2	The Development of Government Media -Video as an Example	3
1.1.3	Application of News Values in Government Media	5
1.1.4	Importance of Audience Engagement	7
1.2	Problem Statement	9
1.2.1	Practical Gap	9
1.2.1.1	Lack of Content Strategy	10
1.2.1.2	Low Level of Audience Participation	13
1.2.1.3	The Development Dilemma of Government Short Videos	14



1.2.2	Knowledge Gap	16
1.2.3	Methodology Gap	18
1.3	Research Objectives	19
1.4	Research Questions	20
1.5	Research Hypotheses	21
1.6	Conceptual Framework	22
1.7	Research Significance	25
1.7.1	Theoretical Significance	25
1.7.2	Practical Significance	26
1.8	Scope and Limitations	27
1.9	Operational Definitions	28
1.9.1	New Media of Government Affairs	28
1.9.2	News Value	29
1.9.3	Audience Engagement Index	29
1.9.4	Video Content Format	30
1.9.5	Social Media	30
1.9.6	Short Video of Government Affairs	31

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Introduction	32
2.2	Social Media in Government	33
2.2.1	Understanding New Political Media: Definitions in China and Abroad	34
2.2.2	Defining New Political Media: Concepts and Boundaries	36
2.2.3	The Development History of China's Political New Media	38
2.2.4	Government and Social Media Use	39

2.2.5	Social Media Political Communication	40
2.2.5.1	Political Communication	40
2.2.5.2	Social Media and Political Communication	42
2.2.5.3	Social Media and the Effectiveness of Political Communication	43
2.3	Development of Short Video for Government Affairs	45
2.3.1	The Development of Short Video and “Douyin” Platform	45
2.3.2	The Development of Short Video on Government Affairs	49
2.4	News Value Theory	51
2.4.1	Definition of the News Value Theory	51
2.4.2	Proposal and Development of News Value Theory	52
2.4.3	The Evolution of News Value Orientation	53
2.4.4	Overview of Differentiated Application of News Value	55
2.4.5	Determination of Independent Variables	56
2.5	Audience Engagement	59
2.5.1	The Development and Evolution of Audience Research	60
2.5.2	Audience Engagement Behaviors	62
2.5.2.1	Like Behavior	63
2.5.2.2	Share Behavior	64
2.5.2.3	Save Behavior	66
2.5.2.4	Comment Behavior	67
2.5.2.5	Impact Mechanisms for Audience Engagement	69
2.5.3	Determination of the Dependent Variables	70

2.6	A Review of Political Short Videos and Audience Engagement	71
2.6.1	The Role of Social Media Content on Users' Engagement	72
2.6.1.1	Media Content Factors	72
2.6.1.2	Content Format (Determination of Control Variables)	74
2.6.2	Advantages and Dilemmas of Audience Engagement in Political Short Videos	75
2.6.2.1	The Communication Advantages of Political Short Videos	76
2.6.2.2	The Communication Dilemmas of Political Short Videos	78
2.6.3	Overview of Research on Political Short Videos and Audience Engagement	79
2.7	Summarize	82

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	85
3.2	Research Design	86
3.2.1	Mixed methods	88
3.2.2	Paradigm Foundation	91
3.2.3	Procedures	92
3.2.4	Selection of Methods	93
3.3	Application of Content Analysis	96
3.3.1	The Objective of Content Analysis	96
3.3.2	Hypothesis Development	97
3.3.2.1	Development of Hypothesis One	97
3.3.2.2	Development of Hypothesis Two	98
3.3.2.3	Development of Hypothesis Three	99

3.3.2.4	Development of Hypothesis Four	99
3.3.2.5	Development of Hypothesis Five	100
3.3.3	Definition and Steps of Content Analysis	101
3.3.3.1	Definition and Steps	101
3.3.3.2	Quantitative Content Analysis Method	103
3.3.4	Sampling	105
3.3.4.1	Phase 1 Sampling of Content Sources	105
3.3.4.2	Phase 2 Information Extracted for Analysis	107
3.3.5	Coding	108
3.3.5.1	Determination of Coding Book Variables	108
3.3.5.2	Measurement Definitions of Variables	113
3.3.5.3	Coding Implementation	115
3.3.6	Reliability and Validity	117
3.3.6.1	Reliability Test	117
3.3.6.2	Validity Test	119
3.3.7	Data Analysis Methods	121
3.4	Application of Interview Method	124
3.4.1	Objective of the Interview Method	124
3.4.2	Procedures for Preparing and Conducting Interview	125
3.4.3	Identify Respondents	126
3.4.3.1	Purposive Sampling	126
3.4.3.2	Sample Size	128
3.4.3.3	Conduct Sampling	131
3.4.4	Instrument for Interviews	136
3.4.4.1	Semi-Structured Interviews	136

3.4.4.2	Focus Group	137
3.4.4.3	In-depth Interview	140
3.4.4.4	Online& Offline Interviews	141
3.4.5	Data Collection	142
3.4.5.1	Translation Process	142
3.4.5.2	Designing the Interview Outline	143
3.4.5.3	Implementing the Interview Strategy	145
3.4.6	Data Analysis	146
3.4.6.1	Transcribing and Translating	146
3.4.6.2	Data Analysis Method	147
3.4.6.3	Ethics	152
3.4.6.4	Reliability and Validity	153

3.5 Chapter Summary 155

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

4.1	Introduction	156
4.2	Findings for RQ1	156
4.2.1	Results for H1, H2, H3, H4	157
4.2.1.1	Descriptive Analysis of Five Accounts	157
4.2.1.2	Descriptive Analysis of Audience Engagement	158
4.2.1.3	Descriptive Analysis of News Value Elements	159
4.2.1.4	Regression Analysis Results for H1, H2, H3, H4	160
4.2.2	Results for H5	164
4.2.2.1	Descriptive Analysis of Content Format	164
4.2.2.2	Non-parametric Tests Results for H5	165

	4.2.2.3	Comparison Between the Operation Practice and Non-parametric Test Results	167
4.3		Findings for RQ2	168
	4.3.1	News Value Elements	169
		4.3.1.1 Proximity	170
		4.3.1.2 Significance	178
		4.3.1.3 Interesting	183
		4.3.1.4 Positivity	191
		4.3.1.5 Negativity	196
		4.3.1.6 Usefulness	199
		4.3.1.7 Importance	201
		4.3.1.8 Controversy	209
		4.3.1.9 Summarize Content Operation Practice Based on News Value Elements	212
	4.3.2	Content Format	214
4.4		Findings for RQ3	226
	4.4.1	Like Behavior	227
	4.4.2	Share Behavior	229
	4.4.3	Save Behavior	233
	4.4.4	Comment	233
		4.4.4.1 Motivation for Commenting Behavior	233
		4.4.4.2 Comment Management	235
	4.4.5	Play Volume & Reading Quantity	243
	4.4.6	Motivation of Overall Engagement Behavior	245
	4.4.7	Summarize the Findings for RQ3	247
4.5		Findings for RQ4	248

4.5.1	Mixed Analysis of News Value Elements	248
4.5.2	Mixed Analysis of Content Format	251
4.5.3	Mixed Analysis of Audience Engagement	253
4.5.4	Content Strategy Framework	255

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1	Introduction	257
5.2	Discussion	258
5.2.1	Discussions of RQ1	258
5.2.2	Discussions of RQ2	260
5.2.3	Discussions of RQ3	264
5.2.4	Discussions of RQ4	266
5.3	Research Contribution	267
5.3.1	Theoretical Contributions	267
5.3.2	Practical Contributions	268
5.3.3	Methodological Contributions	269
5.4	Limitation of Research	269
5.5	Recommendations for Future Research	270
5.6	Conclusion	272

REFERENCES	278
-------------------	-----

APPENDIXES

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.		Page
1.1	Summary of Government Media Development Issues	16
3.1	Methodology	87
3.2	Basic Information of the Five Accounts	107
3.3	Coding Scheme (Code Book) of Content Analysis	111
3.4	Content Analysis Coder Assignment Table	116
3.5	Confidence Information Statistics	118
3.6	Summary of Expert Validity	121
3.7	Basic Information of Respondents	132
3.8	Profiles of Five Government Media Operations Team	135
3.9	Instrument for Interviews	136
3.10	Experts' Comments on the Outline of the Interviews	144
3.11	Themes of Thematic Analysis	150
4.1	Descriptive Analysis of Dependent Variables	159
4.2	Hypothesis Verification Results	161
4.3	Results of Regression Analysis	161
4.4	Negative Binomial Regression Analysis Result	163
4.5	Frequency of Content Format Variables	165
4.6	Non-parametric Test Results of Layout	166
4.7	Non-parametric Test Results of Video Source	166
4.8	Non-parametric Test Results of Posting Time	167
4.9	The Summary of the Findings of Content Format	168

4.10	The Summary of the Findings for RQ1	168
4.11	The Summary of the News Value Themes	169
4.12	The Summary of the Content Format Themes	214
4.13	The Summary of the Audience Engagement Themes	227
4.14	News Value Elements Framework	251
4.15	Content Format Framework	253
4.16	Audience Engagement Framework	255
4.17	Content Strategy Framework	256



LIST OF FIGURES

No. Figures	Page
1.1 User Size and Utilization Ratio of Online Video	4
1.2 Research Conceptual Framework	24
2.1 Literature Review Map	33
2.2 Theoretical Framework	59
3.1 Explanatory Sequential Design	91
3.2 Procedures of the Mixed Method	93
3.3 Selection of methods	95
3.3 The Basic Process of the Interview Method	126
4.1 Audience Engagement Data of Five Accounts	158
4.2 Percentage of News Value Elements	160





APPENDIX LIST

- 1 Expert Content Validity Evaluation Form
- 2 Expert Content Validity Evaluation Form
- 3 Expert Appointment Form
- 4 Expert Appointment Form
- 5 Coding Design of Content Analysis
- 6 Human Research Ethics Form
- 7 Focus Group Outline
- 8 Research Expert Interview Outline
- 9 Administrator Interview Outline
- 10 Non-government Administrator Interview Outline
- 11 Interview Outline Evaluation Form
- 12 Pre-interview Form
- 13 Respondent's Consent Form 1
- 14 Respondent's Consent Form 2
- 15 Respondent's Consent Form 3
- 16 Implementation of Focus Group (Users)
- 17 Implementation of In-depth Interview (Researchers)
- 18 Implementation of In-depth Interviews (Government Media Operators)
- 19 Implementation of In-depth Interview (Non-Government Media Operators)
- 20 Framework Validation Form





CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background



The NGMA is an important way to improve the new model of governance and the ability of social governance in the era of mobile Internet. As of December 2022, the size of China's online government service users reached 926 million, accounting for 86.7% of the overall Internet users. The 2022 UN e-Government Survey Report shows that China ranks 43rd out of 193 UN Member States in e-government, the highest level since the report was released and one of the highest increases in the world (China Internet Network Information Center, 2023).





1.1.1 Social Media Use in Government

Across developed countries, audiences for traditional media are declining, whereas social media have established themselves as alternative ways for citizens to encounter and engage with the news, including political news. A significant trend during the last few years is the rise of social media as a source of political information (Shehata & Stromback, 2018). Social media also plays an important role in e-government.

Social media tools can provide information about user opinions, emotions, intentions, behaviours, and characteristics. Social media use in government is considered a technological innovation and a transforming agent in generating citizen engagement from campaigns and grassroots-activism to shared governance promoting democracy (Chun & Luna Reyes, 2012).



Democracies around the world face challenges related to citizens' engagement with political institutions, and social media technologies are a potential way to change this growing negative trend. Several studies have highlighted the communicative capabilities of social media tools. At the same time, the analysis of social media in government may focus on the potential of this generation of technologies to foster participation, co-production of services, and citizens' general engagement with public authorities (Criado et al., 2013).

Even if using social media to follow news about politics and current affairs does not compensate for not using traditional news media in terms of learning a diverse and broad set of general political news (Shehata & Stromback, 2018),



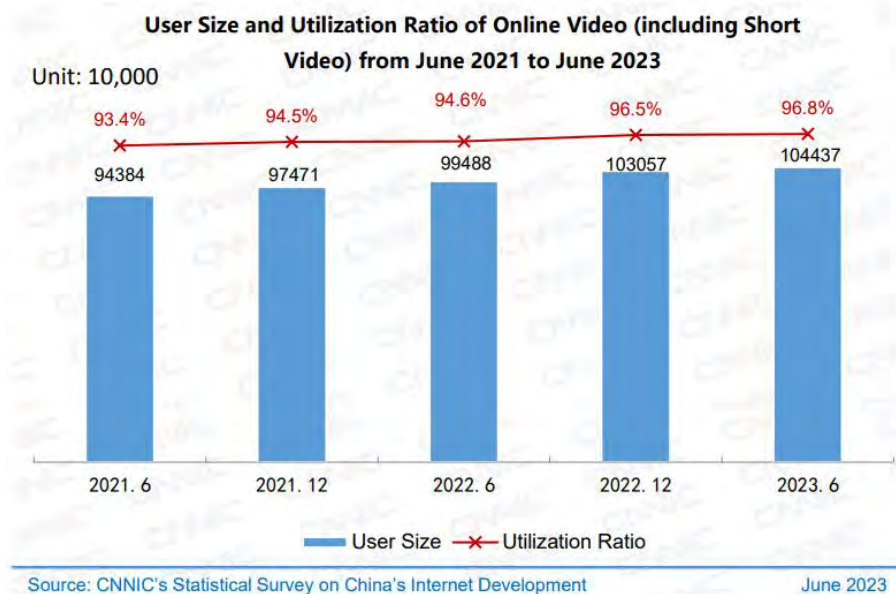


Government agencies must have their strategies for social media communications.

1.1.2 The Development of Government Media -Video as an Example

On August 28, 2023, the China Internet Information Center (CNNIC) released the 52nd Statistical Report on the Development Status of the Chinese Internet in Beijing (Figure 1.1). The report shows that in the first half of 2023, major online video platforms continued to insist on high-quality content creation. The competition between long and short video platforms was gradually transformed into win-win cooperation, and the development trend of the industry was favorable. As of June 2023, China's network video (including short video) user scale was 1.044 billion people, an increase of 13.8 million people compared with December 2022, and the utilization rate of netizens reached 96.8%, which continues to maintain a high growth trend, and has almost become a universal application. Among them, the user scale of short videos was 1.026 billion, up 14.54 million from December 2022, accounting for 95.2% of Internet users (Statistical Report on the Internet Development in China, 2023).



Figure 1.1*User Size and Utilization Ratio of Online Video*

Short video clips are a new symbol of information dissemination in the era of mobile Internet. It precisely adapts to the "fragmented" reading habits of audiences in this era (Ziqiang et al., 2019). Therefore, the short video clips industry is showing a prosperous development trend. The media characteristics of short video visualization, such as strong engagement and strong interaction, have also made short video clips the most popular and sticky form of media communication (Pan, 2021).

Among the short video clip platforms, the Douyin platform stands out. Since the opening of the first government affairs Douyin account in March 2018, government affairs short video clips have entered a stage of rapid development. Government agencies at all levels have settled on Douyin, becoming another major new media platform for government affairs after the "Weibo, WeChat and client" (Lan & Yuqian, 2022).



All 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) in China have opened government affairs accounts on Douyin, and governments at all levels have opened 25,313 accounts (Liang & Liu, 2021). The fans of CCTV News and People's Daily have exceeded 100 million, and the total number of likes for their clips has reached 10 billion, which is a benchmark for government affairs Douyin account that is worth learning ("The 46th China Statistical Report on Internet Development," 2020).

The dissemination effect is remarkable in Douyin for government agencies. For example, the "Play Xi'an with Douyin " challenge in 2018 launched by the Xi'an Municipal Government in cooperation with Douyin is very effective (Chengwei & Liang, 2019). The short video features the beautiful scenery of Xi'an's cuisine, invites local singers to compose music, and has vivid and interesting editing, triggering a wave of imitation and participation by netizens. The campaign received over 200 million views worldwide within one week. The total number of global views exceeded 200 million within one week, which greatly boosted Xi'an's tourism fever.

1.1.3 Application of News Values in Government Media

News value is one of the core concepts of journalism and a criterion for news practitioners to screen news. The law of news value is the fundamental law of news dissemination. In news dissemination, journalists and content producers will form either the same or different news value orientations in news value judgment. In the new media era, news value orientation is undergoing a series of profound changes,





and it is of great practical significance to fully grasp such changes for news content production and dissemination.

After entering the digital age, with the changes in the news ecology, news value has seen many changes and has prompted research on it to show many different characteristics from those in the past. It is precisely because the judgment and selection of news involves the core area of news production that news value has become a research field continuously followed up and still has the value of becoming an analytical concept and research method in the digital era (Jingwei, 2022). The emergence of new technologies, formats, and scenarios has made news value, a theory formed in the mass media era, not obsolete but instead entering a more vigorous stage of development. These researches have mainly advanced in the following four aspects:

① Discovering new news value ② Expanding the research on news decision-making
③ Exploring new research methods ④ Strengthening the comparative study of news value (Hongyi, 2021).

Many past studies have found that the news values valued by different media can vary. The news dissemination form of short videos opens up a new space for news value research. How short-video platforms differentially use news value must be discussed and explored in depth (Jiayu & Tangfa, 2022).

Different decision-making subjects also bring about differences in the use of news value. The video content strategy of governmental media involves not only the change of short videos as a form of communication but also the change of the government as a decision-making subject that differs from professional media.





Social value and news value are the determining factors of the vitality of news. There is a large amount of news value in political reports, and it is important work of journalists to dig out these values better (Wanxin, 2012).

The government affairs report in the new media is a news report formed around the governance activities of the leading organs of the party and government, including, by and large, reports on meetings, activities of leading cadres, document releases, and other aspects. Because of the limitations of its content, it is easy to fall into the pattern and procedural rut. Only by following the law of news value and using news value theory to guide the practice of new media content operation in government affairs can we maximize the news value of government affairs reports (Wanxin, 2012).



1.1.4 Importance of Audience Engagement

Carol Peterman, a leading contemporary American scholar, has proposed “Participation and Democratic Theory”, which believes that the right of the audience to participate in the media must be guaranteed, a true democracy should be one in which all citizens are directly and fully involved in the decision-making of public affairs (Peterman, 2006). The audience not only has the identity of information receiver, but also has multiple identities such as receiver, disseminator, and publisher. Audience engagement with news refers to appealing to a wide range of audiences for browsing and reading news, or to be generally informed about the news.





In the social media news context, engagement refers to the time that audiences are willing to spend on related content while reading; the quality of audience attention (Chan-Olmsted & Wolter, 2018), and interaction among content, platform, and audiences, including commenting on news stories (Opgenhaffen, 2020), exchanging opinions with other audiences, sharing news stories or creating personal profiles (Geqi & Chunlei, 2021).

Government media communication is often political, and the audience's participation in government media is a form of political participation. In real life, multiple media run parallel, and everything is interconnected. Diverse media are like the capillaries of the social organism, reconstructing the ecology of social communication and touching and penetrating every aspect of the living world.

Focusing on the political field, many of the changes that have occurred in the politics of the 21st century is closely related to the participation of the media. Mediated political communication has occupied a core position in today's democratic politics and public life (Peiyuan, 2019).

Political participation is not only the foundation for the survival of modern democratic systems but also an essential way for citizens to realize their political rights. As a common political phenomenon in modern society, political participation has always received widespread attention from political science, sociology, journalism, communication, and related disciplines. For the government, understanding the political participation of residents can help them make better decisions and build a service-oriented government; for the media, political participation can also measure the reach and impact of media information on the





audience. The continuous optimization of media and the increasing updating of technology have provided more media channels for residents' political participation (Changle & Pengjian, 2021).

Audience engagement in the new government media has become an indispensable part of government information dissemination. The audience's willingness and the degree of engagement directly affect the communication power and influence of the new government media.

Some empirical studies have confirmed that audience engagement will affect the audience's trust and satisfaction with the government, change the public's perception of the government's image and the legitimacy of public officials, and have a positive impact on social governance and policy-making.



1.2 Problem Statement

1.2.1 Practical Gap

In the mobile Internet era, new government media is essential for the government to promote government disclosure, government services, and social governance. It has multiple functions of information release, government services, and public opinion guidance. Among them, information release is the most basic function of government media. In the specific practice process, the information release of government media faces a series of practical challenges and communication dilemmas.





The main problems include insufficient content innovation, serious homogeneity, originality, perfunctory content release, lack of market skills in content distribution, and other content strategy issues; Audience participation problems such as low audience participation data and low participation levels; Issues of hindered video development.

1.2.1.1 Lack of Content Strategy

After many years of development, government affairs accounts have gradually standardized its management and operation, but also gradually exposed shortcomings in content production with serious homogeneity, lack of originality, low pertinence, and lack of content innovation (Wensheng & Mengjie, 2021; Chaoning, 2021; Wei, 2020; Jinghua, 2018).

① Insufficient innovation in government new media content

Under the promotion of the State Council, China's government departments at or above the county level have opened new government media, but a considerable number of new government media need more innovation in content (Yu, 2019). From the government information dissemination perspective, many new media use new media platforms as internal "blackboard newspapers" and focus on reporting leadership activities, work meetings, and notification documents (Wensheng & Mengjie, 2021). When selecting content, government media largely consider their propaganda purposes and ideological dissemination needs, which results in a





disconnect between the content supply of government media and the content demand of the public and leads to the solidification of content (Zhemin, 2021). They need to pay more attention to social issues and interpretation of the implementation of new policies.

Some government media operators are government propaganda department staff, while others are third-party media hosting agencies. The particularity of the operating entity leads to a lack of professional standard guidance in the content selection of government media or a rigid application of news selection standards such as news value, which affects the production of high-quality content (Ting, 2015). Government media are often high-handed and use official language, which also makes government content boring.



② Insufficient original content

In the process of pursuing rapid dissemination and wide coverage, government new media accounts, especially grassroots government media accounts, often tend to ignore the depth and originality of content (Yandan & Ming, 2016). Many accounts are mainly "mechanically conveyed" and are accustomed to reprinting information released by higher-level authorities. Their daily work only involves editing and forwarding, and there are few opportunities for creative writing, resulting in serious homogeneity of published content and a lack of original content such as in-depth explanations and interpretations (Chaoning, 2021). This approach not only fails to meet the public's diverse information needs but also ignores the audience's local needs and concerns about hot topics.





③ Lacking marketing skills in content distribution

Different platforms have different characteristics. On the Weibo platform, manuscripts are usually short, and content publishers must attach great importance to the creation and participation of Weibo topics, the grasp of Weibo hot searches, the application of multimedia forms, and the use of the @ function (Chuxin, 2024); On the WeChat public account platform, due to the restrictions on push permissions, articles often pursue both length and depth; On the Bilibili platform, users have a strong learning purpose, so long videos and informative videos are the most valuable, and a unique barrage culture has also been formed on this platform; On the Douyin platform, special attention must be paid to the frequency of updates, the time of updates, the use of background music in the video, the length of the video, the horizontal and vertical screen of the video, etc (Xi, 2024).



Wei (2020) suggested government media lacks appropriate new media marketing skills, does not understand the habits of the fans and audiences in terms of their use of the relevant media, clicking time, and frequency of tweeting. Jinghua (2018) also proposed that news content distribution for government media is not integrated with the news consumption habits of current audiences and the characteristics of social platforms.





1.2.1.2 Low Level of Audience Participation

In the era of traditional media, information exchange channels are single, governments basically are talking to themselves, there is almost no way of feedback of the audiences. In the era of mobile Internet, multimedia, multiple platforms and multiple channels guarantee that audiences can actually enjoy the right of engagement with governments affairs accounts. But one-way interaction tends to still be obvious, audience engagement level is low, deep participation is lacking in government TikTok affairs accounts, some government media have even turned into “zombie accounts” that no one cares about (Ying, 2019).

Compared with the speed and strength of the new media communication platform, the participation of the audience is not satisfactory. The typical problems of audience engagement in the current governmental new media are focused on the following aspects: Firstly, Government media are unable to produce valuable, interesting, attractive content that can resonate and identify with users (Fang & Shengli, 2019). Secondly, the interactivity of the governmental new media is poor, and the response rate is not high. Just like building a platform but not operating it, the phenomenon of "posting but not responding" is still common in the new government media (Pengfei, 2021). Some government media lack an open spirit and interactive awareness and are unable to speak out proactively and effectively. Thirdly, there is still much room for improvement in the convenience of audience participation in the new government affairs media (Chuanbao, 2023).





In general, the content itself is an important factor influencing audience engagement. The high-quality content released by the governments' accounts can form a greater influence and deeper engagement than previous forms of communication based on the advantages of the short video platform. In the meantime, low-quality content may not bring any audience participation at all (Huaxin, Yufeng, & Xiaoran, 2019). This makes the lack of engagement problem more prominent and crucial.

1.2.1.3 The Development Dilemma of Government Short Videos

Government affairs short videos are one form of government new media communication and a hot topic in the current field of new media communication. Although the government short video platform started late, it has developed rapidly and has huge traffic, so it is a platform that government media must deploy (Shan, 2023). However, we should also note that short video platform is not the only platform that government media need to operate because they can only be in the form of videos. Government media often still need Weibo platforms, WeChat public account platforms, etc. to carry their text content and service functions (Xiaochuan, 2024). This multi-platform layout is itself a huge challenge for government media operators.

In the development process, the government's new media has gained rich experience. However, these experiences can't be copied or used on government short video platforms. Most government video media are in the exploratory and start-up





stages (Zhi & Wanzhen, 2024). There are a series of problems in creating and disseminating government short videos, which restricts the upgrade and development of government information releases.

In terms of content strategy, the traditional text and images content production strategy is obviously not suitable for the output of video content. There is a misunderstanding in creating government short videos, which use vital perspectives, colors, and sound effects to gain attention while neglecting content creation and creative planning. The homogeneity of online short videos makes government information lack a sense of identity and adds too many entertainment elements (Haiying, 2022). Many operators are still stuck in the concepts and attitudes of simply integrating various video materials. This integration lacks detailed analysis of content and in-depth research on editing, color, and lens (Xiaojuan, 2021).



In terms of professional requirements, compared with images and text communication, short video communication has specific technical barriers. However, the number of talents recruited by the government for new media is limited, and even most of the staff are not graduates in the new media field. There needs to be more ability in planning and creating short videos (Baohu, 2023).

A significant advantage of social media platforms is sharing and interaction. Restricted by communication thinking and operators' enthusiasm, the government's short video platform needs more interaction with the audience. However, influenced by the traditional one-way communication thinking, the task is often regarded as completed after the short video is sent, making it difficult to form a stable fan group



on the short video platform (Baohu, 2023).

The lack of content strategy based on government short video platforms, the lack of interaction, the limited audience participation, and the superficial understanding of the relationship between content strategy and audience participation have brought about the dilemma of the development of government short videos. This is also the necessity and value of this study.

Table 1.1

Summary of Government Media Development Issues

Issues	Issue description	Correspondence
Issue one: Lack of content strategy	①Lack content innovation. ②Lack original content ③Lack marketing skills	RO2
Issue two: Low level of audience participation	①One-way interaction ②The content itself	RO1, RO3
Issue three: The development dilemma of government short videos	①Lack of short video content strategy ②Lack of interaction	RO4

1.2.2 Knowledge Gap

With the rise and rapid development of short video platforms, the focus of scholars' research has realized a shift from platforms such as political microblogs and Twitter to political TikTok, Some factors related to short videos are also starting to appear in the research, such as the emotional colour of the music, the video graphics. The interactive relationship between government short video content and audience



participation has been the focus of scholars' research. For example, Mengting (2021), Qiang et al., (2019) validated the effect of multiple influencing factors such as topic types on audience engagement of government affairs Douyin; and Bonsón et al (2015) validated the relationship between content types and Citizens' engagement. The consistent conclusion is that content types significantly affect audience engagement, and that topical political information promotes the three behaviours of liking, retweeting, and commenting at the same time (Mengting ,2021; Qiang et al., 2019).

All of these studies cover as many variables related to content and form as possible, but for practitioners operating political Douyin, "How to select content? What kind of content to choose? ", this is a question that have yet to be answered. In other words, a clear path of localized content practice has not been formed, and it is too general to guide content selection only through topic types and content types.

In terms of theoretical basis, some of the existing studies explore the relationship between government Douyin accounts and audience engagement using information ecology theory (Mengting,2021); some explore the motivation of audience engagement from theories such as use and satisfaction theory, impression management, and framing theory. Although Jie et al.'s (2018) study used news value theory to explore the interactive relationship between audience engagement and news value in political microblogs, no scholars were found to further validate the applicability and evolution of news value theory in the operation of political short videos.





Most of the existing audience engagement studies use engagement indicators such as likes, retweets, and comments. Different engagement indicators not only have different meanings, but also reflect differences in the level of engagement. The question of "how to improve the content in order to realize the change from low level to high level of engagement" remains to be further explained.

1.2.3 Methodology Gap

Bernard (1952) believes that content analysis is a research method that objectively, systematically, and quantitatively describes communication content. In this method, researchers systematically analyze the explicit content characteristics of the document to infer the underlying content characteristics related to it (Wildemuth, 2017, pp. 308–330). Content analysis is widely used in media research, but descriptive statistical methods such as counting and frequency are mostly used (Macnamara, 2005). Regression analysis methods that study the relationship between variables are rare. This study uses regression analysis to verify the relationship between government media content and audience participation, and proposes corresponding content strategies to improve audience participation. In terms of data analysis methods, there are certain breakthroughs.

In addition to content analysis, this study also used focus groups and in-depth interviews to interview government media administrators, users, and researchers. The selection of methods fully considered the advantages, limitations, and applicable scenarios of different techniques. The researcher consulted a large number of





theoretical literatures to ensure the appropriateness of method selection and the standardization of method implementation. This study breaks through the limitations of simply analyzing communication content and materials. It not only looks at the content from the perspective of content, but also from the perspective of content producers, consumers, and researchers, providing deeper insights into research issues. The implementation of the interview method in this study better reflects the differentiated views and opinions of government media administrators, and users on government media content, to better achieve the bridging of government media information supply and demand, and improve the efficiency of political communication.

The adoption of mixed methods in this study not only ensures the breadth and depth of the research results; it has both macro-generalizable data guidance and micro-in-depth cases for reference; it explores the questions of "what" and "how much", as well as the questions of "why" and "how", providing a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the research issues. This largely makes up for the lack of mixed methods in media communication research and is innovative.

1.3 Research Objectives

The specific research objectives are as follows:

RO1: To study the relationship between content strategy (news value elements & content format) and audience engagement behavior of government media.





RO2: To analyze the content operation practice (news value elements & content format) of government media from government and audience perspectives.

RO3: To explore how to improve audience engagement with content strategy.

RO4: To validate the video content strategy framework for government media operation practice to enhance audience engagement.

1.4 Research Questions

In order to achieve the research goals, the research began with finding the answers to the research questions. The research questions were formulated to achieve the research objectives. The research questions are as follows:

RQ1: What is the relationship between content strategy (news value elements & content format) and audience engagement behavior of government media?

RQ2: What is the content operation practice (news value elements & content format) of government media from government and audience perspectives?

RQ3: How to improve audience engagement with content strategy?

RQ4: How is the video content strategy framework for government media operation practice to enhance audience engagement?





1.5 Research Hypotheses

This study uses a mixed method starting with quantitative research approach. In a quantitative research design, it is common for research hypotheses to be developed. A hypothesis implies a proposition or a set of propositions formulated as an explanation for the occurrence of some particular phenomenon, either as a tentative conjectural assertion to guide the investigation only or as something accepted as highly probable based on facts (Toledo et al., 2011). Therefore, based on the identified research objective one and the corresponding research question one, the researcher developed the research hypothesis for this study.

H1. There is a relationship between proximity, positivity and like behavior.



H2. There is a relationship between interesting, controversy and share behavior.

H3. There is a relationship between interesting, usefulness and save behavior.

H4. There is a relationship between controversy, negativity and comment behavior.

H5. There is a relationship between posting time, layout, originality and audience engagement.





1.6 Conceptual Framework

News value elements can influence audience engagement behaviour in political media. Currently, there already have been studies proving that news value is an important predictive variable of audience engagement, such as Weber, (2013) found that eight news value elements, such as proximity and controversy, positively promote audience commenting behaviour; Jie et al., (2018) found that six elements, namely, timeliness, periodicity, interestingness, prominence, individuality, and controversy, have a significant predictive power of audience engagement. However, the validity of this logic has not yet been tested on short video platforms. This was also the original intent and purpose of this study.

Different platforms have different publishing rules. For example, the Weibo platform should make good use of topics; the WeChat platform is suitable for in-depth long articles, etc. Even different video platforms require mastering the publishing rules and techniques of the specific platform. Current video platforms include Douyin, Kuaishou, WeChat Video Account, etc. Douyin is the leading video platform that government media pays more attention to. On this platform, content formats such as video update frequency, video duration, video release time, originality, horizontal or vertical presentation of the video, etc., may affect the audience participation effect of the video content.

The audience participation evaluation system is slightly different depending on the platform. On the Douyin platform, likes, shares, saves, and comments reflect different forms, levels, and motivations of audience participation and also have





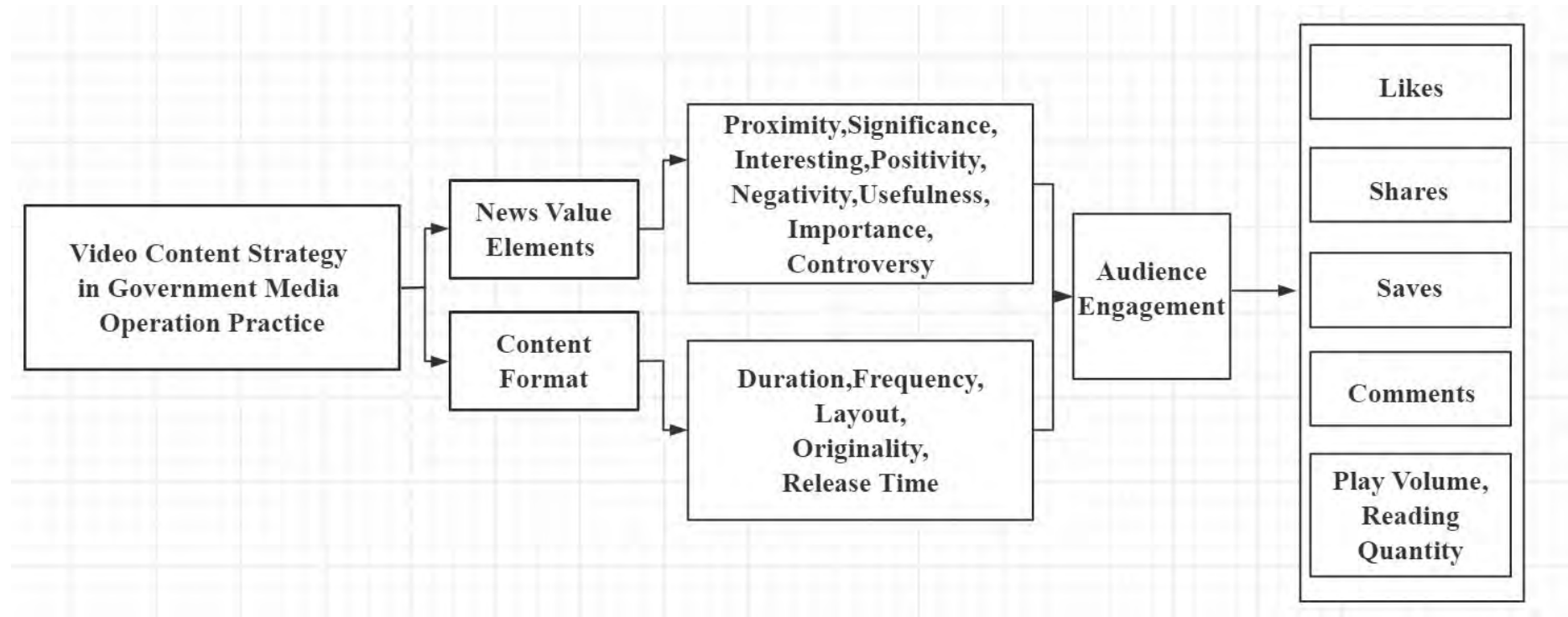
different correspondences with content.

This study generally uses news value theory and social participation theory as the theoretical framework. In the quantitative research, eight news value elements are used as independent variables, three video format elements are used as control variables and four audience participation elements are used as dependent variables to explore the relationship between content strategy and the relationship between audience participation. In the qualitative research, we continued to explore the impact on audience participation from 8 news value elements and 5 video format elements. We expanded the analysis on "how to view, improve, and manage audience participation data in government media?". Figure 1.2 illustrates conceptual framework of the study.



Figure 1.2

Research Conceptual Framework





1.7 Research Significance

The study will benefit the following in different ways:

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

News value theory was formed in the traditional media era but retained the possibility of continued innovation and development in the digital news era. News values are relative and fluid. News values that apply here may not be applicable elsewhere. News values that are popular now may be abandoned in the future (Hongyi, 2021). This study is based on the changes brought about by the development of short videos as a new form and the particular communication subject of the government to the elements of news value. It transforms the concept of news value into specific and operational elements and standards to directly guide the development of government media and to fill the gap in research on the application of news value in government media.

The audience participation mechanism of short video content shows a huge difference from other types of content participation mechanisms. However, due to the short development time of video content, the relevant research of scholars has not yet fully covered this field, especially the field of government affairs short video content. There is no clear answer to the question of factors affecting audience participation. This research can answer this question well.





Like, share, save, and comment behaviours have different motivations and incentives. Like, share, save, and comment behaviours are highly related to the news value elements contained in video content. Related scholars have done less research in this area. Some scholars believe that like is an effective response to messages, whereas comment is a cognitive one. Other scholars have focused on the relations between news value and audience engagement in governments' Weibo sites, but there is no research that explores the interactive relationship between news value and the three behaviours of like, share, and comment in Douyin. This research fills up the theoretical research gap in this area and also provides theoretical guidance for the public.

1.7.2 Practical Significance



- ① This research can provide judgment standards and a basis for government media's video content selection and content production.
- ② This research can provide a practical framework for reference in the content release form and content attributes of government media.
- ③ This research can provide a feasible path for government media to improve government-civilian communication and promote audience participation.

Ultimately, this research can improve government media's influence, communication, and interaction, bring it closer to the people, and achieve optimal





communication effects.

1.8 Scope and Limitations

This study has some limitations.

First of all, there are many influencing factors for audience engagement in government affairs video content, which include the characteristics of the platform, the size of the account, the personality of the audience itself, and the content attributes of the account (topic itself, content carrying form, content expression style, video duration, and social atmosphere). However, this research focuses on the relationship between content strategy and audience participation, especially news value elements and content format. It will no longer discuss audience participation based on platform characteristics, the size of the account and the audience's personality.

Second, the content analysis method of this study selected the five outstanding government affairs accounts as the samples. However, these five samples cannot represent or reflect the current status of all tiers of government accounts from the country to the provincial level to the cities and counties. These five samples cannot provide specific guidance on issues that arise in specific areas such as education, public security and inspections either. This study focuses on the audience participation of current affairs news in comprehensive government departments only.





The five government media operation teams selected in the interview method of this study include both teams that are biased toward government services and those that are biased toward government communication; there are both self-operated teams and outsourced teams; there are both single-platform operation teams and multi-platform operations team. However, due to the limitations of the research, these contents cannot be elaborated.

1.9 Operational Definitions

To understand the content of the current investigation, the following terms are defined operationally:



1.9.1 New Media of Government Affairs

New media of government affairs (NMGA) refers to government departments use new media channels, implement information release, public opinion guidance and provide people's livelihood services (Chaoning, 2021). The current government affairs new media mainly includes government affairs WeChat account、government affairs Weibo account、government affairs Douyin account、government affairs client and many other forms (Zhemin, 2020).





1.9.2 News Value

This study adopts the definition of news value in the Dictionary of Journalism and Communication published in 2014. It explains that "news value is the quality (element) inherent in a fact that can attract the general attention of the audience to a certain extent, and is the basis for the measurement and selection of news facts by the subject of news communication"(Danesi, 2014). These factors usually refer to novelty, importance, prominence, interest, and proximity (Guozheng, 2018).

1.9.3 Audience Engagement Index

Xuejing (2020) proposed that audience engagement includes actual and perceived engagement. Actual engagement refers to specific behaviors such as likes, shares and comments on social media. Perceived engagement is mainly emotional engagement, including the construction of identity, the formation of identity, and the generation of a sense of belonging. Perceived engagement is difficult to measure, so it is not the focus of this research.

The operational definition of "audience engagement" in this study mainly refers to the existing research results of foreign online news audience engagement. Bonsón et al. (2015, p.57) proposed the concept of the "Citizen Engagement Index" in their research on the Facebook pages of European local governments. The index is composed of three secondary indexes, namely "Popularity", "Commitment" and "Virality". The three secondary indexes correspond to the number of "likes",





"comments" and "shares" of Facebook news. The "Interaction Power" indicator in the "New Government Media Impact Report" of the Public Opinion Monitoring Office of People's Daily Online consists of the "number of comments", "number of shares" and "number of likes" (Jie et al.,2018). Considering these indicator systems comprehensively, this study mainly uses three variables: "number of comments", "number of shares" and "number of likes" to measure audience engagement in new government media. At the same time, combined with the characteristics of the TikTok platform, this study also examined the number of saves and video playback indicators.

1.9.4 Video Content Format

Video content format refers to the video's external characteristics, such as the length of the video, the source of the video, the layout of the video, the duration of the video, the releasing frequency of the video, etc.

1.9.5 Social Media

Social media is a virtual community and online platform for people to create, share, and exchange opinions, views, and experiences (Chun et al., 2010). The most significant difference between social media and social mass media is that it gives users more choice and editorial power to assemble themselves into reading and listening community (Graham, 2014). Social media can also be presented in many different forms, including text, images, music, and video. At this stage, social media mainly includes social networking sites, microblogs, WeChat, Douyin, blogs, forums,





and podcasts (Chuanbao, 2023).

1.9.6 Short Video of Government Affairs

The short video of government affairs can be subdivided into three parts: "government affairs", "short" and "video". Specifically, "government" specifies the type of institutions and information content of short videos released by government agencies, party, and government organs, as well as business units and other institutions of government affairs; "short" caters to the fragmented reading habits of current social network users. Restrictions on the length of the video release, generally within 1 minute; "video" refers to the media symbols for the information carried in the form of video (Xiaochuan, 2024). Therefore, short video of government affairs is defined as government agencies, party and government organs, and business units to meet the requirements of government propaganda in the new era, relying on mobile terminal technology and internet information platforms, and publishing videos of government affairs within minutes on mobile short video application platform (Mengting, 2021).

