

THE CULTURAL PENETRATION AND SOCIOCULTURAL IMPACT OF ANIME AMONG CHINESE YOUNG PEOPLE

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Received: 12 November 2025

Accepted: 4 February 2026

Abstract: Anime has penetrated into the daily life of Chinese young people in a form of cross-cultural communication. The existing research is insufficient in systematically exploring the cultural penetration and influence of anime on Chinese youth. There are problems such as a single perspective and method limitations. In order to explore the multi-dimensional effect of anime among Chinese youth, this study analyses the impact of anime on Chinese youth in terms of cultural identity, values, personal development, and social behaviour by integrating and reviewing literature research. The study found that its impact shows significant duality. On the one hand, it can promote cross-cultural understanding and individual identity expression, and on the other hand, it may cause risks such as conflict of values and violent behaviour, bringing new challenges to the education and guidance of Chinese young people. At the same time, this study also points out the limitations of previous research in terms of theoretical depth and sample representativeness, and hopes that future research can be improved in terms of research methods and design.

Keywords: Anime; young people; cultural penetration; cross-cultural communication

INTRODUCTION

The cultural penetration and sociocultural impact of anime on young people in China constitute an interdisciplinary research field that has attracted sustained attention. Over the past 20 years, the anime industry has developed rapidly, becoming a significant part of Japanese popular culture and a cornerstone of Japan's economic development. Japan is renowned as the "Kingdom of Animation" and is the world's largest producer and exporter of anime content. The rise of television anime has facilitated the formation and development of Japan's ACG (Anime, Comic, Game) industry, with anime occupying a central position within the sector. The global market size for anime in 2024 is estimated at 3.84 trillion yen (approximately 24.62 billion USD), once again setting a new record (The Association of Japanese Animations, 2025).

The development of global economic integration has driven rapid innovation in mass media channels, further promoting the dissemination and development of Japanese popular culture and encouraging cross-cultural exchanges. As a significant representative of Japanese popular culture, anime is widely spread around the world, affecting the life, learning and other aspects of young people around the world, and also promoting anime to gradually become an important part of young people's culture.

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Since the introduction of the first anime, Astro Boy, in 1980, anime has gradually gained popularity among Chinese audiences, particularly among young people. These young Chinese individuals have not only become the primary consumers of anime but also actively participate in cultural activities such as ACG clubs, role-playing, and fan conferences, and actively participate in the dissemination of anime culture (Yang, 2022). This remarkable cultural phenomenon has attracted widespread academic interest. The cultural penetration and socio-cultural influence of anime on Chinese youth have become an interdisciplinary research field that continues to receive attention.

An increasing number of academic studies have explored the impact of anime on the values, identity, and social behaviour of young people in China. However, these studies are scattered across disciplines such as media research, cultural sociology, and educational psychology, resulting in a fragmented and sometimes contradictory understanding of the issue. Regarding research methodology, qualitative approaches or convenience sampling are predominantly employed, with a notable lack of mixed-methods or longitudinal research designs capable of establishing causal relationships. In addition, this study limits the research subjects to Chinese young people aged 10-24 years old, and the core focusses on groups from adolescents to early youth, including middle school students, high school students and college students. Most of the research subjects focused on college students in China, while ignoring younger people (such as junior school students and high school students). This limits the understanding of group internal differences based on age, gender, and socio-cultural background. These limitations cast doubt on the generalisability and reliability of existing research conclusions and hinder evidence-based practical guidance and policy formulation. Therefore, a more systematic and comprehensive literature review is required to integrate research findings and critically evaluate this research field in terms of methodological rigour and theoretical depth.

To address these research gaps, this study systematically reviews empirical research on the cultural penetration and social and cultural impacts of anime among Chinese youth. Its main objectives include: (1) Systematically retrieve, screen, and synthesise empirical research evidence in this field; (2) Critically evaluate the methodological rigour of existing research; (3) Identify core research findings, contradictions, and research gaps. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions: 1. The existing research describes the main channels and modes of cultural penetration 2. What types of socio-cultural influences (such as values, behaviours, identity) are reported in these studies 3. What are the advantages and limitations of research methodology in this field?

LITERATURE REVIEW

At present, research mainly focuses on exploring the cultural dissemination of anime in China and the psychological, cognitive, and behavioural impacts on young Chinese people. Most scholars believe that anime combines unique national cultural elements with contemporary popular cultural trends and social values. These elements in anime can significantly affect the cultural identity, values, learning choices and psychological development of young Chinese people, fostering both positive and negative factors. On the one hand, they can promote their growth, and on the other hand, they may also bring new challenges to their original values and behaviours. This research focuses on empirical research into the social and cultural impacts of anime on Chinese youth, through summarising, generalising, and conducting a critical analysis. This study primarily focuses on the impact of anime on young Chinese people in the area of cultural identity and values. Pop culture serves as an important cultural repertoire for young people's self-identification and socialisation (Duff, 2022). Popular culture can provide narrative symbols for the audience, helping them to gradually understand their identity and social dynamics and shape it in the process. As a significant branch of global popular culture,

anime is recognised for its ability to spread its values and national cultural elements worldwide, transcending multicultural barriers. This attraction not only affects the values and ways of Chinese youth's thinking, but also promotes their exchanges with anime culture, creating an emotional and cultural identity.

Scholars have also discussed this phenomenon from various perspectives. Some scholars focus on the impact of specific anime works on young Chinese people and conduct qualitative research on the analysis of selected anime works to explore their impact. For example, Cai and Kou (2022) analysed the classic anime *Inuyasha* and found that the key to its success in China lies in its skilful fusion of Japanese traditional culture and Chinese culture. The collision and integration of the cultural elements evoke familiarity and nostalgia for young Chinese people, fostering a deep empathy, thus establishing a cultural identity with the audience; this cause-and-effect has a significant impact on the audience's values, moral aesthetics, and other aspects. Although this kind of analysis of an individual anime work can provide a deep interpretation of the narrative strategy of cultural integration, its conclusions are mainly based on theoretical explanations by researchers and lack empirical data on the audience's actual reception. Therefore, the impact it reveals is more biased towards potential textual possibilities than towards audience effects. Similarly, Bao (2022) focuses on three anime works that have been popular in China in recent years: *Haikyuu!!*, *Jujutsu Kaisen*, and *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba*. Through the analysis of the theme narrative, framework and impact of these three anime on Chinese young people, it emphasises how these anime works shape different characters from multiple dimensions, but can reflect the daily life and experiences of young people. Notably, these anime gradually transcend the traditional anime narrative structure and stereotyped influence, specifically in their construction of female characters. This is a great progress in the value concept of anime works, which can resonate with young Chinese people and encourage the spread of new values.

Some scholars have also used quantitative research methods to conduct research. For example, Wang (2022) conducted a survey of 400 students from four universities in Binzhou City, China, to assess the impact of anime on the values of the students. The study found that anime has a positive impact on cultural narrative, personal growth, encouraging self-awareness and teamwork. This study adopts the method of quantitative research, but the scope of application of its conclusions is obviously limited: the sample is all from universities in the same region, which lack to cover a wider or younger group of Chinese young people, and the representativeness of Chinese young people is weak. To some extent, anime fills the spiritual emptiness of young Chinese people and provides a gentler solution to the problem. However, it also emphasised that some anime will also have a negative impact on Chinese young people, especially those that distort true history or contain violence and explicit content, which has an extremely negative impact on the shaping of the values of young Chinese people. The existing research on the influence of anime on the cultural identity and values of Chinese youth is relatively diverse. Some scholars focus on the positive or negative single-aspect impact of anime on young Chinese people. For example, Wang and Yan (2025), through the study of the impact of dark transformation anime on the values of Chinese young people, found that some teenagers exhibit problems such as individualism, lack of rational thinking, and aggravation of violent tendencies. This study explores the negative impact of certain anime categories. In fact, in the current study of this issue, more scholars are analysing the impact of anime on the values and cultural identity of young Chinese people from a dialectical perspective, which is also the main trend of research at this stage. The most controversial aspect is mainly the pornographic and violent plots involved in some anime works. Sun (2019) analysed the impact of shonen anime on young Chinese individuals, focusing on both its positive and negative aspects. This type of anime work helps to relieve the psychological pressure on young people and enhances their positive emotional experiences. It can also cultivate artistic aesthetics and team

consciousness, with positive impacts across many aspects. However, one should be wary of violent pornography and other bad plots in some anime works that may have a negative impact on the physical and mental health of Chinese youth, such as their sense of right and wrong, perceptions of national identity and values. This view was also supported in the study by Xia and Cui (2024). They conducted a survey of Chinese youth in three cities in China's province A and found that some youth love to watch anime with graphic violence due to reasons such as the pursuit of their own personality identity and pathological curiosity. To a certain extent, these violent action animes can meet the psychological needs of young people to resist injustice and expect respect, but they also lead to the negative effects of young people being isolated, impulsive, and exhibiting extreme behaviour.

Cross-cultural research has further inspired the influence of anime on the values of young Chinese people. Wu (2021) compared the perceptions of national image held by 20 Chinese and 20 Japanese individuals through interviews, examining these perspectives from the standpoint of cultural exchange. His research results show that anime, as an important part of popular culture, has reshaped the attitude of young Chinese people towards Japanese culture. It has greatly promoted their acceptance of Japanese values, including the philosophy of life, interpersonal relationships and ideals. This study can reveal an in-depth understanding of the respondents' true emotions and ideas through in-depth interviews, but its small sample size limits its ability to address the breadth of the field, thereby limiting the universality of its conclusions.

Anime has a multifaceted impact on the cultural identity and values of Chinese youth, including both positive and negative aspects. Anime integrates multicultural elements and closely aligns with the narrative style of daily life, strengthening the emotional connection between anime and young Chinese people. All these emphasise the impact of anime on the cultural identity and values of young Chinese people. However, although anime promotes cultural exchanges, it may contain negative content and values, which requires Chinese youth to be critical when watching anime. Some studies also emphasised the potential influence mechanism of anime on youth in the process of dissemination. Through a survey of Chinese college students, Zhang and Ding (2020) found that anime can enrich their entertainment activities and help relieve the pressure in real life. Positive values in the anime works, such as rigorous attitude towards life, struggle and team spirit, have invisibly influenced the thought, behaviour and cognition of young Chinese individuals. Conversely, some anime works will foster ideological identity. Some anime may lead to the distortion of values such as the views on love and life, and there are negative psychological suggestions and other effects. Similarly, Sun (2022) found that with the rapid development of the media, more young Chinese individuals choose anime as one of the important ways of leisure and entertainment. Anime culture is subtly affecting their aesthetic values, life values and moral values, even shaking the identity of national values. Overall, some researchers have realised that the influence of anime on the cultural identity and values of young Chinese people is actually more dual, and should dialectically view its value and potential hazards, and carry out research objectively.

Some scholars focus on the study of the social and psychological impact of anime on young Chinese people. They believe that anime affects the hobbies, consumption habits, daily lives, etcetera, of young Chinese people, and even extends to their social interaction and psychological development. Japanese scholar Ikegami Yoshihiko emphasised that teenagers who find it difficult to distinguish between the virtual world and the real world are more likely to be influenced by anime characters due to cognitive defects and immaturity. This vulnerability affects the formation and development of the audience's personality and psychology, making anime characters have an important impact on many aspects of teenage life (Ikegami Yoshihiko, 1985).

Some scholars have found that anime can play an auxiliary role in the psychological development of young Chinese people. For example, Jiang, Ma, and Yue (2022) discovered the rise of healing culture brought about by the healing anime trend, and a number of healing anime works that have appeared, such as Natsume's Book of Friends(2008) and Violet Evergarden (2018). This type of anime work can help young Chinese people relieve psychological stress, thereby promoting the development of psychological cognition. Wei, Yuan, and Fu (2014) found that anime has a positive impact on the mental health of Chinese youth. In his study, he emphasised that anime has a certain degree of influence on the personality traits of young Chinese individuals, especially in terms of personality and emotional stability. Compared with non-anime fans, Chinese youth with the status of anime fans are generally more outgoing and emotionally stable. This study shows that anime fans among Chinese youth are in a positive psychological state, but it does not clearly explain the causal relationship between anime and the extroverted personality and emotions of these young people. It is impossible to know whether watching anime makes people more outgoing and stable, or whether people who are more outgoing and stable are more likely to be attracted by anime and identify with its content. Yan (2020) focuses on sports anime, focusing on how sports anime helps develop young Chinese people's psychological adaptability and social interaction. By introducing different sports and their related knowledge and values, sports anime can help young Chinese individuals build a stronger sense of self-discipline, expand their social circle, and find more friends through common interests. Similarly, Chen (2025), through interviews with high school students who are fans of anime in Guangdong Province, China, has found that watching anime is not only a pastime for Chinese youth, but it is also an important channel for their emotional release and for socialisation purposes. Although this in-depth interview with Chinese high school students can explore the role of anime in their daily life, the research conclusions lack universality and further verification of the conclusions of this study in different regions, schools, and other backgrounds.

Some scholars have also carried out dialectical analysis and research on the impact of anime on the psychological development of young Chinese people. For example, Liu (2024) found that anime is dual in its psychological and emotional dimensions. He found that 55% of young Chinese people would take anime characters as idols and identify with them to relieve pressure in reality. However, if one indulges in virtual fantasy for a long time, it may lead to a blurred boundary between reality and virtuality, which does not support healthy development. Niu (2021) deeply explores the psychological dimensions of young people's exposure to anime through a mixed-methods approach combining questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The analysis indicates that anime content can help young Chinese people understand their ideal self, harmonise it with their real identity, and bring about the growth of personal and self-consciousness. Despite many positive effects, Niu has also raised the potential negative impact of anime on the psychological development of young Chinese people, such as a sense of emptiness in self-worth, a weakening of interpersonal relationships, and the continuation of harmful cultural values (e.g., suicide, apathy).

Some scholars focus on the impact of anime on the social behaviour and cultural consumption of young Chinese people. For example, Zhou (2021) pointed out that anime culture can relieve the psychological pressure of young Chinese people and cultivate social skills, which is more obvious in a high-pressure environment. However, the study also recognises that excessive exposure to anime may have negative effects, such as excessive consumption and escape from reality; exposure to violence or other inappropriate content may affect their behaviour.

Anime can bring many benefits, such as promoting cultural exchange and fostering self-awareness, but it also poses potential problems and challenges, for instance, being overly reliant on the virtual worlds created by anime, distorted interpersonal relationships and violent

behaviour. These findings emphasise the importance of critical participation in anime and addressing its potential negative effects. As research in this field continues to deepen and improve, it may be used to understand the intricate relationship between the media, culture, and young people in the process of globalisation.

Regarding the role of anime in the education and learning of young Chinese people, some scholars focus on its educational guidance in the teaching process. For example, Chen (2014) found that anime can help Chinese high school students understand new knowledge, promote their socialisation, and provide benign educational guidance on worldview, outlook on life, and values, thereby stimulating students' aesthetic interest. However, the uneven quality of anime works may bring about moral confusion, aesthetic vulgarisation, and wrong sex education. In recent years, more scholars have paid attention to the role of anime in practical teaching activities. More scholars pay attention to the role of anime in practical teaching activities. Through practical research, Weng (2024) found that anime, as a teaching tool, can stimulate Chinese students' interest in learning and effectively improve their practical application ability. Similarly, Tang (2020) analysed the performance of anime in Japanese teaching in China's middle schools. He believes that this organic integration has increased the learning interest and language ability of Japanese learners and deepened their understanding of Japanese culture. Liu (2017) also found that watching sports anime can enhance China's secondary school students' attention to sports, increase the frequency of participation in sports activities and help shape sports behaviour. For example, the widely acclaimed sports anime *Slam Dunk* (1993), *Haikyuu!!* (2014) and so on, which can arouse the audience's attention and enthusiasm for the sport. In addition, the influence of anime extends to classroom management in schools. Guo (2019) found that anime can play a positive role in China's high school class management, stimulating students' enthusiasm for learning while creating a class atmosphere of solidarity and mutual assistance. At the same time, it can help high school students shape their personal goals and stabilise the mood of the class. Anime has a multi-faceted impact on the education and learning of Chinese young people, involving multiple dimensions such as sports, language learning and class management.

In summary, the existing research depicts the complex situation of the influence of anime on young Chinese people from many aspects. However, the conclusions of many studies are based on methodologies that are specific and limited. To more objectively evaluate the reliability of the research conclusions in this field, we must critically examine the methodological rigour of these studies.

Based on a systematic reviews of existing literature, this study found that although a considerable number of empirical studies have been accumulated in this field and initially depicts the complex and multifaceted impact of anime on young Chinese individuals, it is constrained by methodological limitations and insufficient theoretical depth, which greatly affects the credibility, generalisability, and guiding value of the research findings to practice and policy. After reviewing the literature, this study found that existing research primarily faces the following problems.

First, the research method is not rigorous enough, and the research conclusions lack persuasiveness. For example, the samples of some studies are relatively concentrated, and the research subjects are students from a university or a city. The coverage of the survey is relatively small, and it is difficult to represent the overall situation of young Chinese people. Almost all studies are carried out at some point in time, not for long-term studies. In the research results, it is hard to judge whether it is the change in values and other aspects caused by anime, or whether people who hold such values prefer to watch a certain kind of anime. Second, in the selection of research subjects, the research is not targeted enough at certain groups. The majority of research on Chinese youth focuses on the college stage (19-24 years

old), and there is a lack of research on the more critical stage of value formation in junior high and senior high school (11-18 years old).

Third, most studies are mainly based on phenomenal analysis and description, which lack theoretical depth. Many studies draw research conclusions based on in-depth analysis of phenomena and collected data, and lack the use of mature theoretical frameworks. This makes it difficult for research to become systematic, limiting the academic value and practical guidance that are significant to the research conclusions.

Existing research involves many fields such as values, cultural identity, social behaviour, etc., but it lacks systematic depth and comprehensive research, and lacks comprehensive research on the current situation of the impact of anime on Chinese young people in recent years.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts the systematic literature review method. The purpose is to systematically and objectively sort out the existing empirical research on the cultural penetration and social and cultural impacts of anime among young Chinese individuals. Through the steps of retrieval, screening, evaluation and synthesis, the existing relevant research is analysed and explored, and all literature that meets the screening criteria is selected for follow-up analysis and research. The specific methods are as follows:

First, this study conducts systematic retrieval in the following Chinese and English academic databases to ensure that the research covers more comprehensive literature, such as China Knowledge Network (CNKI), Wanfang Data, and Google Scholar. As this study primarily involves Chinese youth, thus it focuses on Chinese academic database retrieval. The search terms selected for this study employ the following thematic combinations: “Chinese” or “China”; “adolescent” or “youth”; “anime” or “Japanese animation”; “influence” or “impact” or “effect”. Combine these words for retrieval. When searching, connect the above keyword groups with the 'and' logic, and choose to use the corresponding Chinese keywords for the Chinese database.

Subsequently, the retrieved literature is screened. In terms of research subjects, it is required to screen references for young Chinese individuals, within the age range of 10-24 years old, or to clearly indicate that the research subjects are Chinese middle school students, high school students or college students, and exclude literature that does not match the research object. In terms of research content, it is required to screen empirical research on the impact of anime on the cultural penetration and social behaviour of Chinese youth, and exclude literature that only discusses non-audiential influence topics such as industry or technology. In terms of sources, literature published in academic journals or theses is chosen, and non-research literature (such as reviews and news reports) is excluded.

After that, the screened literature is evaluated, with a focus on the credibility of its research design, sample representativeness, data collection, and analysis. This helps to weigh the reliability of the conclusions of different studies when synthesising the findings.

Finally, the screened literature is comprehensively analysed, primarily using narrative synthesis and thematic analysis. The focus is on the research problems of this review: compare, classify, and synthesise the results of different studies, and identify the limitations of their research.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Based on a systematic synthesis of existing empirical literature, this study found that the social and cultural impacts of anime on young Chinese people show a distinct, complex and multi-level structure. Specifically, these findings can be analysed along four core dimensions: the duality of cultural influence, the practical transformation of identity, the risks to cognitive development, and the methodological limitations of existing research.

This study found that the cultural influence of anime is mainly realised through the two paths of "emotional and spiritual resonance" and "value transmission and collision", and the results are dual. Research results show that anime has a wide influence among young Chinese individuals and has become an important cultural consumption activity in their daily lives. With the development of science and technology, the means of communication have expanded. Anime has quickly expanded the cultural horizons of Chinese youth, met their spiritual and cultural needs while gradually and subtly shaped their psychological development, social behaviour, and other aspects. By watching anime, Chinese youth can be exposed to ideas and behavioural patterns that are different from their cultural norms, which may change their behavioural cognition. Specifically, the existing research provides clear evidence: anime has a positive impact on young Chinese people with its unique narrative style, thematic ideas and character modelling. For example, Bao's (2022) research on the themes, frameworks and other texts of the three anime works shows its positive influence on Chinese young people. Similarly, Liu (2024) shows that anime characters have also created another world of choice for Chinese youth. They will bring themselves into the characters and give them space to release realistic pressure. However, the negative impact also exists. At the same time, due to cultural differences, there are also contradictions and conflicts between the values in some anime and Chinese cultural and social moral standards. Research confirms that this conflict is not theoretically possible, but has a practical impact. For example, the research by Sun (2019) and Xia and Cui (2024) pointed out that violent pornographic plots, gender stereotypes, or wrong historical narratives in some anime will evoke extreme behavioural effects such as value confusion and violent tendencies in young Chinese individuals. This is also an inevitable part of cross-cultural communication. From this perspective, the cultural influence of anime is a "double-edged sword", with both positive and negative influences. The key depends on the specific value content carried by the specific anime work.

Through in-depth analysis of relevant literature, the study found that anime has a significant impact on identity and social behaviour. First, anime has gradually formed a sense of identity with anime through characterisation and theme plots that are close to the lives of young Chinese people. This sense of identity is not passive acceptance, but externalised into a series of active "practical transformations":

The identity formed by young Chinese individuals is manifested in the imitation of anime characters, especially the imitation of language and costumes, and in participation in cosplay and other anime offline activities. As Yang (2022)'s research shows, this kind of anime cultural participation activity is not only entertainment, but also a deep cultural participation and identity that has transitioned from the passive acceptance of watching anime to active practice. In these activities, young Chinese people can expand their social circle and find a sense of belonging, thus deepening their sense of cultural identity, which also has a positive impact on the development of their social and interpersonal relationships. For example, Yan (2020)'s research found that sports anime can help young Chinese people expand their social scope and form an anime social circle. However, this process of conversion from passive to active can foster a strong sense of identity and may also have a negative impact. In addition, the ideology in anime is likely to conflict with the mainstream ideology of Chinese society at some point, which may also impact young Chinese individuals who are in the period of psychological growth, resulting in confusion in their process of self-identity formation, leading to the emergence of the phenomenon of "cultural duality".

The study found that the challenges anime pose to cognitive and social development are rooted in the misalignment between the immaturity of the psychological development of Chinese youth and the narrative complexity of anime. The introduction of foreign culture is undoubtedly a double-edged sword for local culture, which also applies to anime. Although

anime is beneficial for the cognitive and social development of Chinese youth, research has found that anime also has a negative impact. First, because the self-awareness of young people has not been fully formed, their psychology is still in the developmental stage and is easily affected by external factors. This also leads them to be easily immersed in the virtual worlds of anime, making it difficult to distinguish between the virtual and real worlds, resulting in unrealistic expectations and behaviours. When the results are not as good as those described in the anime, it often leads young people to fall into self-doubt and dissatisfaction with the real world. The research by Niu (2021) and Liu (2024) reveals that excessive immersion may lead to the blurring of the boundaries between the real and virtual worlds, affecting health and psychological development, as well as triggering other negative effects. In addition, some anime works have elements such as violence and pornography, which are likely to have a negative impact on the psychological development and social behaviour of young people. For example, Wang and Yan's (2025) research on dark transformation anime found that some young Chinese individuals imitate anime characters after watching anime, leading to violent problem-solving, excessive rebellion, and other issues that also affect their personal growth and personality development.

In summary, the existing relevant literature shows that. The influence of anime on the cognitive and social development of young Chinese people is dual. Anime not only helps Chinese youth with leisure and entertainment and reduces real-life pressure, but also poses potential risks. This also puts forward guidance requirements for parents, schools, and society to minimise the negative effects on young people and promote their healthy growth. Through analysis of the screened literature, this study found that although the existing research offers rich insights, it also has limitations that affect the universality of its conclusions.

In terms of research design, most studies use a cross-sectional survey, which lacks tracking of the time span and other aspects. The research conclusion mainly explores the correlation, but lacks an explanation of causality. In terms of research objects, the distribution of research objects is relatively uneven. Most empirical studies focus on college students in China, while there is a lack of research on age segmentation among younger Chinese individuals. Most of the research subjects are collectively referred to as young Chinese people, but the specific ages of the young people are not explained, which leads to the fact that the existing conclusions may not be universal for Chinese youth of different ages. In terms of research theory, most studies focus on phenomenal descriptions and impact statements, and lack mature theoretical guidance. In terms of research impact, the existing literature studies a more positive impact of anime on young Chinese people than a negative impact. Although many scholars have recognised the duality of anime's influence in recent years, there are few references to a comprehensive analysis of both aspects.

DISCUSSION

Through the combing and analysis of existing literature, this study explores the spread of anime among Chinese young people and its impact on cultural identity. Existing research is mainly manifested in the duality of influence, the practical transformation of identity, and the methodological limitations of existing research. The research hopes that through the analysis of the research situation, concrete and feasible suggestions can be put forward to deal with the actual situation of the impact of foreign culture on young Chinese people.

Through conducting the literature review, this study consults a corpus of relevant literature to understand the research results obtained in this field. In the process of research, this study found that many scholars have some similarities in the existing research results. Scholars such as Wang and Yan (2025) have emphasised the impact of anime on the cultural identity of Chinese youth. They generally believe that anime has a profound impact on the values and behaviour patterns of young Chinese individuals because of its unique narrative

style, character shaping, and cultural elements. Accordingly, this study hopes to further refine the scope of the impactful audience survey in the future research process, especially for different stages of Chinese young people, and pay more attention to the internal differences of Chinese young people. Thereby, to better understand how they form personal identity, psychological cognition, and shape social behaviour and other research issues through exposure to relevant imitations and cultural activities generated by anime works.

Notably, this study has found that previous studies in this field have paid less attention to the negative impact of anime on Chinese youth. For example, anime may cause young Chinese individuals to blur the boundary between virtual and existential reality, which will lead to new problems in their cognitive and social development. In future research, it may be possible to conduct a hierarchical study of young Chinese individuals according to their age, and analyse their specific performance to explore the duality of the influence of anime, with the aim of supporting existing research and demonstrating that anime not only has a positive impact on Chinese youth but may also pose complex psychological and social challenges.

This study also hopes to provide valuable references for educators, parents, and policymakers, especially in dealing with the impact of foreign cultures on young Chinese people. Educators should realise that anime, as a foreign popular culture, has occupied an important part of the daily life of young Chinese people. At the same time, educators should also realise that anime has its advantages and disadvantages. It should neither be totally rejected nor allowed to develop freely. Therefore, initiative should be taken to guide young Chinese minds to correctly understand anime culture and help them distinguish between the virtual world and the real world, to avoid excessive influence on real life due to excessive addiction to the world of anime. With the convenience of educational media, schools can cultivate students' discriminative abilities and cultural criticism, and help them to establish their own rational, cognitive, and critical thinking abilities when exposed to foreign cultures. Parents should also pay attention to their youngsters' exposure to popular culture; to communicate more with them, respect their hobbies and interests, and deepen their awareness and understanding of anime culture, thus turning anime into a bridge for communication with young people, and give appropriate guidance to help them develop in terms of psychology, values, and other aspects in a way that is more acceptable to young minds. Policymakers and managers can consider strengthening the review and management of foreign cultural content and ensuring proper age classification of anime by raising the standards of foreign cultural review, improving the quality of introduced anime works, and ensuring that these works support the healthy growth of young Chinese minds. At the same time, relevant departments should also encourage the innovation and development of local cultural products, enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of local anime cultural products, and promote the benign development of both sides through competition with foreign cultures, so as to reduce the excessive permeability that may be brought about by foreign cultures.

As a systematic review, this study is limited by the research method. Although the literature has been screened and evaluated, shortcomings in the existing literature in sample representativeness will also affect the universality of the conclusion. In addition, the scope of literature retrieval is mainly based on the Chinese academic database, combined with the English academic database, which may omit literature in other languages and unobtained literature.

In summary, through a systematic and critical analysis of the existing literature, this study analyses the social impact, duality, and practical characteristics of anime on young Chinese people, and reveals the limitations of the current research conclusions. For this reason, the focus of future research is put forward, as well as inspiration for educators, families, etcetera. It has deepened the understanding of this field, and also provided an empirical reference for

guiding young people to carry out cultural consumption and promoting their healthy development under the background of globalisation.

CONCLUSION

Through a review and analysis of the past research on the impact of anime on Chinese young people, this study explores the current research trend in this field, mainly focussing on the values, cultural identity, psychological and social activities of Chinese young people. Through the summary of the research results of previous scholars, this study found that anime has an extremely powerful influence on Chinese young people.

The survey found that current academic research on the impact of anime on the Chinese audience primarily focuses on the overall impact on young people, with less detailed research on age-specific stages. The existing subdivision research also focuses more on young individuals in college, and less attention on younger cohorts. Middle school and high school are special and important in China's education system. This group is a typical representative of the profound influence of anime culture: as young Chinese students in middle and high school, they are not only the main consumer group of anime products, but are also important communicators and creators of anime culture. They will transform this cultural identity into practical social actions through anime associations, exhibitions, cosplay, and other activities. In addition, the study found that most scholars can critically analyse the influence of anime in China and explore this phenomenon from multiple dimensions, including cultural exchange, cultural identity, industrial development, and social psychology. Scholars' research on the influence of anime on the spread in China has revealed its complexity, which not only plays a positive role in cultural exchange but also brings challenges to local culture and industrial development. These studies provide valuable perspectives on cross-cultural communication and its far-reaching impact on modern society. In summary, this study integrates and analyses the above problems, and further reveals the shortcomings of the current research in the stratification of research objects.

Although this study reveals the multifaceted impact of anime on young Chinese people, it still has some limitations. First, this study mainly adopts the method of literature review, and does not fully verify the conclusions through large-scale field investigation or quantitative data, which makes some of the conclusions of the study lack the support of empirical data, and fails to deeply explore the differentiation of the specific performance of Chinese young people of different ages after contact with anime.

Second, this study focuses on the psychological and behavioural impacts of anime on young Chinese people. Future research may further explore a range of dependent variables. In addition, as a popular cultural phenomenon, anime has a deep influence worldwide. Future research may more deeply explore the impact of anime on audiences in other countries, particularly how it can enhance its cultural influence through cultural export. In order to make up for the shortcomings of the current research and expand cognitive boundaries, future research should pay special attention to the neglected age-stratified research problems, and adopt more systematic and diversified research methods, such as questionnaires, interviews, and experiments, to obtain more empirical data, to verify, supplement and deepen the existing research findings.

Acknowledgment

The main author would like to express her sincere gratitude to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Roslina Mamat and Dr Pabiyah Toklubok for their insightful comments, constructive suggestions, and continuous encouragement throughout the development of this manuscript. Their valuable feedback has greatly contributed to improving the clarity, coherence, and academic quality of this work

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