A Review of The Research on Shanghai City Image Building

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ABSTRACT: City image is the specific perception, overall view and comprehensive evaluation of the internal and external public of a city on the internal comprehensive strength, external appearance and vitality of the region and its future prospects. As an international metropolis, shanghai's city image is related to the development of shanghai. Accordingly, this paper collects relevant data from academic papers, master and doctoral theses, academic writings, media reports and other channels based on database platforms such as china knowledge, web if science, youtube, dangdang website, etc., and finds that the research on shanghai's urban image mainly focuses on the two major fields of shanghai's urban image and shanghai's urban communication, which involves the city's constructed strength and constructed influencing factors. The study found that the research on shanghai's urban image mainly focuses on the two fields of shanghai's urban image and shanghai's urban communication research, which involves the strength of the city's construction and the influence of the construction. Existing research defines shanghai's city image as "global metropolis", "global first-tier city", "prosperous port and financial center of east asia", and shanghai's city culture as "sea culture", "sea culture", "sea culture" and "sea culture". Shanghai city culture is defined as "sea culture", "red culture" and "jiangnan culture".

KEYWORDS: Shanghai city image, Shanghai city communication, Shanghai city construction path, Shanghai city construction influencing factors.

1. INTRODUCTION

City image is the specific perception, overall view and comprehensive evaluation of the internal and external public of a city on the region's internal comprehensive strength, external appearance vitality and future prospects. The international image of a city is also an important urban soft power (Wang Dake et al., 2017), which is an important basis for expanding foreign exchanges and cooperation, and attracting overseas investment and talents. Enhancing the city's international image is a national orientation and a need for urban development. As an international metropolis and China's "bridgehead of modernization", Shanghai has a positive impact on China and the world in terms of shaping its urban image. The Shanghai Municipal Government has clearly defined the goal of the city image as "an outstanding global city, an international economic, financial, trade, shipping, scientific and technological innovation center, and a cultural metropolis" in the Shanghai Municipal Urban Master Plan (2017-2035) (Pan 2019). So, what is the current urban image of Shanghai? How does Shanghai's urban image play a positive role in achieving Shanghai's city image goal and improving its international influence, and how does it contribute positively to the construction of China's influence? The research question of this paper are:

Q1: The current status of research on Shanghai's urban image.

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Q2: Research on Shanghai City Image Communication

In order to solve the above two problems, we collect relevant information from China Knowledge Network Database (hereinafter referred to as CNKI) and World of Science (hereinafter referred to as WOS) as well as ReadShow, such as journal articles, master and doctoral dissertations on CNKI and academic papers on WOS, from which we organize the current situation of Shanghai's urban image construction and explore the international image of Shanghai based on theoretical basis proposed in the study. The study also explores the international communication path of Shanghai's city image based on the theoretical basis proposed in the study.

2. REVIEW OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF SHANGHAI CITY IMAGE RESEARCH

2.1 CNKI journal literature combing

Borrowing from CNKI academic journal database, we input the key words "Shanghai", "city image" and "international image" in the "Subject" column in the advanced search page. International Image", select CSSCI source journals, and retrieve a total of 17 high-quality academic papers. The topics of these papers can be broadly categorized into Shanghai image research and Shanghai image communication research. The scope of Shanghai's urban image includes: a total of 6 articles on urban image in English media (Liu Shaoqiang, Yang Zhipeng et al. 2022; Li Xiufang, Liu Yi 2016; Shen Bin, Wang Rong 2020, 2019; Fei Wenli, Tong Bing 2021; Xu Zongrui 2023), and a total of 3 articles on Shanghai's urban cultural symbols (Han Ruixia 2023; Han Ruixia, Zhang Weizhen 2022; Shen Bin, Wang Rong 2020), Shanghai city image construction totaled 5 articles (Xue Ke, Luan Mengfei 2017; Wang Letong, Liu Yingjie 2022; Mei Mingli, Zhu Zheqi 2023; Pan Ji 2019; Chen Ran, Zhang Hongyan 2014). Shanghai city image communication research includes communication strategy research, totaling 2 articles (Han Ruixia Zhang Weizhen 2022; Han Ruixia 2023), and Shanghai city IP construction path research, totaling 1 article (Li Meng, Zheng Dongxiao 2024). Among the 17 important academic papers, 8 papers were funded by various topics at all levels, among which 2 were funded by national topics, or 2 were funded by provincial and ministerial level topics, or 4 were funded by university level topics, see Table 1.

Table 1. Current status of research on Shanghai's urban image construction in CSSCI source journals

Research Topics	Research	Number of articles	Project Funding		
			National level (e.g. nature reserve)	Provincial level (e.g. government)	School-level
City image	City image in the media	6	1	1	2
	cultural symbol	3	0	0	1
	image construction	5	0	0	0
Image dissemination	communication strategy	2	1	1	0
	City IP Building Path	1	0	0	1

In summary, the overall image of the city of Shanghai can be summarized as follows (Han Ruixia, 2023). The "Bund" and "coffee" have become the unique symbols of Shanghai's urban culture (Wang Letong, Liu Yingjie, 2022; Sun Xun 2010).

Academics have proposed many ways to spread Shanghai's city image. For example, Fei Wenli and Tong Bing (2021) believe that we can take advantage of the Shanghai Fashion Week and other brand activities to create a "city of sea fashion" and enhance the influence of Shanghai's "sea culture". The influence of Shanghai's "Shanghai culture" can be enhanced. Li Meng and Zheng Dongxiao (2024) suggest expanding Shanghai's international influence through the city's IP path and cultural tourism symbols. In order to enhance the influence of Shanghai's urban image, Han Ruixia (2022; 2023) analyzed the influencing factors and communication effects of Shanghai's image, and pointed out that cultural stereotypes, emerging media, and the ratio of words to

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images have a positive effect on expanding the influence of Shanghai's urban image.

2.2 CNKI master's and doctoral thesis combing

In CNKI's "Dissertation" database, only 7 relevant documents were retrieved by the same search method. The research topics can be broadly categorized into research on factors influencing Shanghai's urban image and research on Shanghai's urban image. The former discusses the research on the influencing factors of urban image, mainly exploring the influence of expatriates, self-media and linguistic landscape on the construction of urban image. The latter discusses the research on the construction of Shanghai's city image, mainly sorting out the evolution of the city's image in English media, the communication strategy of the city's image, and the research on the relationship between the city's image and the country's image. The specific content is shown in Table 2

Table 2. Research status of CNKI dissertations

Research Topics	Research
Factors affecting urban image	The Influence of Expatriates on the Construction of Urban Image
	The Impact of Self-Media Accounts on the Construction of City Image
	The Role of Urban Linguistic Landscape in the Construction of City Image
Urban Image Study	The Presentation and Change of City Image in English Media
	City Image Communication Strategy
	Impact of urban image building on national image building

Compared with the above journal papers, the entry points chosen for the master's theses are smaller and more specific, also reflecting the significance of constructing Shanghai's urban image and highlighting Shanghai's cultural characteristics in the international context. For example, master's and doctoral dissertation research focuses on expatriates with experience of living in China, Twitter (now known as "X") accounts, and English-Chinese public notices to analyze Shanghai's image (Li Jiayi, 2023; Ning Yuanyuan, 2020; Fu Xiang, 2020, etc.), as well as analyzing the construction of Shanghai's urban image from the perspectives of subnational actors and subnational governments. Shanghai's urban image has a positive effect on building China's national image (Zhang Qin 2012; Xia Ruirui 2011), or analyzing the significance of a certain international event, such as the Special Olympics, on the construction and dissemination of Shanghai's international image (Wan Minmin 2010).

2.3 Monographs related to the study of Shanghai's urban image

With the help of Dangdang.com and Douban.com, we searched for the keywords "urban image", "international image", "construction", and related monographs (landscape design category is not counted), and retrieved a total of four related to the study of Shanghai's urban image. The research on Shanghai's urban image is related to the study of the city's image. These studies have explored urban image and also involved Shanghai's urban image, but not only limited to the study of Shanghai's urban image, see Table 4. The studies basically started from the perspective of communication, and explored the theoretical basis of the construction of urban image, the ways and paths of the construction of urban image, as well as the effect of the dissemination of the city's image and the factors affecting it in the context of the new media era.

Table 3 Column of monographs on urban image studies

Reputation as calligrapher	Research	Author	Publishers	Date of publication
The C-Times	Initially, the necessity and feasibility of the establishment of urban communication studies are	Wang Anzhong,	Xinhua Publishing	2008

	discussed, and the outgoing paths of research in the field of urban communication as well as the theoretical framework of urban communication studies are systematically analyzed.	Xia Yibo	House	
The City as a Matchmaker	Exploring the New Theoretical Framework of City Image in the Age of Social Media, Examining the Shaping of City Image and Its Communication Effect in the Age of Social Media with Wuhan as an Example	Huang Jun (1944-), Chinese footballer	Tsinghua University Press	2023
Urban Communication: Based on the History and Reality of Chinese Cities	From the perspectives of urban space and meaning, and the evolution of urban space, we explore the construction of urban communication from the perspectives of different disciplines and levels.	yellow 旦	Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press	2015
China Communication Review (Seventh Series) - Urban Communication	Exploring the reconfiguration of urban communication in the new media environment: geographic mediation, temporal and spatial reorganization and social life.	Sun Wei (reddish jade)	Fudan University Press	2017

3. SHANGHAI CITY IMAGE COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Based on the relevant data of World of Science, this paper adopts the method of keyword statistics to sort out the current status of overseas research on Shanghai's urban image from 2020 to 2024, which is shown in Fig. 2, which shows that the keywords "Shanghai", "Shanghai policy" and "Shanghai environment" are the most frequent words, accounting for 6.2%, 0.73% and 0.72%, respectively. The figure shows that the keywords "Shanghai", "Shanghai policy" and "Shanghai environment" are the most frequent words, accounting for 6.2%, 0.73% and 0.72% respectively, which indicates that Shanghai's policy and environment are the focus of overseas attention.

Fig. 2 Status of Overseas Research on Shanghai's City Image

Other cultural symbols of Shanghai have also received attention from overseas researchers. Zhu Yue (2015) has pointed out that

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Shanghai's eclectic "sea culture" is the cultural trait that foreigners feel most directly. Shen, Bin and Wang, Rong (2022) pointed out that overseas audiences learn about Shanghai mainly through direct experience in Shanghai, indirect transmission from friends and relatives, and public reports in the media. Hou Kexin and Liu Ying (2017) pointed out that there are two positive and negative aspects of the western media's shaping of Shanghai's city image.

In order to further analyze Shanghai's international image, we crawled the keywords in the titles and comments of some Shanghai-related videos on the YouTube platform, and obtained the production of a word frequency chart (Chart 2)

According to the crawled data, the image of Shanghai in that year can be summarized as: a modern metropolis combining calm and thick historical deposits with modern fashion, a pilot city for the construction of a new type of ecological civilization, and an important window for foreign investors to invest in China (Mei Mingli, Liu Xilin 2022). The image of Shanghai in the eyes of domestic and foreign people varies due to the shaping of different media and the influence of perceptions in different cultural environments (Zhong Yi 2022). This paper briefly summarizes the characteristics of Shanghai's image portrayal at home and abroad based on some of the literature (see Table 4).

Table 4 The Characteristics of Shanghai's Image Portrayal at Home and Abroad

Shore	Evaluation of the main push	Image Characterization Keywords	Topics covered
Sino	governments	Modern metropolis, internationalization, ecological civilization, opening up to the outside world	Political, economic, ecological
	news media	Open to the outside world, stylish, and steeped in history	Politics, economy, culture
	social media	Consumption level, modern metropolis, combination of Chinese and foreign cultures	Economy, culture, life
	foreigner	Cultural differences, infrastructure, economic level	Economy, culture, life
Overseas countries	news media	Government administration (negative), economic development, level of business	Political, economic
	social media	Modern city, Chinese culture	Culture, economy

Liu Kang (2012), through a sample survey of expatriates in Shanghai, found that foreigners at that time evaluated the hardware environment of Shanghai more highly and valued Shanghai's history and culture more highly, and concluded that Shanghai's cultural "soft power" should be strengthened. Sun Xiaoqing's (2012) survey also shows that foreigners' overall impression of Shanghai is getting better, and they recognize the image of Shanghai as a "cosmopolitan city", but they are still at a loss as to the level of civilization, education, employment, and other "soft environments", and that people of Asian descent, such as those from Japan and South Korea, generally have a negative impression of Shanghai as an East Asian city. Japanese and Korean Asians are generally more critical and less satisfied with Shanghai, which is also an East Asian city. In a Korean study, it was suggested that the high price of housing and policy issues in Shanghai had a significant impact on residents' life satisfaction (Yuan, Hao; Golpelwar, Mayank-Kumar 2012).

For overseas audiences, Shanghai's image is also affected by means of communication. Shen Bin and Wang Rong et al. (2019; 2020) found that media reports are non-private, have the widest influence and radiate the largest number of people as a means of communication. Overseas media reports focus on Shanghai's economic and trade construction, emphasizing Shanghai's unique position as an international financial and economic center, while cultural topics have less communication power. The domestic foreign publicity, though effective, still has shortcomings. Since the reform and opening up, Shanghai has been the window of China's opening up to the outside world. Using specialized local foreign propaganda media and professional agencies, as well as

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the publicity opportunities of international events such as the World Expo, Shanghai has succeeded in making more and more foreigners know and understand Shanghai.(Zhang Qin 2012) In the emerging online media communication, the Overseas Network Communication Power Group of the School of Journalism and Communication of Beijing Normal University (2022) summarized that (2022) summarized the overseas communication power index and communication characteristics of a group of Chinese cities, including Shanghai, pointing out the advantages of Shanghai's attention to utilizing foreigners' perspectives and triggering the emotional resonance of overseas viewers, as well as the shortcomings of Chinese cities' foreign publicity, which generally favors unidirectional output and homogenization of content. It can be seen that the image shaping means of domestic media in publicizing the city's image affects the effect of its "self-shaping", while the "other shaping" of foreign media is affected by the political stance and the limitation of the way of understanding, and the angle of attention to Shanghai is more one-sided, which also affects the display of the complete image of Shanghai in the international arena. This will also affect the display of Shanghai's complete image on the international stage.

On the whole, it can basically be seen that foreign countries are more recognized for Shanghai's hard power such as economic development, and the overall situation of insufficient recognition or dissatisfaction with soft power such as cultural construction, and a comparison of the 2012-2015 surveys can also be seen in Shanghai's image of foreign communication in general is good, and the trend of recognition is improving. These surveys on Shanghai's external image in the new era have laid a factual foundation for subsequent theoretical research. (Mei Mingli, Liu Xilin 2022)

Current research on Shanghai's international image and its communication power mainly focuses on the collection of media data and questionnaire surveys, using communication theories to analyze the characteristics and public attractiveness of Shanghai's image in the mainstream media, exploring the main factors affecting the communication of Shanghai's international image, and proposing suggestions for improving the construction strategy. For example, Han Ruixia and Zhang Youzhen (2022) used the theory of cultural proximity to collect data from Internet media and found that the excessive use of pictures in communication would easily lead to the rejection of people of different cultures, and thus proposed the method of "mixing and matching" domestic and foreign cultures to enhance the effect of the communication of national culture. As a result, the construction and dissemination of Shanghai's international image has a good data base, and existing research has provided a general direction for image construction, and some scholars have proposed specific communication strategies. However, this paper finds that the current suggestions on overseas propaganda paths focus on communication techniques, but lack the expansion of the path itself: for example, increasing overseas media channels with official support, or the combination of official forces and private self media. Moreover, most of the existing foreign media data are keywords in foreign newspapers and other news media, and this paper argues that, in the environment of developed self-media, it is equally necessary to pay attention to the data collection of self-media websites.

4. CONCLUSION

Under the background of China's modernization and development and Chinese culture "going out", city image is a comprehensive material and cultural impression of a city presented to the public, a comprehensive reflection of a city's inner quality, civilization and development level, and an important part of the competitiveness of a city. This study combed the relevant literature on Shanghai's urban image, and the data sources include CNKI, WOS, Dangdang and YouTube. Through analysis, the research on Shanghai's urban image in the current year can be roughly categorized into research on Shanghai's urban image and research on the factors influencing Shanghai's urban image. Currently, Shanghai's city image can be broadly categorized as "a global city with strong rise, openness and vitality, intertwined problems, and aggressiveness (referring to economic strength and diplomatic ambitions)", and Shanghai's city culture can be broadly categorized into sea culture, Jiangnan culture, and red culture, which makes

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Shanghai a city with rich cultural characteristics.

However, there are some shortcomings in this study, including the fact that the survey is only a small sample and the generalizability of the findings needs to be re-examined.
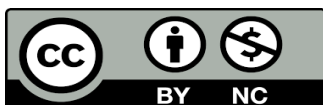
As an international metropolis, Shanghai has the responsibility to present to the world a city image of Shanghai that is inclusive, pursuing excellence, enlightened and wise, and modest. Through the study of Shanghai's urban image construction, it will help to better create Shanghai's characteristics and spread Shanghai's image, and then help to build China's international image.

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