THE STRATEGY OF FEATURING THE GAME HONOR OF KINGS THROUGH CHARACTERIZATION IN THE DRAMA SERIES YOU ARE MY GLORY (2021)

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**Recommended Citation**
DOI: 10.7454/irhs.v9i2.1322
Available at: https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/irhs/vol9/iss2/16

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ABSTRACT
The drama series You Are My Glory (Nǐ shì wǒ de ròngxíng 你是我的荣耀), directed by Wang Zhi (王之), aired in 2021 and consists of 32 episodes. This research focuses on the first 14 episodes, which showcase the popularity of the game Honor of Kings-HoK (Wángzhě ròngxíng王者荣耀) through the interactions and dialogue between the two main characters, Yu Tu (于途) and Qiao Jingjing (乔晶晶). The integration of the popular online game HoK with the drama, starring top actors and actresses, represents a novel strategy that warrants further study. The analysis is conducted intrinsically by examining the characterizations of the two main characters in You Are My Glory and extrinsically by describing the social realities of urban Chinese society. This research finds that the portrayal of the HoK game's popularity through the interactions and dialogue between the main characters reflects contemporary conditions in China. Key findings include: the online game HoK is immensely popular among young urban Chinese; the game's popularity illustrates the advancement of information technology in China; Depicting the popularity of HoK through character interactions is a strategic element contributing to the success of the drama series You Are My Glory. This strategy of combining the online game HoK with the drama series aligns with the core goals of the Two Centenaries (Liǎng gè yībǎi nián 两个一百年) and the themes in Xi Jinping's speeches. It represents a new approach by China to bolster local cultural development and extend its soft cultural power globally.

KEYWORDS: China; You Are My Glory; Online Game; Honor of Kings; Characterization; Urban Society

INTRODUCTION
The Communist Party of China-CPC (Zhōngguó Gòngchǎndǎng 中国共产党) is the most powerful single party in the People's Republic of China-PRC (Zhōnghuá Rénmín Gònghéguó 中华人民共和国). The First National Congress to establish the CPC was held in Shanghai in July 1921 (Chesnaux, Barbier, & Bergere, 1977). Under the
leadership of Mao Zedong (毛泽东), the CPC proclaimed the founding of the PRC on October 1, 1949. The CPC has fostered a strong spirit in its development by adhering to the state's ideals and goals, fulfilling its mission, demonstrating a willingness to sacrifice, fighting bravely, showing loyalty to the party and the country, serving the people, and reinforcing its distinctive political character. Over the past 100 years, China's history has continued to evolve, and the tradition of glory and the spirit of building the party and the country must be passed down from generation to generation (Xinhua News Agency, 2021).

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC, a conference was held at Tiananmen Square (天安门), China, on July 1, 2021. Xi Jinping (习近平), General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPC, President of China, and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivered an important speech on behalf of the party and the people. His address included the following:

“经过全党全国各族人民持续奋斗，我们实现了第一个百年奋斗目标，在中华大地上全面建成小康社会，历史性地解决了绝对贫困问题，正在意气风发向着全面建成社会主义现代化强国的第二个百年奋斗目标迈进。这是中华民族的伟大光荣，这是中国人民的伟大光荣，这是中国共产党的伟大光荣。”

“Thanks to the relentless efforts of the party and people from all ethnic groups, we have achieved the first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, addressing the historical problem of absolute poverty. We are now enthusiastically progressing toward the second centenary goal of comprehensively building a modern and strong socialist country. This represents the great glory of the Chinese nation, the great glory of the Chinese people, and the great glory of the Communist Party of China.” (Xinhua News Agency, 2021)

Xi's speech reinforces the Two Centenaries policy (两个一百年) established by the CPC. China's Two Centenaries policy outlines a long-term vision: first, to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects by the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China in 2021, and second, to build a modern and strong socialist country in all respects and strengthen China's international standing by the 100th anniversary of the founding of the PRC in 2049. Following the achievement of the first centenary goal in 2021, China is now progressing toward the second centenary goal.

In the 75 years since its official establishment on October 1, 1949, China has undergone numerous transformations to keep pace with the times and advancements to the present day. China's development and progress in all aspects—social, cultural, economic, and political—are remarkable. Its breakthroughs in science and technology, as well as in visual and entertainment media, including the film industry, drama series, and the online gaming industry, have propelled its growth into a globally competitive country.

To enhance its global competitiveness, China has released numerous films and drama series across various genres for public entertainment. Over time, these films and drama series have also been used as propaganda tools (Eriyanti, 2017). Engaging films and dramas are crafted to convey specific ideas or messages intended to shape or influence public opinion. A recent strategy adopted by China involves combining popular online games with drama series featuring top actors and actresses.
One of the online games that highlight Chinese cultural values and has become one of the most popular online games in China since 2020 is 王者荣耀 (Wángzhè Róngyào) or Honor of Kings (hereinafter abbreviated as HoK). HoK is one of the most popular and widely played Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) games or 多人线上战斗竞技场游戏 (Duō rén xiàn shàng zhàndòu jìngjì chǎng yóuxì) in China (Ye et al., 2020). According to Aurora statistics, as of March 2020, HoK remains the online game with the largest user reach, with a penetration rate of 17.7% (Zhang, 2022).

HoK, developed by TiMi Studio Group since 2015, is owned by Tencent Games in China. Tencent Games is the world’s largest gaming company headquartered in China. Tencent Games holds significant shares in many other e-sports publishers. Tencent Games plays an essential role in the development of Chinese e-sports (Giulia, 2024). As China’s leading internet giant, the HoK game has proven commercially successful (Yao & Chen, 2022). HoK serves as an entertainment medium that helps players connect and interact with each other. HoK understands the players’ need to experience the adrenaline rush of competition, feel the life of characters in the game that makes a difference, and fulfill their social needs through the game (Zhang, 2022).

HoK is also one of the various genres of games included in e-sports. In recent years, e-sports or electronic sports, which use online games as a competitive field, have transformed the gaming world. E-sports continues to show development with the emergence of various types of games. E-sports players consist of teams that play games to compete against each other at a professional level. In both their own teams and opposing teams, e-sports players are balanced in terms of age, individual backgrounds, and gender. Players compete and strive to win prizes such as large sums of money, certificates, trophies, medals, and more. E-sports can be a place for non-academic achievements as it is recognized as an achievement sport (Kevin, 2021). After debuting as an exhibition sport at the 2018 Asian Games, e-sports officially became a sporting event. E-sports was first contested at the 2022 Asian Games in Guangzhou, China. The inclusion of e-sports in official sports events signifies that gaming has been recognized as a sport in leading multi-sport events, such as the Asian Games (Galuh and Reska, 2020).

E-sports has become a central aspect of urban Chinese culture, especially among the youth and adults. This e-sports culture and trend are reflected in the daily lives of urban Chinese society. Chinese drama series are one of the media that represent e-sports in various ways. China can depict the culture and trend of e-sports among urban youth through drama series. There are many Chinese films or drama series in the e-sports genre. One famous Chinese drama series that combines the e-sports genre with romance is titled You Are My Glory or 你是我的荣耀 (Nǐ shì wǒ de róngyào).

The drama series You Are My Glory directed by Wang Zhi (王之), was produced by Tencent Video and aired in 2021 with a total of 32 episodes. The first 14 episodes primarily focus on the game HoK while episodes 15-32 shift the focus to the Chinese space industry. The series stars Yang Yang (杨洋) as Yu Tu (于途), a handsome and intelligent aerospace engineer, and Dilraba Dilmurat (迪丽热巴·迪力木拉提) as Qiao Jingjing (乔晶晶), a renowned celebrity known for her beauty. The drama explores the romance between Yu Tu and Qiao Jingjing.

Qiao Jingjing, an ambassador for the game HoK, faces a challenge when a video revealing her subpar gameplay threatens her positive image. Determined to improve her skills, she undergoes intensive training and reconnects with Yu Tu, a high school friend she once had a crush on. Their reunion, after a decade apart, begins when Yu Tu invites...
her to play HoK. In turn, Jingjing requests Yu Tu to coach her in the game.

Several factors make the drama series You Are My Glory particularly intriguing to analyze. Firstly, the series benefits from the popularity of its two main actors, Yu Tu and Jingjing, who have a strong and dedicated fanbase. Additionally, the show reflects contemporary urban Chinese society's enthusiasm for playing the highly popular game HoK, even featuring HoK e-sports match sessions. As one of the most played MOBA games, HoK has created a unique cultural phenomenon beyond its gameplay appeal (Li & Song, 2023). The innovative combination of the HoK game with the romance genre in You Are My Glory represents a fresh strategy and breakthrough, contributing to the series' growing popularity.

According to IMDb (2021), the drama You Are My Glory has a rating of 8.2/10. Guduo Data (2021) reports that within the first five hours of its release, the series garnered over 100 million views. In less than a month, the view count surged to 1.98 billion. You Are My Glory ranked first on the top 10 lists of popular Chinese dramas on Vlinkage, De Tavin, and Guduo Data (Ari, 2021). This demonstrates the high level of popularity the series has achieved.

The strategy of integrating the online game HoK with the drama series You Are My Glory has proven successful and serves as a means of disseminating cultural soft power. Using games and drama series as platforms for cultural promotion aligns with the themes of Xi Jinping's speeches. In his 2013 speech titled Enhancing China's Cultural Soft Power (提升中国文化软实力), Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of cultural soft power in expanding China's international influence, stating:

"Enhancing cultural soft power is crucial for our country to achieve the Two Centenaries goals and to realize the dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, carrying significant meaning."

"To strengthen Chinese culture, it is essential to promote the values of modern China. These values, which reflect socialism with Chinese characteristics, represent the essence of advanced Chinese culture. China has successfully embraced this path, and the results have demonstrated the success of our system, theory, and society. We must bolster ideological theory and expand external publicity platforms to ensure our culture is more effectively communicated internationally." (Qiushi, 2020).

Cultural soft power is a crucial component for achieving the goals of the Two Centenaries and expanding the influence of Chinese culture. To enhance the global recognition of Chinese culture through international communication and dissemination, it is essential to develop and promote Chinese ideas by expanding global publicity platforms. These
platforms include online games and drama series, which provide China with broader access to international markets for spreading its cultural values.

Several research articles have explored the game HoK as an example of e-sports. For instance, Zhang Zhikun’s (2022) article, *The Influence of Social Attributes in Games on Consumers: The Example of The Phone Game Honor of Kings*, examines how social attributes in the game impact consumers. It addresses two dimensions: attracting players and stimulating consumer spending. The article highlights how HoK’s features facilitate online social interactions, contributing to its success in acquiring user groups and effective marketing. HoK has successfully met user needs and provided a level of satisfaction and enjoyment that players might not find in real life.

Second, the article titled *Video Game Music and Cultural Dissemination: A Study of Honor of Kings as a MOBA Game*, written by Li Fan and Song Liuyan (2023) and published in the Media Studies Journal, explores how the online game HoK integrates traditional Chinese cultural elements—such as game characters, plots, scenes, backgrounds, and aesthetic music—into its design. The study reveals that HoK players often have a solid educational background and considerable free time. Many players are deeply interested in the game’s character backstories, intricate skin designs, and the origins of its music. This interest plays a significant role in promoting and popularizing traditional Chinese culture on a global scale.

Third, Jean Hun Chung (2019) authored an article titled *A Study on the Visual Elements of Mobile Games Focused on Female Gamers*, which examines HoK’s game skins, particularly those preferred by female players. The study highlights that female players are more emotionally engaged and prefer visually appealing characters. HoK’s success among female players, exceeding 100 million, can be attributed to its simplified game mechanics, social functions, and customizable characters that cater to female preferences.

However, there is limited research on the drama series *You Are My Glory*, particularly regarding its portrayal of e-sports. One notable article, *Exploring the Communication Characteristics, Dilemmas, and Development of E-sports-themed Dramas: A Case Study of Crossfire, You Are My Glory, and Falling Into Your Smile*, written by Zhu Mingjie and Li Furong (2023), addresses this gap. The article discusses how the booming domestic e-sports industry since 2015 has led to the creation of e-sports-themed films and TV dramas, capturing significant attention and opening new avenues for e-sports dissemination in China. The study analyzes three popular e-sports dramas, finding that their core values include legitimizing e-sports as a professional sport and celebrating the sportsmanship of e-sports athletes. However, the depiction of e-sports in these dramas often exacerbates issues of sexism in the field, leading to criticism from e-sports fans.

Additionally, there is research on e-sports in the drama series *A Smile is Beautiful*, also known as *Love O2O* (2016), which stars Yang Yang, who is also the lead actor in *You Are My Glory*. The article titled *Research on the New Media Communication of NetEase Games*, written by Wang Lu and Jiang Xiaozhuo (2018), highlights how incorporating game advertisements and featuring well-known celebrities in *Love O2O* effectively boosts NetEase game registrations. The integration of the drama and game plot is so impactful that fans often find themselves identifying with the characters. Yang Yang, being both an actor and a gamer, was chosen to play gamer roles in several dramas.

Yang Yang also stars in *The King’s Avatar* (2019). In the article *Online Chinese Dramas Bank on Esports Themes to Attract Young Consumers*, written by Ouyang Shijia, it is noted that Chinese drama series are increasingly embracing e-sports themes due to their growing popularity among tech-savvy young gamers. *The King’s Avatar* has become one of the most-watched dramas, amassing over 3 billion views on Tencent Video. This
drama is notable for its storyline centered purely on e-sports, rather than a romantic theme. Overall, this study finds that previous research depicts HoK as one of the most popular e-sports games in China, making it an engaging subject for drama series. This study draws on the work of researchers such as Zhang Zhikun, Li Fan and Song Liuyan, Jean Hun Chung, and Zhu Mingjie and Li Furong, who discuss the influence of MOBA online games like HoK on contemporary urban Chinese society. It is particularly inspired by the studies by Wang Lu and Jiang Xiaozhuo and Ouyang Shijia, which explore how games and e-sports affect drama series like Love O2O and The King's Avatar. However, this study specifically examines the impact of games in You Are My Glory, highlighting differences from the games featured in Love O2O and The King’s Avatar.

Since its rise to popularity in China in 2020, the online game HoK has significantly impacted media and entertainment. The drama series You Are My Glory, released in 2021, reflects contemporary trends and realities in China. This study examines how incorporating HoK into the drama's storyline, coupled with performances by well-known actors and gamers, represents a novel strategy that contributes to the series' success. It identifies a research gap regarding the portrayal of HoK in You Are My Glory, emphasizing the influence of this popular MOBA game on urban Chinese society, especially among the youth, through the characters Yu Tu and Jingjing.

By closely analyzing You Are My Glory, this study aims to understand how featuring HoK through the characters Yu Tu and Jingjing illustrates the social dynamics of contemporary urban China. It addresses the research gap left by previous studies and investigates how integrating HoK into the drama’s narrative serves as a strategy to highlight the advancement of the Chinese gaming industry and boost the game's popularity among urban Chinese youth.

To explore this topic, the study employs a qualitative approach, combining descriptive-analytical methods with quantitative data and literature review. It includes both intrinsic and extrinsic analyses: intrinsic analysis focuses on the portrayal of the main characters in the drama series, while extrinsic analysis examines the broader context of contemporary urban Chinese society's engagement with online gaming, drawing from external sources such as books, journals, and online articles relevant to the subject.

DISCUSSION

The discussion in this article will be organized into the following sub-sections:

Synopsis: A brief overview of the drama series You Are My Glory; Analysis of HoK Integration: An examination of the strategy behind incorporating HoK as an e-sports element through the characters Yu Tu and Qiao Jingjing; Popularity and Social Reflection: An analysis of how the popularity of HoK is depicted in the series and its connection to the social realities of contemporary urban Chinese society; Strategic Implications: A detailed look at how the portrayal of HoK in You Are My Glory reflects and responds to current conditions in China, including its broader cultural and social implications.

Synopsis

The drama series You Are My Glory consists of 32 episodes, featuring two prominent artists with substantial fan bases both in China and internationally: Dilraba Dilmurat, who plays Qiao Jingjing, and Yang Yang, who plays Yu Tu. The first 14 episodes primarily focus on the online game HoK and e-sports competitions, while episodes 15 through 32 shift focus to the Chinese aerospace industry. This study will concentrate on analyzing the first 14 episodes to explore the impact of HoK on the social life of urban Chinese society through the characters of Yu Tu and Qiao Jingjing.

In the series, the influence of HoK begins in episode 1 when a video of Jingjing's
poor performance in the game is leaked, jeopardizing her reputation as the game's ambassador. Determined to restore her image, Qiao Jingjing dedicates herself to improving her gaming skills. She reconnects with Yu Tu, her high school crush, who becomes her coach. Their modern and romantic reunion unfolds through the game, leading to significant personal and professional growth for Jingjing. By episode 14, Jingjing, alongside Yu Tu, triumphs in the *HoK* e-sports competition, prompting the *HoK* company to seek an extension of their collaboration with her.

After the synopsis, the discussion is divided into two parts: first, an analysis of the depiction of the popularity of *HoK* as an e-sports branch in the drama series, and second, the influence of the popularity of *HoK* on the social life of urban society in China. Each part will be explained in detail using data from tables containing descriptions of scenes, dialogue quotes, and characterizations from the relevant episodes. Below is a table that provides a specific depiction of the popularity of *HoK* as an e-sports branch through the characters Yu Tu and Qiao Jingjing.

**Depiction of the Popularity of the Game *HoK* through the Characters Yu Tu and Qiao Jingjing**

This section will analyze how the popularity of the game *HoK* as an e-sports phenomenon is portrayed through the characters Yu Tu and Qiao Jingjing, focusing on their dialogues. The analysis will be based on the data presented in Table 1, as detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Episodes and Minutes</th>
<th>Scene Description</th>
<th>Dialogue Quotes</th>
<th>Characterization Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yu Tu (于途)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Episode 3 minutes to 11:14</td>
<td>Through the microphone, Sister Ling (玲姐) then looks at Yu Tu's game profile in <em>HoK</em>.</td>
<td>Sister Ling said, &quot;A 93% win rate? Are you serious?&quot;</td>
<td>Yu Tu is highly skilled, expert, reliable, and proficient at playing games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>Episode 14 minutes to 05:43</td>
<td>During the <em>HoK</em> e-sports match, Jingjing selected Yu Tu and invited him to join her team on stage. The MC then asked Yu Tu to introduce himself by stating his name, level, and occupation.</td>
<td>Yu Tu said, &quot;I'm a 50-star High King.&quot;</td>
<td>Yu Tu is highly skilled, an expert, reliable, proficient, and exceptional at playing games.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Qiao Jingjing (乔晶晶)

**Episode 1** minutes to 12:50 p.m.

Someone spreads a video showing Jingjing playing the HoK game poorly, leading to her losing, despite being the game’s Brand Ambassador.

Sister Ling said, "Don't underestimate this. Do you realize how popular HoK is? Look at how many men and women are eagerly lining up, trying to become the star of this commercial."

Jingjing doesn't want to be merely the Brand Ambassador for the HoK game; she also wants to excel at playing it.

**Episode 7** minutes to 27:41

When Jingjing loses while playing games with Yu Tu, she blames the system. Yu Tu then explains that Jingjing's defeat was due to her focus on chasing him rather than farming and pushing, which were essential strategies for the game.

Jingjing says, "Surely the computer assigned to me by the system can't manage the lane properly."

Jingjing's gaming skills are the opposite of Yu Tu's. As a newcomer, she frequently struggles and loses in HoK games.

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Table 1 presents scene descriptions and dialogue quotes from the characters Yu Tu and Qiao Jingjing, illustrating the popularity of HoK as an e-sports branch. The table reveals that Yu Tu is portrayed as a highly skilled and expert gamer, known for his reliability, proficiency, and strategic intelligence. His ability to play various heroes effectively and analyze opponents’ strategies highlights his deep understanding of the game. Yu Tu’s role in helping Jingjing improve her skills further emphasizes the sophistication of the gaming industry and its advancements.

China’s gaming industry has seen significant growth, with a projected 14% increase from 2021 to 2026. As one of the world’s most lucrative gaming markets, China attracts global companies investing in local game developers and professional gaming teams. The rise of smartphone mobile video games has been notable. Statista (2024) reports a continuous increase in mobile gamers in China, growing from 455 million in 2015 to 656 million in 2023. This growth aligns with the advancement of the Chinese
gaming sector, including the development of the MOBA game *HoK* since 2015. The gaming industry's progress in China is driven by the rapid expansion of e-sports, where professional players compete in tournaments that are broadcast live. The drama series *You Are My Glory* portrays young people, including Yu Tu and Jingjing, participating in *HoK* e-sports competitions, reflecting the industry’s impact on contemporary urban society. This depiction highlights the emergence of expert gamers and the broader influence of e-sports within the Chinese gaming industry.

In Table 1, Qiao Jingjing’s section (3) highlights a conversation between Jingjing and Sister Ling, showcasing the extensive popularity of *HoK*. It illustrates how many people compete to become the game’s spokesperson. According to Sensor Tower (2022), *HoK*, with over 95% of its users in China, was the world’s highest-grossing game in April 2022, earning over $274 million in in-app purchases. Statista (2024) further reports that *HoK* was the best-selling MOBA game globally in November 2023.

Section (4) of Table 1 presents Jingjing as a novice in *HoK*, struggling with gameplay and often losing. She is portrayed as being more interested in the aesthetic appeal of hero skins rather than mastering the skills of each hero. Jingjing’s preference for heroes with visually appealing skins, despite her lack of proficiency, echoes findings from Jean Hun Chung’s (2019) study, *A Study on the Visual Elements of the Mobile Game Focused on Female Gamers*. This research identified that female players often prioritize attractive visuals in game characters, and *HoK*’s ability to offer customizable and simplified gameplay for female players contributes to its large female user base.

In the drama series, Jingjing’s role as the Brand Ambassador for *HoK* means that her endorsement significantly boosts the game’s visibility among urban Chinese society. Her substantial fanbase, both male and female, drives interest in *HoK*. Jingjing’s participation in *HoK* e-sports competitions inspires her fans to engage with the game and aspire to join e-sports competitions themselves. This influence helps elevate *HoK*’s popularity, encouraging fans to become skilled players and potential e-sports athletes. Jingjing’s portrayal as a top celebrity and active e-sports participant underscores *HoK*’s prominence and appeal in China, demonstrating the impact of celebrity endorsements on game popularity.

Yu Tu’s characterization highlights the advancement of China’s gaming industry, portraying him as a highly skilled and knowledgeable gamer. His expertise and proficiency in playing *HoK* reflect the industry’s growth and sophistication. On the other hand, Jingjing’s characterization underscores *HoK*’s popularity in China, showcasing her as a prominent celebrity whose endorsement amplifies the game’s appeal.

These portrayals are interconnected: Yu Tu’s role as an expert gamer demonstrates the advanced features and professional aspects of the gaming industry, while Jingjing’s popularity as the game’s ambassador illustrates how *HoK* has become a cultural phenomenon. Together, these characters convey a larger message about the rapid development of information technology and e-sports in China, highlighting how technological advancements and celebrity influence drive the success of games like *HoK*.

**The Popularity of the Game *HoK* as a Reflection of the Social Reality of Urban Chinese Society**

After discussing the popularity of *HoK* as an e-sports branch in China, this section will explore how *HoK*’s popularity influences the social life of urban Chinese society through the characters Yu Tu and Qiao Jingjing. This analysis will be based on the dialogues between these characters and will utilize the data provided in Table 2. The following points will be discussed:

Published by UI Scholars Hub, 2024
The portrayal of *HoK* in the drama series reflects and influences the social dynamics and cultural landscape of urban Chinese society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yu Tu (于途)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Episode 2 minutes to 30:22</td>
<td>Jingjing sends a message to Yu Tu, requesting him to become her game mentor.</td>
<td>Yu Tu replied, &quot;I'm currently on leave, and it could end at any time.&quot;</td>
<td>Yu Tu only plays <em>HoK</em> games with his friends to pass the time during his vacation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>Episode 3 minutes to 17:33</td>
<td>While playing the online game <em>HoK</em> and chatting with Yu Tu and their friends, Jingjing pretends that her air purifier is broken and asks Yu Tu to come to her house to fix it, hoping to meet him in person.</td>
<td>Yu Tu replied, &quot;If possible, I'll take a look at it there.&quot;</td>
<td>Yu Tu agreed to visit Jingjing's house to fix the air purifier, which belongs to his company. He isn't hesitant to meet her in person, despite knowing her primarily through the <em>HoK</em> game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qiao Jingjing (乔晶晶)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>Episode 1 minutes to 17:27</td>
<td>Jingjing asked Sister Ling to clear her schedule once all her work was finished.</td>
<td>Sister Ling said, &quot;There’s still about a month or more until the day of the match. Do you plan to use all that time to practice gaming?&quot;</td>
<td>Jingjing plans to focus on practicing <em>HoK</em> games during her leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>Episode 14 minutes to 03:14</td>
<td>Jingjing told the MC that she and Yu Tu had lost contact for many years, but recently, they have rekindled their connection through playing games together.</td>
<td>The MC remarked, &quot;There are many such examples. <em>HoK</em> has a unique ability to bridge distances between people. Sometimes, those who were once distant can come to understand each other better.&quot;</td>
<td>Yu Tu and Jingjing were able to reconnect and grow close again thanks to their shared interest in playing the game <em>HoK</em>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
through the game and eventually even get married."

Table 2 provides a detailed look at how the popularity of HoK influences contemporary urban Chinese society through the characters Yu Tu and Qiao Jingjing. In Section (1), Yu Tu is shown playing HoK with his friends during his free time on leave. However, once his leave ends, he seldom plays HoK. In Section (3), Jingjing asks Sister Ling to clear her schedule for a month leading up to the competition so she can focus solely on practicing HoK to improve her skills. During this period, Yu Tu and Jingjing train together, taking advantage of their time off and lack of work commitments.

This portrayal aligns with findings from a survey by Deng and Liao (2022), as detailed in their article Gaming in China Before the COVID-19 Pandemic and After the Lifting of Lockdowns: A Nationwide Online Retrospective Survey. The survey, which included 5,268 participants, revealed an average age of 27 years, with a near-equal gender distribution and most being unmarried, students, or employed. The demographic profile of the survey participants closely mirrors the characters Yu Tu and Jingjing, who are both approximately 28 years old and unmarried.

The survey results highlight how MOBA games like HoK have integrated into the daily lives of urban Chinese society. Gaming has become a popular leisure activity, offering relaxation, social interaction, and enjoyment. This trend extends across various demographics, including teenagers, students, young professionals, and celebrities. These individuals engage in HoK to stay current with trends, connect with friends, and participate in discussions about the game, whether online or in person.

Jingjing’s portrayal as a novice HoK player reflects the contemporary urban Chinese experience, especially among women interested in MOBA gaming. The presence of female e-sports athletes in China further supports this representation. The drama series effectively uses Yu Tu and Jingjing’s gaming experiences to educate viewers about the social dynamics of young urban Chinese individuals. It highlights the integration of MOBA online games, particularly HoK, into daily life, illustrating how contemporary urban Chinese people engage in online gaming and communication globally.

Table 2 illustrates how Yu Tu and Jingjing’s interactions through HoK reflect broader social trends. In Sections (2) and (4), Yu Tu and Jingjing reconnect and become closer after years of separation, thanks to their shared interest in HoK. The game’s advanced features—such as solo 1v1 matches, 5v5 team matches, microphone functionality, a chat box, unique hero skins, and championship levels—facilitate this reconnection. These features enhance player engagement by enabling communication and interaction, which are crucial for maintaining player interest and loyalty.

HoK exemplifies how online games can foster social connections. Its advanced social features, including in-game chat and gifting options, help players build and sustain relationships. This dynamic is evident in the drama, where Jingjing’s actions—such as

Note: The article will provide a detailed discussion of the data in the table by referring to Sections (1), (2), (3), and (4).
purchasing attractive skins and inviting Yu Tu to her home—underscore the game's role in enhancing social bonds. Jingjing's efforts to connect with Yu Tu through these in-game interactions demonstrate how HoK blends real-life relationships with virtual gaming experiences, reinforcing player loyalty and community engagement.

The drama series portrays Yu Tu and Jingjing's meeting as both straightforward and contemporary, highlighting their interaction through the MOBA online game HoK. While Jingjing is aware of Yu Tu's identity, Yu Tu remains unaware of the woman he is playing with until he visits her house. Discovering that she is his high school friend, and a top celebrity underscores the modern and trendy nature of their connection. This narrative choice emphasizes the significant impact of HoK on contemporary urban Chinese social life.

The characters of Yu Tu and Jingjing represent diverse backgrounds yet share a common bond through HoK, illustrating how the game bridges gaps between people from different walks of life. The drama highlights HoK's role in uniting individuals and reflects the broader influence of gaming in contemporary urban China. The popularity of HoK mirrors China's rapid technological advancements, which have integrated gaming into daily life as a form of entertainment, relaxation, and social interaction. Meeting people in real life who were first encountered through online games like HoK has become a notable social trend in modern Chinese society (Luo, Wong, and Xiao, 2019).

The Presence of Online Games in Drama Series as a Reflection of Modern China's Progress

Based on the comprehensive discussion of Yu Tu and Jingjing in You Are My Glory, it's clear that the portrayal of HoK through their interactions reflects contemporary China. The series effectively highlights several key aspects: popularity of HoK: the game is a major trend among urban Chinese youth, showing how deeply integrated gaming is in their social life; advancement of information technology: HoK's popularity mirrors China's rapid technological progress, illustrating the country's strides in IT and gaming innovation; and, strategic success of the drama: the incorporation of HoK into the series not only boosts its appeal but also aligns with the drama's success strategy, leveraging the game's current popularity.

The drama's blend of romance, celebrity culture, and gaming resonates with audiences, combining these elements to create a compelling narrative. By featuring HoK prominently in the first half and China's aerospace industry in the latter half, the series offers a well-rounded portrayal of China's modern advancements. This approach not only enhances viewer engagement but also showcases the country's evolving entertainment landscape.

The success of the drama series in combining games with a drama series is a new strategy and breakthrough that can support the core goal of the Two Centenaries (两个一百年) and the content of Xi Jinping's speech. It not only strengthens the cultural construction within the local scope of China but also spreads China's soft cultural power globally. Because this drama series can convey specific messages to the public in the form of interesting entertainment and can influence the audience's opinions on the social life of contemporary urban Chinese society.

Soft cultural power plays a crucial role in achieving the goals of the Two Centenaries and expanding the influence of Chinese culture globally. By increasing the popularity of drama series like You Are My Glory, China can enhance its cultural reach and appeal to international audiences. This strategy helps in disseminating Chinese cultural values and perspectives, thereby strengthening China's position on the global stage. As China's cultural exports gain traction, the country moves closer to
fulfilling its second centenary goal of bolstering its international standing and influence.

**CONCLUSION**

This research highlights that the highly popular drama series *You Are My Glory* is rich with elements ripe for analysis and critique, including its promotion of China's advancing gaming industry and its influence on the social life of urban Chinese society. The series captivates viewers with its engaging storyline, visually appealing aesthetics, and the charisma of its top celebrity leads. By seamlessly integrating romance with the e-sports genre, particularly through the popular game HoK, the drama resonates deeply with its audience, both gamers and non-gamers alike.

The success of this drama is attributed to several factors: the star power of its main characters, the contemporary and relatable storyline, and its strategic incorporation of a popular game that reflects the social life of modern urban China. The portrayal of HoK, a game that is widely enjoyed by young people in China, adds authenticity and relevance to the series, making it not only entertaining but also a reflection of current trends.

Moreover, *You Are My Glory* is more than just a contemporary drama; it also serves as a vehicle for promoting China’s cultural and technological advancements. The series aligns with China's soft power strategy, supporting the broader objectives of the *Two Centenaries* (两个一百年). By leveraging the appeal of top celebrities and combining romance with e-sports, the series advances China's cultural influence and aids in its global cultural diplomacy efforts.

Through this drama, China demonstrates how entertainment media can be a strategic tool for promoting national values and achievements. The success of *You Are My Glory* underscores the potential of integrating entertainment with soft power objectives to enhance a country's global standing.

This research paves the way for further exploration into the growing trend of incorporating e-sports and other contemporary elements into Chinese dramas. Future studies could delve deeper into how these trends impact cultural diplomacy and the global perception of Chinese media.

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