

Reposting Inclination of Chinese Millennials on Social Media: Consideration of Gender, Motivation, Content and Form

Yinan Lin
Wenzhou-Kean University, China

Dr. Rob Kim Marjerison
Wenzhou-Kean University, China

Dr. Sarman I Kennedy
Wenzhou-Kean University, China

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to build on previous research regarding the motivations and priorities of Chinese Millennials' use of social media with regard to the "reposting" or "sharing" of content by exploring specifics of gender, motivation, form and type of content. This large and commercially important demographic is known for a high adoption of smartphone usage, an extremely high level of social media usage including sharing of information, publicity, gaming, social and business activities. The potential promotional value of content that "goes viral" is immense. The findings of this study are based on the results of over 650 online surveys and include both theoretical and practical contributions to the body of knowledge regarding the nature of viral propagation of content in social media. This contribution to the understanding and insight social media activities of this significant and commercially consumer demographic may be of value to online promoters and marketers as well those interested in the use of social media for commercial purposes in the design and management of their online and social media presence, marketing and advertising strategies

Keywords: Millennials, Viral Content, Social Media Sharing, Social Media Reposting

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INTRODUCTION

As internet accessibility worldwide has increased, the adoption and frequency of smart phones and hand-held devices has also increased dramatically. This trend is of special interest in China due to both the large population, and the rapidly emerging middle class. For end users, the integration of social media and social networking with daily activities is nearly immeasurable (Kelly, Suryadevara, & Mukhopadhyay, 2013). Social media sites (SMS) like Facebook and Twitter provide abundant and diverse benefits for users, and are increasing in number steadily. Meanwhile, messaging services are also vying for end user time and attention and are rapidly becoming more comprehensive (Bouwman, Carlsson, Castillo, Giaglis, & Walden, 2010a).

The numbers of users on various type of social media, including social networking sites, microblogs, blogs as well as other virtual communities, is over 300 million. By comparison, this is greater than the combined population of France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom (Chiu, Ip, & Silverman, 2012a). In the fastest growing market, China, growth is expected to increase by roughly 30 percent annually for the foreseeable future (Chiu, Ip, & Silverman, 2012b).

Chinese social media platforms Sina Weibo and Wechat have experienced unprecedented rates of adoption in recent years. Weibo is the largest social media site in China and is used frequently for collecting data from users and consumers (Xu et al., 2016). It serves as the combination of Twitter and Facebook providing a new approach for both interpersonal communication, and for acquiring domestic and international news (Han & Wang, 2015). WeChat has become the most extensively used mobile instant-messaging service in China with users exceeding 600 million worldwide as of April 2014 (Pang, 2016). At the same time, WeChat is emerging as a combination between traditional online business and social networking interaction (Yang, Chen, & Li, 2016).

Chinese social media is a dominant way to collect and share information, make social connection as well as entertain (Zhang, 2014). It is noteworthy that reposting, users' major activities online, is one of the most frequently adopted information sharing behaviors among users (X. Chen, Tao, & Zhou, 2019).

Information contains text, pictures, audio and video are able to be spread by mobile social network in a rapid speed (Lu, Wen, & Cao, 2014). Compelling content, known as an ignited online hotspot, can be virally disseminated and spread to thousands of users, often within a few seconds. Reposting, users' major activities online, is one of the most frequently adopted information sharing behaviors among Chinese mobile phone users (Bouwman, Carlsson, Castillo, Giaglis, & Walden, 2010b).

Millennials are well known as extensive users of mobile technologies and the Internet (Mu, Spaargaren, & Oude Lansink, 2019). This is consistent with the data collected for this study. Considering both the penetration of social media use, smart phone adoption, and frequency of reposting activity, it is apparent that the demographic of Chinese millennials is worthy of study.

When considering the nature of viral messaging, the circumstances that make viral messaging proliferate and the potential for promotion and marketing, users of all social networking sites and platforms are potentially customers whose attention can be attained by online information (Bronner & de Hoog, 2014). In addition to its potential promotional and marketing value, viral content can also impact consumer behavior by influencing consumer perceptions, attitudes and views and has the potential to emerge as a key element of a company's promotional mix (Kirby & Marsden, 2006). Awareness of the potential value of exploiting viral reposting is not new, but the potential continues to grow. With increases in the development of social networking driven technology, service providers are endeavoring

to build a customized and content-aware service (De Reuver & Haaker, 2009; Klemettinen, 2007). Through social media, a simple corporate message is able to be turned into powerful viral marketing tool easily if a company can implement the right content effectively (A. M. Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

While there is a considerable depth in the literature for studies done with online behavior concerning social media, e.g. Facebook, Twitter Oh (2015), the applicability of findings of that work is limited with regards to China, "The world's largest social-media market is vastly different from its counterpart in the West" (Chiu et al., 2012b). Even within the emerging but still limited body of research concerning social media usage patterns in China, there exists a gap within the topic of particular emphasis regarding Millennials. The existing usage of social media in China is pervasive, among the highest levels of user penetration in the world, China has the largest internet population in the world (Men & Tsai, 2013). According to Chu et al, (2010), Chinese users spend more time on SNS than Americans, and with the rapid adaptation of faster network connectivity, more pervasive access to wifi, 4G and very soon 5G mobile phone technology, the number of users is likely to continuously and rapidly increase.

Peer-to-peer communication leads to the possible viral nature of online reposting in which participants as well as message-receivers are often willing to actively spread information (Eckler & Bolls, 2011). To determine what type of content and form of messages arouses the interests of millennials leading to reposting is an important endeavor and can lead to a significant contribution towards understanding viral messaging, social media use and online advertising.

Gender is added as a relevant variable to for analysis because online shopping varies by gender, Dillon et al. (2014) , Wu et al. (2017) as does social media usage (Bivens & Haimson, 2016; Nesi & Prinstein, 2015; Schwartz et al., 2013). In fact, the work of Li et al (2018) supports gender differentiation in this area by predicting user gender with a high level of accuracy based on reposting behavior. This is consistent with the data analysis of this study as indicated in Table 1 and is discussed in the Findings section.

Identifying the motivational, content message and type of media most reposted by millennials by gender will provide insight in how reposting can be used for commercial purposes. This study aims to fill the literature gap by investigating Chinese millennials reposting behavior on social media. The findings may offer online-marketers and promoters some useful insights considering Chinese millennials and viral social media content.

BACKGROUND

There appears to be little in the existing literature focusing specifically on, or related to social media reposting behavior of Millennials in China. Some studies have been conducted concerning workplace usage of technological incorporation and organizational accommodation including Hershatter (2010) in the area of tourism, and Luo (2018) for in-vehicle use while travelling (Polzin, Chu, & Godfrey, 2014).

A viral hot spot can be ignited as well as spread virally through social media in a matter of seconds, not only nationally, but internationally without regard for linguistic limitations (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Online content is able to be reposted quickly and efficiently, 70 percent of likes on wall posts happened within four hours and about 95% occur within 22 hours of the original posting (Heidemann, Klier, & Probst, 2012). In the United States, Facebook has become an effective civic engagement tool, 74% of House candidates and 81% of Senatorial candidates won their battles for their higher number of fans on Facebook during the 2010 midterm elections (Obar, Zube, & Lampe, 2012). Breaking news is a good example of how fast information can spread through viral activity on social media and

further may even provide an alternative role by substituting for the formal mainstream media. The news of the Sichuan earthquake which killed around 70,000 people in China, was disseminated worldwide from a single post made by a local citizen three minutes earlier than U.S. Geological Survey (Gabarain, 2008).

The interactive nature of social media could provide an opportunity for increasing the degree of users' engagement. Reposting is one of the most important forms of viral behaviors and is the highest for recognition of certain types of content among all kinds of viral behavior, not only for psychological approval, but also for actual behavior implemented (Alhabash & McAlister, 2015a). Khan (2017) argues that user participation can be considered by usual viral behavior including likes, comments and shares. Online interactions are often more uninhibited, creative and explicit than in-person communication (Wellman et al., 1996). The behavior of reposting is an embodiment of participation and of a certain type of self-branding.

The identification of the content types that trigger Chinese millennials' reposting behavior and motivation is worthy of further discussion. Much about an individual's offline character can be perceived in their social media presence (Sell, de Reuver, Walden, & Carlsson, 2012a). Much can also be determined about individuals, both directly and indirectly by analyzing the content that they post or repost on social media (Chiu et al., 2012b). The value orientation of an individual could effectively be interpreted by the words they use on social media (J. Chen, Hsieh, Mahmud, & Nichols, 2014). In addition to posting and reposting of secondary content, posting of original content on SMS, especially, "selfies" occurs frequently and is an effective mechanism for analysis of personal characteristics (Sung, Lee, Kim, & Choi, 2016).

Chinese Millennials

Although there are various definitions towards "Millennials", researchers tend to identify the age group as 18-30 years of age (Alhabash & McAlister, 2015b; Erlam, Smythe, & Wright, 2016; Rodney & Wakeham Dr, 2016; Witt, Best, & Rainie, 2008). In this study, the age group from 18-30 is used. Rainer and Rainer (2011) posit that Millennials are those born within the duration of 1980 to 2000, which is proving to be a commercially significant as well as an influential generation.

The Millennial Generation is forecast to change the perception of young people in part due to their heavy involvement in in online social events to a large extent accessed through various social media platforms (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Millennials have played an influential role in social media's evolution into an important source of product information and subsequent online shopping (Blake et al., 2017; Mangold & Smith, 2012a).

Wang et al. (2017) state that Chinese millennials are a generation that cannot be generalized into any other, in part because they came of age during the time of economic reform in China and the explosive economic growth that accompanied that era. With that consideration, Chinese millennials are a huge potential commercial market as they come of age with a previously unseen capacity for online commercial activity (Blake et al., 2017). Combined with their high level of online activity and adoption social media, this group must be studied as a unique demographic. Chinese millennials have developed in completely different surroundings than their Western counterparts and they probably have very little similarities with them (Sethi, 2019).

Reposting

Reposting is regarded as the most impactful way to disseminate information rapidly and with influence (Borge-Holthoefer, Baños, González-Bailón, & Moreno, 2013). Reposting is also the easiest way to diffuse information virally. In this case, diffusion being defined as a process that communicates via specific channels among members of a social system (Rogers, 1995). Reposting is an implicit advertising behavior which is motivated by a user's own initiative. The challenge is how to engage and attract users to repost actively and willingly. Once the interest to repost is aroused, the potential advertising effect can be optimized. Reposting is an efficient and convincing way to spread the message.

Merton et al. (1954) argue that homophily is one of the fundamental principles of social network structure. Friends are likely to join in collective activities, provide assistance and communicate with each other (Argyle & Furnham, 1983). For online relationships, finding and connecting with other with whom one has more in common is more easily accomplished, and has much greater possibilities in part due to the relative ease of online communication and vast number of relationships possible, 80% of Dutch use social network sites for connecting and maintaining offline friendship (Valkenburg & Peter, 2009).

Compared to advertising posted by business accounts, messages reposted between people with non-professional relationships are more likely to get attention of SNS users. The process of online users reposting viral advertising to friends could be regarded as an endorsement of a certain brand's ads and levels up the possibility getting receiver's attention and forward again (Chu, 2011). For these reasons, research to identify triggers, and motivations, as well as specifics of the content of Chinese millennials is worthwhile. The objective then becomes to determine what will encourage this group to repost willingly and frequently.

Motivation to repost

Motivation can be explained as a psychological concept that leads individual to act towards a directed or identified objective (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Studies about motivation have been done concerning the application of activity in social media, Urista et al. (2009) similar activities in the work-place George et al. (1996) and information acceptance behavior (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992). Entertainment, social engagement and a variety of incentives are part of the motivation that drives brand-consumers to interact online across differences in age, gender and style of usage of social media (Rohm, D. Kaltcheva, & R. Milne, 2013).

Social cognitive theory has been applied to understand consumer behavior and personal actions in particular circumstances which may be based on individual cognition (Hsu, Ju, Yen, & Chang, 2007). Self-efficacy and outcome expectation are two main influential factors of individual cognition. Intrinsic motivation is defined as people performing activities solely for the gratification and satisfaction of the activity itself (Sweetser & Kelleher, 2011). Self-centered and community related desires are distinct according to studies of sharing behavior on SMS (Hsu et al., 2007). Users share content in order to gain recognition and respect, grow and strengthen their social network, secure their self-esteem and acquire an enhanced sense of community (Baym, 2015a; Gretzel & Yoo, 2008). Altruism is explained as supporting others, the activity of helping others and as viewed as a reposting of useful, or helpful content and may provide re-posters with a feeling of being needed or of being helpful ((Baym, 2015b).

Social media users also expect identification in virtual community for example, Facebook users seeking identification implicates self-awareness of membership in online groups (Cheung, Chiu, & Lee, 2011). People dedicate to present themselves in cyberspace with self-disclosure, for creating personal image and an enhanced identity (A. M. Kaplan &

Haenlein, 2010). Sharing of common content that may be viewed as positive by peers is related to societal norms, commonly held tastes and common objectives (Williams, 2009).

Types of content

Content Form refers to types of content and the presentation form that is re-posted. According to Erdogmus (2012), when posting on social media platforms, consumers are likely to share types of content that is related to music, technology, and humor. On twitter, for example, content viewed as worthy is categorized as: informative - 48% or funny - 48% (André, Bernstein, & Luther, 2012). In the field of television researchers classify the type of content into a matrix model concerning attention, emotion, information, and opinion (Wohn & Bowe, 2016). According to the evaluation of official Facebook pages, contents related to celebrities and product information are most often viewed and shared (Parsons, 2013). Online marketing is the emerging and most effective way to target prospect customers by providing them with entertaining and informative content (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012).

Presentation Form

The form, or technical specification of content that is used on SMS varies with the most re-posted being either textual and narrative communication or audio and visual content (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). During the chatting interaction, bonding of users in social media varies with decreasing degree from video, audio and instant message (Sherman, Michikyan, & Greenfield, 2013) Various forms of images and video assist in building the brand identity of the user in social media platforms (Parsons, 2013) Content comprised of both audio and video is found to be more impactful compared to text or static pictures by online browsers, particularly when confronting multimedia features in the field of commercial websites and online products (Appiah, 2006a).

Videos of commercial material, similar to that used in television is an emerging trend and represents a new way to advertise (Parsons, 2013). In the field of enterprise social media, combined text and multimedia such as video, the term hypermedia has emerged as an application which provides enhanced reach and richness of content (Kane, 2015).

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

For several reasons gender is one of the most commonly used demographics to segment a market (Putrevu, 2001). Gender segments are easily measured through survey respondents self-identification and as explained above, gender provides a solid rationale for responding to marketing mix elements (Darley & Smith, 1995). Evidence indicates that women are more likely to value social network interactions (Debrand & Johnson, 2008; Shi, Cheung, Lee, & Chen, 2009). According to Hans (2006), maintaining an active social network is an instrumental objective when women use mobile devices whereas male subjects are more likely to use mobile device primarily for entertainment purposes such as online games. Females are more likely to use social media interactions to join into a conversational culture (Mante & Piris, 2002; Sell, de Reuver, Walden, & Carlsson, 2012b). This is supported by research indicating that females are more inclined to use social media in various social contexts than men, and social networking (Sell et al., 2012a). While the research is limited, there are indications that people prefer to share visual content over text content (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014).

Research has been done to identify the most common presentation form for self-presentation (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015a). The same work indicates that teenage boys are more willing to be viewed publicly and more likely to present assertiveness by text while

girls use tends to incorporate more individual privacy, for example by limiting the visibility of profiles images and details (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015b).

Social connection is a main purpose of females to interact online. Incongruously, while females may be willing to present attractive and sexually appealing visual content, patterns of presenting used by males remains vague. Young females were identified as more likely to be impacted by athlete public figures and to spread positive word-of-mouth, and less likely than men to consider athletes as materialistic, making them more receptive to sports celebrity role models (Dix, Phau, & Pougnet, 2010). Females used more words related to psychological and social processes than males (Newman, Groom, Handelman, & Pennebaker, 2008).

Based on the existing body of knowledge reported above, the following hypotheses are derived:

Research Question (RQ): What are the differences in the reposting behavior between males and females with regards to motivation, content, and media type?

H1: Regarding Motivation to Repost

1a - Female subjects are more motivated to repost for incentives.

1b - Males are more inclined to repost in order to gain recognition.

H2: Regarding Types of content

2a - Women are more likely to repost celebrity-related content.

2b – Social news and current affairs are more likely to trigger reposting by Men.

H3: Regarding Media type

3a – Text and word forms are preferred by Female.

3b – There is significant difference in favor of picture-based media content.

METHODOLOGY

Pilot Study - Qualitative Method

In order to identify the most frequently used responses to the research inquiries, a qualitative pilot study combining interviews and discussions was undertaken. In-person interviews with 30 Chinese millennials (15 males, 15 females) were conducted, all subjects self-reported as being both adept and active users of SMS. The responses were collected, collated and arranged into types. Responses that repeated frequently were selected as the choices for the questionnaire of the full study.

Instrumentation Design (Quantitative Method)

The survey was designed based on pilot study and previous related research design (Yuan, Bare, Johnson, & Saberi, 2014).

Survey Question on Motivation to Repost

Seven options were presented as possible responses for the question regarding motivation:

- Work and professional purposes
- Social interaction (common interests)
- Seeking Recognition
- Follow Celebrities

- Opinions (Resonated content)
- Altruism (Helpful and motivational information)
- Incentives, Virtual or Financial (Drawings, raffles etc.).

In addition to the most frequently occurring responses during the Qualitative Pilot Study, an option for Work and Professional Purposes was included due this option being identified as a factor in previous related literature. Facebook is emerging as a platform for work-related objectives as the online business model continues to form (Mazman & Usuel, 2010). Some business sectors are moving more rapidly to integrate social media into their regular operations, students majoring in journalism are more likely than students majoring in other disciplines to use social media for work purposes (Hermida, Fletcher, Korell, & Logan, 2012).

It is not uncommon for users to see social media as an extension of earlier technological version of connectivity, and to find that the primary objective of the Internet is supporting collaborative work (Wellman, 2001). Chinese companies apply social network sites to promote public dialogue with consumers by posting corporate information to target the global market (Men & Tsai, 2012). More importantly, Chinese social network site users are sometimes required to propagate or publicize for their off-line community, organization or company.

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) demonstrates that behavioral intention can lead to individual specific action, which in turn is influenced by personal attitudes and subjective norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977). Apart from this classical theory, motivation theory is widely applied in recent research. Extrinsic and intrinsic are the two main branches most likely to exert examined influence (Lee, 2014). The former pertains to environmental outcomes, e.g. values, benefits, while the latter refers to motivation related to enjoyment and interest of self regardless of outside stimuli. Crucial predictors in knowledge sharing, for instance, financial incentives and personal reputation is classified as extrinsic motivation, and altruism is regarded as intrinsic motivation (Hung, Durcikova, Lai, & L2011).

Meanwhile, social capital theory is often considered. Social capital is a diverse concept regarding structure, relation and cognition (Chang & Chuang, 2011; Chiu et al., 2012b; Wasko & Faraj, 2005) Chinese youth are undergoing an extensive transformation towards cultural and value consumption (Fung, 2009). The report of Sina demonstrates that there are more than 60,000 official accounts including celebrities, sports figures, well-known spokesman. Following celebrities through social media is a popular activity, and is found to be a highly commercialized trend, complete with various cultural and value consumption factors (Dionísio, Leal, & Moutinho, 2008; Fung, 2009). In order to target opportunities in the fan-based online sports market, Chinese social media users were studied (Fung, 2009; S. Kaplan & Langdon, 2012) After reviewing existing literature and the results of the pilot study the expression of each choice to more accurately reflect the intent of this study was completed.

Survey Question on Types of Content

Eight alternatives were provided to measure the factor of Type of Content:

- Incentivized Content, Virtual or Financial (Drawings raffles etc.)
- Charity and Donations
- To Bring Good Luck
- Interesting, novel and entertaining (cultural, fashions, sports)
- Emotion and Feelings (chicken soup for the soul)
- Social news, current affairs and Hot topics,

- Professional contents which are significant and beneficial
- Idols, Celebrities, loved bloggers and public figures

Superstition sometimes is seen irrational, it assists human beings in dealing with ambiguous circumstances and uncertainty (Gimpl & Dakin, 1984; Rice, 1985; Tsang, 2004a)(Rice Jr, 1985), (Tsang, 2004b). Chinese millennials go through extremely competitive exams, interviews, and occupational challenges and regularly pursue good luck to strengthen confidence and provide psychological comfort. Individuals may resort to totemic symbols before taking exams or when seeking for money in order to appeal to the god of scholarship (Zeng, Huang, & Dou, 2009). Many Chinese pray or seek to gain blessings for good health or healing, or seek to be offered blessings related to health and prosperity (Badham, 2008; Billioud, 2013; Law, 2005).

Stroke patients in China regard spiritual needs was important at all stages of recovery (Lui & Mackenzie, 1999) People are inclined to share news they have encountered on social media for constructing a shared reality such as for religious, superstitious, or spiritual purposes(Lui & Mackenzie, 1999) As Chinese millennials develop a sense of self-presentation and identity management, their personal social media brand, through technology-mediated communication Chu et al (2010), frequently posting and re-posting of these types of content has become frequent. Several participants of the pilot study revealed that they would like to repost emotional content to convey their believes and values. Social media is an indirect way to express their own words.

Survey Question on Presentation Form

Based on the frequency of repeated responses in the Pilot Study, Social media content was subdivided into 6 categories of presentation forms:

- Multi-media (Video + Audio)
- Audio only (Music)
- Pictures (Static & Animated gif)
- Pictures with comments, captions and clarification
- Short messages
- Long text, (a paragraph or longer)

Online presentation features are frequently a debate in the field of cyber-news, online-learning, and advertisers (Omar, Ismail, & Kee, 2018; Sundar, 2000; Sundar, Narayan, Obregon, & Uppal, 1998). Multimedia is a popular form of choice which contains both video and audio and may have favorable impacts on commercial websites (Appiah, 2006b). Audio content delivery is a crucial approach in online-marketing (Scott, 2009). Digital audio, images and photographs are well defined types of presentation for use in social media (Mangold & Smith, 2012b). The combination of picture and text is also a often used form for content in online and social media.

In the context of business use, text-image congruence facilitates clear product images (Van Rompay, De Vries, & Van Venrooij, 2010). In the context of Twitter, the design and purpose is to encourage people to post or repost short text to update their network (Marwick & Boyd, 2011). In the case of Weibo, a amximum of 140 words are allowed in a single post, however, various other social media platforms are offering the options of more content which is beginnign to be viewed as necessary. Detailed narrative communicative practices include blogs, written reviews and other information, and in particular, fashion and brand related content (Helal, Ozuem, & Lancaster, 2018).

ANALYSIS / RESULTS

A total of 1,347 online survey questionnaire responses were collected. Basic information on age groups and frequency of social media use breakdown is provided on Table 1. The Chinese millennials age group ranging from 18 to 30 years represented the majority of the survey respondents with 838 participants out of the total or 64% with a gender make up composition of (295 males 35.2% and 543 females 64.7%). This Chinese Millennial age group are active social media users and reposted more frequently 62% compared to the other age groups in the study (see table 2). The majority of the respondents, 621 of the survey's participants (74.1%) hail from the Zhejiang province of South-East China. This is due to the manner in which the survey data was collected, Millennials shared the survey link with their friends on their WeChat accounts, and in turn asked their friends to keep sharing it with their friends, thus creating a snowball sampling effect. Table 1 (Appendix) shows a comparison between the frequency of reposting between Millennial (18-30 years of age) and users that are <18 or 30+.

Table 2 (Appendix) shows the comparisons of age groups and reposting frequency when engaging in social media interaction with others. Based on the comparison of the different age groups in reposting content on social media and sharing frequency, the Chinese millennials are uniquely distinct group of heavy social media use with dominant counts and frequency of usage for both male and female. Especially, for the highest sharing frequency of posting content in social media in five times or more and one to four times per day (5+ times a day (68%), 1-4 times a day (67%), 1-5 times a week (70%).

Table 3 (Appendix) shows that when comparing the Chinese millennials' age cohort groups on gender differences and the motivation or the driving reasons to repost on social media, some interesting findings emerged. For example, the chi-square test uncovered a statistically significant differences between male and female in their motivations to share content, $\chi^2 (1, N = 838) = 7.66, 6.18, 7.3, 7.8, 35.09$ $p < .001$ related to resonated content females were more likely to be motivated to share that content more than males (62% to 52%), likewise females were more likely to be motivated to share content related to altruism (28.5% to 20%), financial incentives (32% to 23%), and celebrity related reposts (22.5% to 6.4%), while interestingly males showed a significant difference than females (21.7% to 14.4%) to be motivated to share contents related to recognition seeking $\chi^2 (1, N = 838) = 7.30$ $p < .001$. On the other hand, there was no statistically significant difference between the Chinese millennials' gender for being motivated to repost on work related to socially interactive activities.

Further analysis of the data, shown in Table 4, (Appendix) indicates that the media form used to share content by gender differences, there were some significant differences $\chi^2 (1, N = 838) = 8.54$ and 13.42 $p < .001$). Female participants showed more inclination to share multimedia (text, audio, and video) content (54% to 43.4%) and long message format (one paragraph or longer) (36% to 23.7%) for the motivations cited above. In the motivation to share short message text a $\chi^2 (1, N = 838) = 4.72$ $p < .05$, females differed with males (34.4% to 27.1%). There was no major difference between Chinese millennial genders with regards to sharing pictures with comments, pictures with animated gifs, and audio messages.

On the third research question regarding what type of content Chinese millennials shared or reposted to their online connections $\chi^2 (1, N = 838) = 14.06$ and 61.20 $p < .001$). Table 5 (Appendix) indicates that females showed a significant difference to males in the shared content type related to bring good luck (24.1% to 13.2%) as well as content related to celebrities or public figures (30.2% to 6.8%).

While the male survey respondents showed a statistically significant difference $\chi^2(1, N = 838) = 4.47, p < .05$ to sharing or reposting more than female survey participants when the content was related to charity or donations (27.5% to 21%). This finding was unexpected and is included in the further research suggestions. On the other hand, there was no statistically significant difference between the Chinese millennials' gender on sharing or reposting content types related to financial drawings (raffles), novel or interesting content (fashion or cultural), emotion and feeling, current affairs, and professional related content.

Furthermore, when we compared the survey respondents' overall gender differences ($N = 1347, female N = 888, male N = 459$) and included in the analysis the other two age groups in the survey (younger than 18 and older than 31) with a total of $N = 509$, on the question of motivation to repost or share content on social media the results were unexpected.

Table 6 (Appendix) shows that males in the overall general population showed a significant difference to females, being more inclined and motivated to share $\chi^2(1, N = 1347) = 13.08$ and $44.75, p < .001$) content related to altruism (37.2% to 62.8%) even though they represented 34% of the survey sample with females representing 66%, and similarly with celebrities (37.4% to 62.6%).

Additionally, male participants showed some difference at the $\chi^2(1, N = 1347) = 3.14$ and $3.17, p < .1$) level with sharing content related to raffles and financial gain (35.3% to 64.7%). In contrast, in the overall group analysis, female participants were more motivated to share and repost $\chi^2(1, N = 1347) = 4.24, p < .05$ the content related to seeking recognition (33% to 67%). Very surprisingly, this is a reversal from the results observed in the Millennials age group gender differences analyzed above, and this finding is a compelling motivator for further research of a replicative or exploratory nature.

Similarly, an analogous pattern emerges again in the general population sample compared to the millennial age group. We find there's a significant relationship between gender and social media format used as a medium to repost messages to others as shown on Table 7 (Appendix). $\chi^2(1, N = 1,347) = 6.85, 5.61, \text{ and } 7.56, p < .001$ Chinese male participants of almost all age groups surveyed in the study were more likely to engage in using media types of pictures with comments (38.8% to 61.2%), and long text messages (36% to 64%) and short text reposts (36.4% to 63.6%) to share contents with their circles. While there was no statistically observed gender differences in the survey's overall participants' preferences in using multimedia (text, audio and video) and pictures (both static and gif) media types.

Table 8 (Appendix) shows the types of content Chinese social media users shared and reposted, this also follows a pattern similar to the motivation and media used to repost content findings above. In the overall survey participants' responses, again there's a strong relationship between gender and type of content reposted on social media. $\chi^2(1, N = 1,347) = 11.9$ and $64.026, p < .001$) especially in two items out of the eight items in the survey questionnaire (see Table 8), in those two items male's shared or reposted content were significantly different than that of female in terms of to bring good luck (36.1% to 63.9) and celebrity related content shared (38.7% to 61.3%). Whereas, surprisingly females $\chi^2(1, N = 1,347) = 10.66, p < .001$) shared more content related to current affairs than their male counterpart in the same survey.

CONCLUSION AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Content that goes viral in Social Media is emerging as the future means of reaching many target demographic audiences. The results of this study analyzed Chinese Millennial gender differences in sharing and reposting content on Social Media and confirms the findings of communication theory such as Uses and gratification theory (UGT), and

motivation theory, but this study's findings also enrich gender studies regarding social media usage. Exploring the intricate relationship between gender, motivation and content form, the online social media promoters and businesses may be able to use these findings to design advertising and commercial content according to targeted millennial market segmentation with gender difference. Additionally, social media content developers may also benefit from focusing on building improved social media platform strategies by delivering content by viewing findings.

The findings in the motivation of reposting demonstrate that, Chinese millennials females are more motivated to repost content on social media that relates to following celebrities, sharing resonated opinions and financial gain such as raffles as well as spiritual incentives than their counterpart male millennials. On the other hand, Chinese Millennial males are more likely to repost content in social media to get more recognition.

When examining reposted content in social media, females are more likely to share content with the intention to bring good luck and celebrity-related content. Conversely, males are more likely to share charity and donation related message. Comparing the propensity of each female and male Chinese millennials to repost themes based on the form of the content, females are more likely to repost text messages, both long and short than males. Females also preferred more use of multi-media presentation formats than males.

On a practical application level, online marketers and social media content developers can use these findings to segment their intended market demographics by gender which, as described above is a key factor in targeted promotional advertising social media campaigns. For instance, when promoting a female cosmetic product or service, it would be sufficiently helpful to invite key opinion leaders (KOL) or influential celebrities to be spokesperson as well as adding content which is aimed at bringing good luck with the use of multi-media or text based format for marketing outreach programs. For males delivering content which allows to easily get recognition and includes some form of charity aspect factor would be most likely approach.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although some of the findings presented in this study are of great interest, however, some limitations exist. The surveys were accomplished with self-assessed approach which is subjective. Future studies would do well by using more back and forth focus groups. Secondly, the measured data in the survey was broadly generalized on all social media to the extent of social media used without pointing out a specific social network site platform, this is less of a limitation than it appears as WeChat is by far the most prevalent social media platform used in China. This paper focuses on gender differences in social media of Chinese millennials, which provides a fertile group for further study in any of the variables explored. Future research could elaborate on the relationships between mentioned factors in both objective and subjective methods. Finally, future studies can use an application programming interface to investigate reposted information in analyzing type of content and presentation form accurately and on a larger scale.

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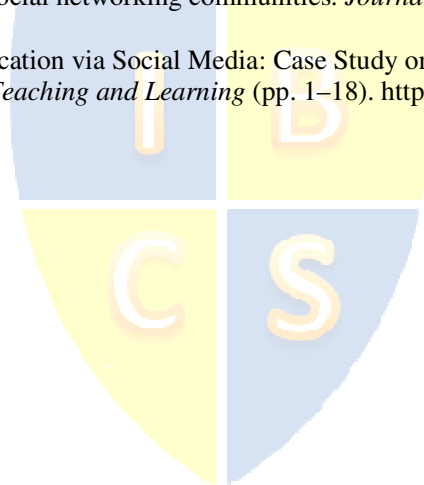
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APPENDIX

Posting Frequency	Female	%	Male	%
5+ times a day	58	7%	35	4%
1-4 times a day	101	11%	42	5%
1-5 times a week	204	23%	106	12%
1-4 times a month	246	28%	119	13%
Once a month	235	26%	121	14%
Rarely	44	5%	36	4%

Age Groups	Female	%	Male	%
<18	90	10%	27	6%
18-30	543	61%	295	64%
31-40	111	13%	53	12%
40+	144	16%	84	18%

Table 1: Frequency distribution with gender comparison

Sharing Frequency	5+ times a day	1-4 times a day	1-5 times a week	1-4 times a month	Once a month	Rarely	Total	%
Age								
<18	8	10	21	27	36	15	117	9%
18-30	68	96	218	230	193	33	838	62%
31-40	7	15	26	46	56	14	164	12%
40+	10	22	45	62	71	18	228	17%
Total	93	143	310	365	356	80	1347	

Table 2: Age group distribution of frequency reposting on social media - China

	Female	Expected	%	Male	Expected	%	P value	χ^2	Cramer's V
	543		65%	295		35%			
Reason to repost (Share content on social media)									
Work related	213	210.6	39.2%	112	114.4	38.0%	0.721	0.13	0.01
Resonated content	337	318.2	62.1%	154	172.8	52.2%	0.006 ***	7.66	0.10
Social interaction	225	226.8	41.4%	125	123.2	42.4%	0.793	0.07	0.01
Altruism (Helpful and motivational information)	155	140.0	28.5%	61	76.0	20.7%	0.013 **	6.18	0.09
Seek recognition	78	92.0	14.4%	64	50.0	21.7%	0.007 ***	7.30	0.09
Financial incentives (Virtual drawings or raffles)	175	157.5	32.2%	68	85.5	23.1%	0.005 ***	7.82	0.10
Follow celebrities	122	91.4	22.5%	19	49.6	6.4%	0.000 ***	35.09	0.20

*, **, and *** indicate the significance level of 10%, 5%, and 1%, respectively

TABLE 3 : Comparisons of Chinese millennial motivation to repost content in social media for shared content.

	Female	Expected	%	Male	Expected	%	P value	χ^2	Cramer's V
Media Form Used to Repost (Shared)									
Multi-media (video + audio + text)	293	272.8	54.0%	128	148.2	43.4%	0.003 ***	8.54	0.10
Pictures (comments, captions and clarification)	370	362.2	68.1%	189	196.8	64.1%	0.232	1.43	0.04
Pictures (static, animated gif)	280	269.6	51.6%	136	146.4	46.1%	0.131	2.28	0.05
Long text (one paragraph or longer)	196	172.4	36.1%	70	93.6	23.7%	0.000 ***	13.49	0.13
Short message	187	173.0	34.4%	80	94.0	27.1%	0.030 **	4.72	0.08
Audio message	426	433.5	78.5%	117	109.5	21.5%	0.177	1.82	0.05

*, **, and *** indicate the significance level of 10%, 5%, and 1%, respectively

TABLE 4 : Comparisons of Chinese millennial in social media for media format types used for shared content

	Female	Expected	%	Male	Expected	%	P value	χ^2	Cramer's V
<i>Shared (Reposted) Content</i>									
Virtual or Financial (Drawings or raffles)	158	153.6	29.1%	79	83.4	26.8%	0.477	0.51	0.02
Charity and Donations	114	126.4	21.0%	81	68.6	27.5%	0.034 **	4.47	0.07
To Bring Good Luck	131	110.2	24.1%	39	59.8	13.2%	0.000 ***	14.06	0.13
Entertaining (cultural, fashions, sports)	275	265.7	50.6%	135	144.3	45.8%	0.177	1.82	0.05
Emotion and Feelings (chicken soup for the soul)	123	130.2	22.7%	78	70.8	26.4%	0.220	1.51	0.04
Current affairs	163	168.5	30.0%	97	91.5	32.9%	0.392	0.73	0.03
Professional contents	193	193.1	35.5%	105	104.9	35.6%	0.988	0.00	0.00
Celebrities (following idols)	164	119.2	30.2%	20	64.8	6.8%	0.000 ***	61.20	0.27

*, **, and *** indicate the significance level of 10%, 5%, and 1%, respectively

TABLE 5 : Comparisons of Chinese millennial in social media for types of content shared and reposted.

	Female	Expected	%	Male	Expected	%	P value	χ^2	Cramer's V
<i>Reason to repost (Share content on social media)</i>									
	888		66%	459		34%			
Work related	549	546	66.3%	279	282	33.7%	0.710	0.138	0.010
Resonated content	423	438	63.6%	242	227	36.4%	0.077 *	3.134	0.048
Social interaction	587	580	66.7%	293	300	33.3%	0.407	0.688	0.023
Altruism (Helpful to others)	584	613	62.8%	346	317	37.2%	0.000 ***	13.089	0.099
Seek recognition	767	754	67.0%	377	390	33.0%	0.039 **	4.248	0.056
Financial incentives (Virtual drawings or raffles)	678	691	64.7%	370	357	35.3%	0.070 *	3.178	0.049
Follow celebrities	732	771	62.6%	438	399	37.4%	0.000 ***	44.752	0.182

*, **, and *** indicate the significance level of 10%, 5%, and 1%, respectively

TABLE 6 : Overall population and gender comparisons for motivation on repost in social media - China.

	Female	Expected	%	Male	Expected	%	P value	χ^2	Cramer's V
<i>Media Form Used to Repost (Shared)</i>									
	888		66%	459		34%			
Multi-media (video + audio + text)	497	506	64.7%	271	262	35.3%	0.28	1.166	0.029
Pictures (comments, captions and clarification)	281	303	61.2%	178	156	38.8%	0.009 ***	6.859	0.071
Pictures (static, animated gif)	472	477	65.3%	251	246	34.7%	0.593	0.285	0.015
Long text (one paragraph or longer)	625	643	64.0%	351	333	36.0%	0.010 ***	5.619	0.065
Short message	593	615	63.6%	340	318	36.4%	0.005 ***	7.564	0.075
Audio message	744	750	65.4%	394	388	34.6%	0.323	0.975	0.027

*, **, and *** indicate the significance level of 10%, 5%, and 1%, respectively

TABLE 7 : Overall population and gender comparisons on media form used to share in social media - China.

	Female	Expected	%	Male	Expected	%	P value	χ^2	Cramer's V
<i>Shared (Reposted) Content</i>									
	888		66%	459		34%			
Virtual or Financial (Drawings or raffles)	699	696	66.2%	357	360	33.8%	0.692	0.157	0.011
Charity and Donations	622	610	67.2%	304	316	32.8%	0.152	2.049	0.039
To Bring Good Luck	711	734	63.9%	402	379	36.1%	0.000 ***	11.903	0.094
Entertaining (cultural, fashions, sports)	526	525	66.1%	270	271	33.9%	0.884	0.021	0.004
Emotion and Feelings (chicken soup for the soul)	649	654	65.4%	343	338	34.6%	0.517	0.420	0.018
Current affairs	622	595	68.9%	281	308	31.1%	0.001 ***	10.665	0.089
Professional contents	603	603	65.9%	312	312	34.1%	0.980	0.001	0.001
Celebrities (following idols)	687	739	61.3%	434	382	38.7%	0.000 ***	64.026	0.218

*, **, and *** indicate the significance level of 10%, 5%, and 1%, respectively

TABLE 8 : Overall population and gender comparisons for types of content shared in social media - China.