

Causes of The Popularity of Short-Format Videos

A Study on Causes of The Popularity of Short-Format Videos

Taking Chinese "Social Shake" on TikTok as An Example

Runyu Li

rli@trinity.edu

Abstract

With the rapid development of Internet technology and the popularity of smartphones, the impact of new media and new media platforms on the Internet has become more and more significant. In recent years, short video platforms such as TikTok (Chinese version: Douyin) and Kuaishou have been favored by smartphone users in China and over the world. This article will take Chinese "Social Shake" dance videos as an example to analyze the reasons for the popularity of short-format videos. Then, an analysis of the pros and cons of short-format videos and TikTok's explosion.

Keywords: Short-Format Videos, TikTok, Social Shake, Short Video Platforms, Douyin

The Popularity of Short-Format Videos

Introduction of the Short-Format Videos in the 2010s'

Since 2017, the short video industry has been growing significantly. "TikTok" (also known as "DouYin" in Chinese version), a social software developed by ByteDance, a multinational internet technology company headquartered in Beijing, was launched in September 2016. TikTok is a social network application for creating and sharing videos from 3 seconds to 60 seconds long. Users can use the video editing functions (such as screen filters), background music, and lip-sync templates included in these videos to communicate with viewers' online communities. Since its establishment, TikTok has attracted millions of users worldwide. TikTok reached 150 million daily active users in June 2018, and it had also become the world's most downloaded application in the first quarter of 2018¹. The popularity of TikTok and short video formats are closely related to the development of technology, media audience's participation, and cultural innovation.

The Reasons of The Success of TikTok and The Popularity of Short Video Formats

Unique Big Data Analysis

According to "*A Study on the Characteristics of Douyin Short Videos and Implications for Edge Caching*,"² the video platforms like Douyin (TikTok), Instagram, and YouTube usually have a huge video database or media information library. The platform can only classify and analyze users' usage data based on having a large amount of data. For example, the platform party can calculate the user's interests and hobbies by sorting out the user's viewing time for

¹ Fang, J., Wang, Z., & Hao, B. (2019, April). Analysis of "Anesthesia" Mechanism in Mobile Short Video

² Chen, Z., He, Q., Mao, Z., Chung, H. M., & Maharjan, S. (2019, May). A study on the characteristics of douyin short videos and implications for edge caching. In Proceedings of the ACM Turing Celebration Conference-China (pp. 1-6).

different types of videos, labeling the user's preferences, and showing them to users in the form of "recommended videos."

In "*Analysis of "Anesthesia" Mechanism in Mobile Short Video Applications*,"³the researchers argued TikTok is doing accurate "anesthesia" with big data and artificial intelligence. Under the precise calculation of big data, users of video platforms such as TikTok can always see what they want to watch on the platform. Videos on TikTok are shorter than traditional video modes like YouTube. In comparison with YouTube, there are more video producers on TikTok. Through specific calculations, TikTok can more accurately calculate user preferences and popular real-time content. By analyzing the big data, the TikTok platform can absorb the enthusiasm of creators in different fields and acquire more audiences. The TikTok platform can also ensure the audience's activity by using the recommendation mechanism to ensure the audience's long-term use of the product.

Convenient Video Production

In "*Analysis of the Reasons and Development of Short Video Application—Taking TikTok as an Example*,"⁴ the authors argued that convenient video creation, diverse video content, and high audience participation are all reasons why TikTok is popular.

The short videos are simple to make and spread quickly, especially on the platform like TikTok. Compared with long videos, the threshold for short videos' creation is not too high, and short videos are more accessible for regular audiences to accept. A short video platform like TikTok has simplified the complex video production operation process. TikTok has also added

³ Fang, J., Wang, Z., & Hao, B. (2019, April). Analysis of "Anesthesia" Mechanism in Mobile Short Video

⁴ Yang, S., Zhao, Y., & Ma, Y. (2019, July). Analysis of the Reasons and Development of Short Video Application—Taking TikTok as an Example. In Proceedings of the 2019 9th International Conference on Information and Social Science (ICISS 2019), Manila, Philippines (pp. 12-14).

some practical and straightforward tool functions so that users can easily use their creativity to produce the video. People can use the fragmented time to watch or make short videos in their spare time. In this way, people from different social statuses can easily be producers and target widely different audience groups.

Another reason is that the content of the short videos has a wide variety. According to Maryam Mohsin's report, compared with Vine, another short video platform from the United States, "TikTok provides a platform for users to express themselves in a very creative way."⁵ The short video formats can break the logic of the production of traditional videos. Because TikTok's video duration is limited to 3 to 60 seconds, video producers need to grab the audience's attention in a short period of time. In order to gain attention, this has stimulated the creativity of creators to some extent. Charles Tumiotto Jackson also argues that although short viral videos occasionally appeared on Vine, Vine could not keep updating new popular topics and events like TikTok is doing today⁶. TikTok also no longer uses a single search engine like traditional video platforms (like Vine and YouTube). TikTok instead created a video-viewing mode that has one video constantly occupying the users' entire screen. Then, a random swipe up or down from the current video allows the system to recommend content that meets users' interests or suggests unexpected material they may enjoy.

Another reason for the popularity of TikTok is that many of TikTok's users are not only the audiences but also the producers. Under Webster's three models⁷ of the audiences, TikTok users act almost perfectly as agents in this situation. There is a lot of freedom and multiple ways for

⁵ Mohsin, M. (2020). 10 TikTok Statistics That You Need to Know [September 2020]. Retrieved 22 November 2020, from <https://www.oberlo.com/blog/tiktok-statistics>

⁶ Jackson, T. (2020). Why Is TikTok Better Than Vine?. Retrieved 22 November 2020, from <https://medium.com/better-marketing/why-is-tiktok-better-than-vine-b33ce1cf3367>

⁷ Webster's three models: Audiences can be regarded as outcomes, mass, and agents.

TikTok users to participate and interact with the media content on TikTok. The TikTok users can choose what kinds of videos they watch and give feedback by clicking "likes" and writing comments. The users can also choose to follow the video producers they like.

Most importantly, TikTok users can easily and freely choose to follow other users to create similar media content or original content. TikTok users can not only access content through specific tags, but they can also create completely original tags and challenges themselves⁸. To generate more popularity for their tags and challenges, they can also invite other users to participate. TikTok users can complete selective processes, acquire gratifications, and create interpretations as agents with great freedom.

Compared to TikTok, Vine is still considered a traditional video platform. Vine has only changed its video length from long to short, whereas YouTube's creation and production methods are still the same. TikTok has innovated its content and usage models. More importantly, TikTok encourages the participation of a large number of content creators and maintains its users' fidelity to the app. The limited access of the users to create media content is why Vine's user base began to shrink a lot after two years of popularity from 2013 to 2015 and ceased operations in 2017. TikTok and Douyin have been steadily growing since they were released in 2016, becoming the giants of short video platforms.

Great Advertising

Shuai Yang, Yuzhen Zhao, and Yifang Ma argued that the primary user group of TikTok is young people⁹. The most distinctive feature of this group is keen insight and pursuit of trends.

⁸ Tagging allows a user to identify someone or something else in a post, video, status update, or location on the social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter

⁹ Yang, S., Zhao, Y., & Ma, Y. (2019, July). Analysis of the Reasons and Development of Short Video Application—Taking TikTok as an Example. In Proceedings of the 2019 9th International Conference on Information and Social Science (ICISS 2019), Manila, Philippines (pp. 12-14).

The young TikTok users also laid the foundation for the spread of the celebrity effect. In the mobile Internet era, the short-term popularity of new media content is closely related to celebrity recommendations and the power of fans. Now, there are many businesses selling goods on short video platforms. Some of them create their own accounts to sell products, and some invite popular video producers to help them promote their products. Under this business model, more and more businesses are willing to use TikTok for commercial promotion. More celebrities are also willing to use TikTok to increase their popularity and conduct commercial activities. The majority of users, especially young people, are driven to start using TikTok because of trends and celebrity effects. At the same time, due to TikTok's simple and barrier-free video production model, newly created celebrities and trends continue to appear on the platform. This mutually beneficial business environment enables TikTok to develop in a long-term and stable manner.

One example can be seen in the relationship between athlete branding and TikTok stated in "Fan Engagement in 15 Seconds: Athletes' Relationship Marketing During a Pandemic via TikTok"¹⁰. An Athlete's personal brand is their most valuable asset. Even if a particular athlete's sports performance has declined, some brands or advertising contracts will continue to exist. For example, the retired athlete Michael Jordan still has substantial advertising benefits after retirement. Therefore, this proves that athletes with strong influences can continue to inspire consumers. And social media is the cornerstone of athletes' brand building. The importance of social media in sports is how it supports the interaction between athletes and their fans. Social media allows fans to learn more about the lives of their favorite athletes and other miscellaneous, personal information. In recent years, with the development of short video platforms, more and more athletes are also posting videos through media such as TikTok to interact with fans. At the

¹⁰ Su, Y., Baker, B. J., Doyle, J. P., & Yan, M. (2020). Fan Engagement in 15 Seconds: Athletes' Relationship Marketing During a Pandemic via TikTok. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 13(3), 436-446.

same time, some athletes cooperate with businesses and post videos or information about sports-related products. Driven by the athlete's personal brand or name, the athlete's supporters will likely buy the products.

Under TikTok's business mode, the audience commodity has formed. Under the audience commodity, media are sold to audiences, and audiences are sold to advertisers. Audiences perform as labor for advertisers by learning about brands, paying attention to certain products and information, and purchasing the products. As long as audiences use TikTok to watch videos, they directly or indirectly help advertisers. Dihua Tang argues¹¹ that merchants can do marketing on TikTok by releasing advertisements directly on TikTok officials. Those marketing activities include recommendations and advertisements of TikTok interspersed between short videos, creating business accounts, posting product-related media content, cooperating with the TikTok influencers, and asking them to promote the products. Some "indirect advertisements" viewed by audiences include but are not limited to videos of video producers that have cooperation with third-party merchants, videos of potential business partners, product evaluation videos, etc. There is a "disappearing line" between ads and media content. Whenever audiences spend their time on a media platform like TikTok, they have already become the unpaid labor of the advertisements.

The Pros and Cons of Short-Format Videos and TikTok's Explosion

Short video platforms such as TikTok with many active users can bring economic benefits to businesses, allow the audience to achieve self-satisfaction, and promote creativity among

¹¹ Tang, D. (2019). The New Situation of Marketing in the Self-Media Era-Taking TikTok as an Example. Chen, Z., He, Q., Mao, Z., Chung, H. M., & Maharjan, S. (2019, May). A study on the characteristics of douyin short videos and implications for edge caching. In Proceedings of the ACM Turing Celebration Conference-China (pp. 1-6).

users. If the public uses TikTok properly, it can even positively affect education, medical care, and national social security management.

A journal of chemical education shows that educators released instructional videos through short video platforms and received positive feedback¹². Publishing education-related content through short video platforms such as TikTok can increase students' enthusiasm to learn and encourage teachers to be more creative. At the same time, posting education-related videos on these public social media platforms can also increase the public's enthusiasm and attention on related topics (education). In the future, the investment and application of online teaching and digital education resources will increase.

In "How Health Communication via TikTok Makes a Difference: A Content Analysis of TikTok Accounts Run by Chinese Provincial Health Committees,"¹³the authors argued that the massive influence of short video platforms had brought society into the digital age. On the one hand, the country can promote medical insurance through short video platforms. In China, the government investigates the health insurance status of users through short video platforms. The government regularly publishes medical insurance-related announcements and information on the platform to facilitate medical insurance among the public. On the other hand, TikTok can collect data and gain insights into real-time social dynamics. Both the government and the public can use TikTok to learn about significant events in society. The government can also prevent and intervene in certain specific events through data analysis.

¹² Hayes, C., Stott, K., Lamb, K. J., & Hurst, G. A. (2020). "Making Every Second Count": Utilizing TikTok and Systems Thinking to Facilitate Scientific Public Engagement and Contextualization of Chemistry at Home.

¹³ Zhu, C., Xu, X., Zhang, W., Chen, J., & Evans, R. (2020). How health communication via TikTok makes a difference: a content analysis of TikTok accounts run by Chinese provincial health committees. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(1), 192.

Zongyi Zhang argues that in the digital economy and information age, the government's control of data is conducive to social security stability¹⁴. The government's supervision of short video platforms is to maintain public security and stability. The primary user group of short videos is young people, including a large number of minors. Under the influence of social media, it is difficult for many young users to make reasonable judgments about the authenticity of specific content and its value. Some short video producers sometimes display potentially violent, pornographic, or otherwise inappropriate content in their videos to gain attention. It is sometimes difficult for a platform with a massive base of video producers and users like TikTok to monitor all content in real-time effectively. Li Xu argues¹⁵ that poor content management like fake goods flooding the platform is also an existing problem on TikTok. Since it is very easy to create an account on TikTok, merchants can quickly create an account and promote products of poor quality. In this case, the supervision or the involvement of government control is essential. However, from the general public's perspective, the government can use social media to affect or manipulate public behavior. Taking the Chinese government as an example, the government's excessive intervention and censorship of media content limit users' freedom of use and influences user experience to a certain extent.

Despite the fantastic development and attractiveness of the significant data era, there are still many gray areas on social media platforms such as TikTok that need further supervision. However, how the government or the official supervises the content on the forum also needs to be further considered. Otherwise, excessive supervision can potentially hinder user participation. At the same time, public institutions should also lead media audiences to understand the business

¹⁴ Zhang, Z. (2020). Infrastructuralization of TikTok: Transformation, power relationships, and platformization of video entertainment in China. *Media, Culture & Society*, 0163443720939452.

¹⁵ Xu, L., Yan, X., & Zhang, Z. (2019). Research on the causes of the “TikTok” app becoming popular and the existing problems. *Journal of Advanced Management Science* Vol, 7(2).

and operating modes of short video platforms, analyze the pros and cons of using software, and ensure that ordinary users can surf the Internet safely and be able to make appropriate choices.

One Example: Short-Format Videos: Chinses "Social Shake"

Introduction of "Social Shake"

According to Internet interpretation, "Social Shake" usually refers to a form of dance without specific movements. It is mainly a group of people shaking their heads, swinging their arms, twisting their waist, and kicking in the background music under the strong drum sound and a strong sense of rhythm. In the early days, this dance was trendy in the disco and was sought after by many young people in the society, so it was called "Social Shake." According to Xiamen Daily's report¹⁶, the reason how "Social Shake" got popular in China was the promotion of the mobile video application "Mei Pai." In 2014, Mei Pai held the "National Social Shake" event, which generated a large number of "Social Shake" videos and was widely loved by young people around 25 years old. In just two days, these videos had achieved nearly 1 million views. Since then, many young Chinese people had developed the idea of dancing this kind of dance to get popular on the Internet. The popularity of "Social Shake" is related to the explosion of short video platforms such as Douyin (TikTok) and related to its associated cultures.

The Causes of The Popularity of "Social Shake" in China

In 2018, with the vast popularity of mobile phone short video platforms "Dou Yin (TikTok)" and "Kuaishou" in China, an alternative network dance like "Social Shake" had also ushered in a climax. The most representative person known for "Social Shake" was Pai Pai Qi.

¹⁶ "美拍全民社会摇创吉尼斯世界纪录两周吸引 102 万人-闽南网". Mnw.Cn, 2014, <http://www.mnw.cn/xiamen/news/815360.html>.

According to Baijiahao¹⁷ and Haixia Net¹⁸, Pai Pai Qi was initially a relatively famous network anchor in "Kuaishou." Because Pai Pai Qi's dance videos had "magical" background music. The "magical" background music was usually very local; they often had catchy melodies or lyrics; and they were usually the electronic versions of some old Chinese songs, which could give listeners a sense of déjà vu. In addition, although the dance steps of Pai Pai Qi's "Social Shake" were pretty simple, these dance steps were very rhythmic. Therefore, some people even called these dance videos as "brainwashed videos." By producing these "brainwashed videos," Pai Pai Qi gained immense popularity. Pai Pai Qi once had over 35 million followers on Kuaishou. During that period, many teenagers have begun to follow Pai Pai Qi's outlook and dance. At that time, "Pai Pai Qi" had formed his own brand. Pai Pai Qi had played a brand effect for his fans and the viewers and imitators of "Social Shake."

In the dance video of Pai Pai Qi's "Social Shake," Pai Pai Qi and his dance partner with a kind of specific outlook. Many people called people whoever dressed like them as "Spirit Guy." These young men who were addicted to "Social Shake" usually have specific hairstyles. There was no particular name for this hairstyle. Their hair was typically short on both sides and long in the middle. The bangs in the middle were usually trim, and it looks like half of the watermelon covers the head. They typically wear tight T-shirts and leggings. The T-shirts they sometimes wear with huge brand logos. And they also either wear "Beijing canvas shoes" or "Peas shoes." According to Bai Jia Hao's report¹⁹, these "Spirit Guys" usually came from Chinese third- and fourth-tier cities, urban-rural junctions, and even remote rural areas. Unlike young people in

¹⁷ "快手坐拥 3500 万粉丝社会摇主播被封，社会摇到底有何来头？". Baijiahao.Baidu.Com, 2018, <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1597912441903870152&wfr=spider&for=pc>.

¹⁸ "社会摇是怎么火起来的为什么这么火？牌牌琦是社会摇的创始人吗". Hxnews.Com, 2018, <http://www.hxnews.com/news/yl/mxhg/201804/10/1492542.shtml>.

¹⁹ "快手坐拥 3500 万粉丝社会摇主播被封，社会摇到底有何来头？". Baijiahao.Baidu.Com, 2018, <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1597912441903870152&wfr=spider&for=pc>.

Chinese first- and second-tier cities, young people in small towns sometimes lived in a "relatively isolated parallel world." They often drop out of school early and leave the places like Internet cafes, KTVs, and dance halls. Due to the lack of educational resources and material resources, after watching the video of "Social Shake" and knowing how popular it could be, many young people living in small towns came up with the idea of making such a video to become famous and make money. "Internet celebrities" like Pai Pai Qi have also led the formation of this trend by modeling themselves promoting their media content.

"Social Shake" is a unique dance popularized on the Chinese network, but "Social Shake" is not the only dance that spreads quickly on the Internet like a virus. In 2011, the American music group LMFAO produced "viral music," "*Party Rock Anthem*."²⁰In Party Rock Anthem's music video, modern cities were like ruins when they were quiet. However, when the music with a strong rhythm started to play, people crowded into the street and began to twist and dance irregularly frantically. This kind of music is a kind of song that spreads quickly like a virus, driving people crazy and involuntarily starting to dance. Since this strong melody and heavy rhythm music started being popular on the Internet, artists worldwide have begun to create similar works. In 2012, Korean artist PSY released a music video of the electronic dance song "*Gangnam Style*,"²¹ Once this video was published, it quickly became popular worldwide. In 2012, Gangnam style's music videos surpassed 100 million views on YouTube, becoming the most viewed video on YouTube in 2012. Until early 2020, Gangnam Style already had more than 3.5 million views on YouTube. The popularity of Gangnam Style was not only due to its

²⁰ Gordy, S., Gordy, S., Listenbee, D. J., & Schroeder, P. (2010). Party rock anthem [Recorded by LMFAO]. On Sorry for party rocking.[CD single, digital download]. Santa Monica, CA: Will. I. am, Cherrytree, Interscope, Panther Records.

²¹ Shin, R. (2016). Gangnam style and global visual culture. *Studies in Art Education*, 57(3), 252-264.

catchy melody and dramatic dance. According to Choi²² and Park²³, Gangnam style's music videos showed how people in urban spaces planned and developed for entirely different purposes could live and entertain together in the same city. Gangnam Style spanned people's aesthetic class, the rich and the poor, and became music that everyone can enjoy and shows the modern urban life in different aspects of South Korea to the world. Gangnam Style caused this kind of electronic music trend and aroused curiosity and exploration of Korean pop culture and Asian pop culture by the worldwide netizens. In addition, these works can stimulate the audience's resonance; more importantly, they have been spread rapidly under the development of the Internet and technology in recent years.

In "Social Shake," in addition to "Shake," the dance which influenced by the global Internet popular culture; several different cultures also influence "Social." According to Ma²⁴, in China, the "social" aspect of social turbulence lies in its popularity among a large number of young people, but also in its romantic connection with street culture and the criminal underworld. Chinese gangster is often referred to as "triad society" or "black society." According to Wing-Sang²⁵, since the history of Hong Kong was colonized by Britain, China later recovered it. The gangster culture, which embodied different social forces and showed individual heroism, was very popular in the 1980s. In China in the 1980s and 1990s, gangster-themed movies were viral among young people. Although this type of movie became a pioneer of Chinese action

²² Julie, C. H. O. I. "Right to the City: The Metropolis and Gangnam Style." *Korea Journal* 59.2 (2019): 86-110.
Park, Jinhee. "Neoliberalism meets "Gangnam Style": Vernacular private sector and large urban developments in Seoul." *Urban Planning* 4.4 (2019): 62-72.

²³ Park, Jinhee. "Neoliberalism meets "Gangnam Style": Vernacular private sector and large urban developments in Seoul." *Urban Planning* 4.4 (2019): 62-72.

²⁴ Ma, Te. "How The 'Social Shake' Became China'S Latest Dance Craze". Sixth Tone, 2017, <http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1001415/How%20the%20%E2%80%98Social%20Shake%E2%80%99%20Became%20China%E2%80%99s%20Latest%20Dance%20Craze>

²⁵ Wing - sang, Law. "Hong Kong undercover: an approach to 'collaborative colonialism' ." *Inter - Asia Cultural Studies* 9.4 (2008): 522-542.

movies, it also brought social instability like poor street culture and campus violence. When people like Pai Pai Qi, who dance "Social Shake," produced such music videos, they also used their uniform dance and dressings to show their gang power and domination of the street culture.

On the other hand, a large part of China's street culture represented by "Social Shake" was influenced by American hip-hop culture and street culture. Many social shake dance videos are filled with flashy cars, sexy young women, well-dressed men, or fraternities which showed a lot on Western hip-hop music videos. However, the American hip-hop culture is based mainly on the expression of poor African-Americans, encouraging young people to differentiate themselves from their society. "Social Shake" is a way for young Chinese who question the idea of hard work to seek satisfaction from low-cost entertainment. But unlike Hong Kong's gangster movies and American hip-hop music videos, the production cost of "Social Shake" is meager, and everyone can show the culture they want to show through simple dance. The charm of culture itself is essential, but the high degree of audience participation is the key to promoting culture.

The Pros and Cons of "Social Shake"

The "Internet culture" has produced in these days, which also gradually become an integral part of today's global pop culture. However, audiences have mixed opinions on many media contents that are popularized on the Internet. The product of "Internet culture" such as "Social Shake" has many different views for Chinese audiences.

Cons

In recent years, many Chinese audiences regarded the "Social Shake" videos popularized on the Chinese Internet as Chinese "tacky culture." These "Social Shake" videos were not only disgusted by many Chinese viewers but even restricted by the Chinese government for their distribution on the Internet.

According to Sohu's report, the negative thoughts displayed by "Social Shake" and the potential danger to unrest in Chinese society²⁶. In 2018, Xinhuanet's Weibo publicly accused the "Social Shake" of distorting the values of young people and hoped that the Chinese media platform should prevent the existence of social shaking. At the end of 2018, Pai Pai Qi's account was blocked, the Chinese Internet also ushered in a huge content rectification.

Pros

"Social Shake" is a product of culture hybridity argued by Kraidy²⁷. "Social Shake" was a fusion of many different pop cultures. After being combined with the local culture of China, "Social Shake" was loved by a specific group of people. Like PSY's Gangnam style and LMFAO's Party Rock Anthem, "Social Shake" by using catchy music and simple dance, showed the lifestyle of some young people. "Social Shake" also showed the young people's yearning for street culture and desire for group belonging. More importantly, the popularity of "Social Shakes" in society marks the rise of new media such as short-format videos, the development of the information age, and the changes in people's behavior and entertainment. And different cultures also collide, merge and spread.

"Social Shake" had been regarded as the Chinese "tacky culture" by its low-cost entertainment and cheap artistic value. But who is qualified enough to define "Social Shake" as "tacky culture"? According to Nye²⁸, popular means widely diffused, generally accepted, and approved by the majority. People usually can appreciate a particular artwork after living in a specific environment of being through certain events. Today's boundary between the elegant

²⁶ "广电总局约谈今日头条和快手! 央视白岩松怒批快手! 仙洋牌牌琦被封号". Sohu.Com, 2018, https://www.sohu.com/a/227372832_100117310

²⁷ Kraidy, Marwan M. *Hybridity, Or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005. Print.

²⁸ Nye, Russel B. "Notes for an Introduction to a Discussion of Popular Culture." *Popular Culture Theory and Methodology: A Basic Introduction*. Eds. Harold E. Jr Hinds, Marilyn F. Motz, and Angela M. S. Nelson. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2006. 23-29. Print.

culture and the vulgar culture is fuzzy. Like the "Tong Su"²⁹ music from Hong Kong and Taiwan in the 1980s mentioned by Baranovitch, which the Chinese government and some people rejected because the "Tong Su" music was regarded with the themes of yellow, obscene, decadent, and homesickness³⁰. But today, many similar theme music has lifted the ban. Rocks, hip-hop, and other music originally boycotted by the Chinese government have gradually become an integral part of contemporary Chinese and world pop music.

Conclusion

Like Shuai Yang, Yuzhen Zhao, and Yifang Ma argued³¹, TikTok has implemented the function of accurately pushing content according to users' preferences and needs. The success of TikTok is closely related to its fashionable content, advanced production level, complete celebrities' power, and interesting advertising creativity. Advances in technology and high-speed networks have also laid the preconditions for the popularity of short videos. Most importantly, high audience participation allows TikTok to build a stable business model and carry out sustainable development.

The pros and cons of using TikTok and other social media software usually depend on how users use it. With reasonable use, the content on the media platform can positively affect individuals and society. In the era of big data and constant popular trend updates, ordinary media audiences should also learn to judge by themselves. The media audience should use the media as a tool instead of being dominated by the media.

²⁹ "Tong Su" is a Chinese word means popular in English

³⁰ Baranovitch, Nimrod. *China's New Voices: Popular Music, Ethnicity, Gender, and Politics, 1978-1997*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. Print.

³¹ Yang, S., Zhao, Y., & Ma, Y. (2019, July). Analysis of the Reasons and Development of Short Video Application—Taking TikTok as an Example. In *Proceedings of the 2019 9th International Conference on Information and Social Science (ICISS 2019)*, Manila, Philippines (pp. 12-14).

The value of short-format videos like Social Shake is difficult to assess. Every individual in this society with different knowledge, belief, art, custom, and other capabilities. Because people from different social statuses or groups grow up in different environments and are influenced by different cultural values, people often have different value judgments about popular culture. The "Social Shake" was the epitome of the confused young people who lived in the urbanization of Chinese towns. Like many popular cultures, "Social Shake" shows the power and influence of cultural globalization, the development of the technologies, and how people use them and shows the local culture and social background. In China, the inequality of educational resources and the gap between the rich and the poor in cities and townships are the reasons why this group of young people have no goals and vainly revel. But when we look at the world and look back at history, how many popular cultures were not born out of mass meaningless carnivals? The government's actions to ban a certain popular culture to ensure social stability are also worthy of our thinking.

References

- "美拍全民社会摇创吉尼斯世界纪录两周吸引 102 万人-闽南网". *Mnw.Cn*, 2014,
<http://www.mnw.cn/xiamen/news/815360.html>.
- "快手坐拥 3500 万粉丝社会摇主播被封，社会摇到底有何来头？". *Baijiahao.Baidu.Com*, 2018,
<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1597912441903870152&wfr=spider&for=pc>.
- "社会摇是怎么火起来的为什么这么火？牌牌琦是社会摇的创始人吗". *Hxnews.Com*, 2018,
<http://www.hxnews.com/news/yl/mx/bg/201804/10/1492542.shtml>.
- Julie, C. H. O. I. "Right to the City: The Metropolis and Gangnam Style." *Korea Journal* 59.2 (2019): 86-110.
- Park, Jinhee. "Neoliberalism meets "Gangnam Style": Vernacular private sector and large urban developments in Seoul." *Urban Planning* 4.4 (2019): 62-72.
- Ma, Te. "How The 'Social Shake' Became China'S Latest Dance Craze". *Sixth Tone*, 2017,
<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1001415/How%20the%20E2%80%98Social%20Shake%20Became%20China%20Latest%20Dance%20Craze>.
- Wing-sang, Law. "Hong Kong undercover: an approach to 'collaborative colonialism'." *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 9.4 (2008): 522-542.
- "广电总局约谈今日头条和快手！央视白岩松怒批快手！仙洋牌牌琦被封号". *Sohu.Com*, 2018,
https://www.sohu.com/a/227372832_100117310.
- Nye, Russel B. "Notes for an Introduction to a Discussion of Popular Culture." *Popular Culture Theory and Methodology: A Basic Introduction*. Eds. Harold E. Jr Hinds, Marilyn F. Motz, and Angela M. S. Nelson. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2006. 23-29. Print.
- Baranovitch, Nimrod. *China's New Voices: Popular Music, Ethnicity, Gender, and Politics, 1978-1997*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. Print.
- Kraidy, Marwan M. *Hybridity, Or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005. Print.
- Zhang, Z. (2020). Infrastructuralization of TikTok: Transformation, power relationships, and platformization of video entertainment in China. *Media, Culture & Society*, 0163443720939452.

Yang, S., Zhao, Y., & Ma, Y. (2019, July). Analysis of the Reasons and Development of Short Video Application—Taking TikTok as an Example. In Proceedings of the 2019 9th International Conference on Information and Social Science (ICISS 2019), Manila, Philippines (pp. 12-14).

Xu, L., Yan, X., & Zhang, Z. (2019). Research on the causes of the "TikTok" app becoming popular and the existing problems. *Journal of Advanced Management Science* Vol, 7(2).

Tang, D. (2019). The New Situation of Marketing in the Self-Media Era-Taking TikTok as an Example.

Chen, Z., He, Q., Mao, Z., Chung, H. M., & Maharjan, S. (2019, May). A study on the characteristics of douyin short videos and implications for edge caching. In Proceedings of the ACM Turing Celebration Conference-China (pp. 1-6).

Fang, J., Wang, Z., & Hao, B. (2019, April). Analysis of "Anesthesia" Mechanism in Mobile Short Video Applications. In The First International Symposium on Management and Social Sciences (ISMSS 2019). Atlantis Press.

Zhu, C., Xu, X., Zhang, W., Chen, J., & Evans, R. (2020). How health communication via TikTok makes a difference: a content analysis of TikTok accounts run by Chinese provincial health committees. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(1), 192.

Hayes, C., Stott, K., Lamb, K. J., & Hurst, G. A. (2020). "Making Every Second Count": Utilizing TikTok and Systems Thinking to Facilitate Scientific Public Engagement and Contextualization of Chemistry at Home.

Sullivan, J. L. (2019). *Media audiences: Effects, users, institutions, and power*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Omar, B., & Dequan, W. (2020). Watch, share or create: The influence of personality traits and user motivation on TikTok mobile video usage.

ByteDance. (2020). Retrieved 22 November 2020, from <https://www.bytedance.com/en/>

TikTok - Make Your Day. (2020). Retrieved 22 November 2020, from <https://www.tiktok.com/en/>

Mohsin, M. (2020). 10 TikTok Statistics That You Need to Know [September 2020]. Retrieved 22 November 2020, from <https://www.oberlo.com/blog/tiktok-statistics>

Jackson, T. (2020). Why Is TikTok Better Than Vine?. Retrieved 22 November 2020, from <https://medium.com/better-marketing/why-is-tiktok-better-than-vine-b33ce1cf3367>

Su, Y., Baker, B. J., Doyle, J. P., & Yan, M. (2020). Fan Engagement in 15 Seconds: Athletes' Relationship Marketing During a Pandemic via TikTok. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 13(3), 436-446.

Gordy, S., Gordy, S., Listenbee, D. J., & Schroeder, P. (2010). Party rock anthem [Recorded by LMFAO]. On Sorry for party rocking.[CD single, digital download]. Santa Monica, CA: Will. I. am, Cherrytree, Interscope, Panther Records.

Shin, R. (2016). Gangnam style and global visual culture. *Studies in Art Education*, 57(3), 252-264.