

An Evaluative Comparison of China's social Media, For Musicals Which Is Best at Promotion

And Why?

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Abstract:

Finding the most suitable social media platforms in China for spreading musicals and related topics. Leveraging multiple resources to support and validate the research. Searching CNKI for literature related to social media and musicals. Designing and publishing a questionnaire on the frequency of social media use in China and the amount of reading on musical-related topics, to gain a timely and realistic understanding of the real-world situation. Interviewing relevant professionals and evaluate the suitability of each platform for musical-related topics from different perspectives. The literature demonstrates how different interactive features can be categorized, thereby identifying which questionnaires have the most valuable data. The survey results show that respondents prefer Rednote, and features with deeper interactive meaning are used more frequently on Rednote than on the other two platforms WeChat and Weibo. Due to its high interactivity and adaptability, Rednote is the most suitable social media platform for spreading musicals and related topics. This research can, on the one hand, promote the development of the musical and media industries, attracting more audiences, building positive reputation and value, and forming a virtuous cycle; on the other hand, it can promote musical culture, popularize niche culture, and enrich social and cultural values.

Keywords: Musical; Social media; Interaction functions; WeChat; Weibo; Rednote.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, as the cultural industry is booming, musicals have gradually become a new hot spot among young generations, with their unique artistic charm

and immersive experience. In recent years, the scale of the musical market in China has continued to expand, the number of performances and box office revenue have increased year by year, and online communication has broken through the limitations

of theater space, allowing more people to access this art form.

In the new media era, the integration of social media and live performances has accelerated, and digital audio-visual forms such as film and drama have become increasingly prominent. Internet media has eliminated the physical presence constraints of drama communication, and the focus of industrial development has shifted from traditional theaters to cinemas and online platforms [43]. However, the communication effect and depth of influence of musicals are highly dependent on the systemic operation and communication functions of social media platforms in China. Different platforms have different positioning, audience portraits, and communication logic, and present diverse forms in the communication of musical topics. From topic planning, content production, to interactive feedback, they all have distinct personalities, which constitute the real background of research.

Social media refers to internet-based platforms for content production and exchange based on user relationships. Social media can be considered a process in which large numbers of netizens spontaneously contribute to, extract, create, and disseminate news and information. Two key points are important to emphasize: the sheer number of users and the spontaneous nature of dissemination [51].

The study will take WeChat, Weibo, and Rednote as examples to explore the differences in communication logic, content presentation, and interactive mechanism when these social media platforms spread musical topics, as well as the driving role of platform attributes and user needs on the differences. The study adopts a combination of primary research, including questionnaire design and interviews to explore users' feedback and expert's advice, and secondary research, literature retrieval, to find the theoretical foundation for each platform. The core question is why the dissemination effects of topics related to musicals vary on China's mainstream social media platforms, hoping to provide theoretical and practical references for the adaptation of musical communication platforms and the improvement of cultural communication effectiveness.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Differences in social media platforms

To study the differences between different social media platforms, it is necessary to analyze from three aspects: user portrait, communication function and main topic media form, which directly shape the channels and effects of information dissemination.

WeChat users span all age groups, with social relationships primarily consisting of "strong connections", such

as family, friends, and colleagues [48]. Its communication capabilities combine private social interaction with in-depth reading. Public account function tweets are suitable for long-form content, such as background analysis of musicals. Video Channel function more like a "video media platform", allowing users to watch various dynamic and captivating clips and other content. While Moment function relies on trusted connections to spread information. However, users may become "online silent" [48] on topics outside of their core interests, such as "reading but not replying" to content about niche musicals, limiting their reach.

Weibo, as a representative of timely social media in the new media era, is characterized by strong dissemination, wide reach, and high timeliness [42]. Weibo's users are also diverse, ranging from ordinary citizens to government agencies and even major commercial brands. Unlike other platforms, Weibo's "fission" [19] dissemination method is particularly prominent. Its Forward function often attracts a large number of viewers and discussions, achieving successful dissemination results. Weibo's "hot search" function is also a unique feature with a very significant effect. For example, when a social disaster occurs, the relevant terms will dominate the hot search list, quickly attracting public attention [19]. However, rapid dissemination is not always a good thing for netizens. In the case of malicious incidents, it can easily cause inexplicable panic among the public and ignite rumors. This phenomenon, known as a "public crisis" [19], can prevent authoritative organizations from having sufficient time to prepare public relations plans and respond.

Rednote has young women as its core user group [7]. According to Sun's statistics, female users account for 70% [32]. They prefer to obtain practical information through "instrumental interaction" [49], and the interaction is mostly centered on knowledge sharing and emotional resonance. Communication actions on social media are centered on "interest recommendation" [7], and pushes content based on user search behavior and tag matching. The topic format is mainly graphic notes and short videos, focusing on sharing real experiences. For example, musical-related content is often presented in very life-like forms such as repertoire evaluation and ticketing reminders. Users strengthen their sense of belonging to the group through intimate titles such as "sisters" [32].

2.2 Current communication situation

The development of the spread of Chinese musicals began with the introduction of Western classics. In 2002, *Les Misérables* was performed 21 times in a row at the Shanghai Grand Theater. Although the box office sales rate of

the first show was only 30% [38], as a new starting point, the introduction of Western musicals opened the prelude to the spread of musicals in China. Since then, repertoires such as *Cats* and *Notre Dame de Paris* have accumulated core audiences and increased fan loyalty through national tours. These works have mature artistic forms and commercial operations [18], promoting musicals from niche art to the public.

At the same time, the gradual development of the economy and the improvement of infrastructure also provide support for dissemination. As China's per capita GDP increases, the consumption capacity of audiences in first-tier cities increases, and theaters that meet the standards for musical performances have been built in Shanghai, Beijing and other places, providing a hardware foundation for offline dissemination [38]. At the same time, policy support for the cultural industry has prompted the standardization of the performance market and promoted the transformation of musicals from rare performances to regular operations [18].

2.3 The dissemination model and mechanism of social media

From the perspective of communication studies, the media communication mechanism has undergone significant changes in the new media environment. In the early days of new platforms such as social media, the way to disseminate various types of information was basically through authoritative organizations or brands producing videos, advertisements, and other content for distribution [1], and individual users did not participate much in discussions.

Firstly, from the perspective of the communication subjects, "topics" as a special culture or a certain event or theme within a group [44], the dominant parties are no longer professional institutions or units. Ordinary users can also participate. The public is not only the receiver of information but can also become a disseminator, and even through creating content or expressing opinions, they can influence the direction [21] of communication [39]. This diversification of subjects makes communication more flexible and the interactivity greatly enhanced. Users' Likes, Comments, and Forwards are all part of the communication [44].

Secondly, in terms of the communication structure, the hierarchical communication model that was previously distinct has gradually been replaced by a network structure. Information no longer flows hierarchically but spreads like a network, with more direct connections between nodes and a wider dissemination range [36]. Moreover, the collaboration among multiple media platforms will also accelerate communication and form a cooperative to

promote information dissemination [28].

Thirdly, in terms of specific communication models, logical patterns such as "viral dissemination" often appear in the public's view. For example, models such as SIR and SEIR were developed based on the infectious disease model. These models compare information dissemination to virus diffusion, distinguishing between "susceptible" individuals who are easy to receive information, "infected" individuals who are spreading the information, and "immune" individuals who no longer participate, to explain how information spreads rapidly [44].

In summary, in the new media environment, media communication involves many communication subjects, and relying on the networked communication structure and the collaboration of multiple platforms, it uses models similar to viral diffusion to achieve information dissemination, forming a complex and dynamic communication system.

2.4 Gaps in Dissemination of musical in online forms

Regarding the current research and different topics spreading on WeChat, Weibo, and Rednote, these three social media platforms, although there are numerous studies on the mechanisms and patterns of topic dissemination on these platforms, they either analyze the dissemination routes of news or study films as one of the cultural products and their related topics. None of the studies focused on or analyzed topics related to musicals.

Meanwhile, relevant studies that mention the development of the musical industry in China, combined with the advent of the new media era, can be found. However, since it is a macroscopic view of the entire online dissemination, it did not specifically consider specific platforms and failed to conduct a specific analysis based on the actual situation.

However, it is necessary to study the dissemination of musicals and related topics on the most effective and efficient social media platforms. On one hand, this can maximize the gathering of musical enthusiasts, promote cultural exchange and interpersonal interaction, and enhance connections between people; on the other hand, it greatly helps the dissemination of musicals, especially in China, and promotes the further development of the musical industry in the new media era.

To sum up, it is pivotal to find the most adaptable pattern in a specific online social media platform for spreading music-related topics, to help the development of musical industry. Since there are still some uncertain problems, the author believes finding the most effective means for the dissemination of musical is necessary.

3. Methodology

The dissertation combined primary and secondary research methods. Firstly, through secondary research, background research was conducted on differences in social media platforms, musical industry current situation in China, and the media dissemination mechanism. Secondly, the study also adopted the primary research methods. A questionnaire is designed to discover the feedback from musical fans, which is about the online dissemination effect and platform user experiences. Besides it, a student graduating in Media Communications major at the University of the Arts London (UAL) was interviewed for this study. She is also a fan of musicals and will offer professional platform suggestions from her perspective, such as which platform is the most suitable for the dissemination of musicals and why.

3.1 Literature Research

To find the background information related to the research, the researcher used CNKI to search for relevant literature. A total of five searches were conducted, with the keywords being musical, new media communication, WeChat, Weibo, and Rednote, and the secondary search terms being musical industry, topic communication, WeChat users, Weibo users, and Rednote users. The five searches retrieved more than 72,800 documents. Based on the five principles of currency, relevant, authority, accuracy, and purpose, a total of 52 literature were suitable for use, and this dissemination directly cited 23 documents.

3.2 Questionnaire

The researcher designed a questionnaire on Questionnaire Star, with 25 questions, mainly using multiple-choice and ranking questions. The complete questionnaire can be found in the appendix. The first four questions are based on personal information, which includes whether the respondent is a fan of musicals, group age, gender and region. The principle is voluntary, and personal information was not disclosed to ensure personal privacy was not compromised.

Question 5 to 8 were set based on the respondents' current understanding and attention to musicals, especially their attention to musical-related topics on social media. In thesis four questions, if the respondent chooses "no" when answering Question 6 (Have you ever become interested in a musical and learned more about it or even went to see it live because of a musical-related topic you saw on domestic social media?), Question 7 will be skipped since the author believes that the respondent will not be attracted by the topic, and there is no need to understand what the topic is specifically.

And then starting from Question 10 to 22, different questions may be answered by different respondents which depending on which choice they have chosen in Question 10. If they choose WeChat here, they will follow the steps to answer Question 11 to 14, which are related to WeChat; if they choose Weibo, they will jump to answer Question 15 to 18; and if they choose Rednote, they will jump to Question 19. After these three groups of respondents have finished their answers to these questions, all of them will respond to Question 23 to 25. It is worth mentioning that the three groups of questions from 11 to 14, 15 to 18, and 19 to 22 are basically the same, so this jump logic is only used for classification to view the results of respondents who choose different platforms.

Taking Question 19 to 22 as an example, the author asked respondents questions in the form of multiple-choice questions about the interactive functions of Rednote and the topic initiation, diffusion, and decay structure to obtain feedback from Rednote platform users.

Question 23 provides a huge multiple-choice question which is about the benefits of three social media platforms, it can be functions, systems or user experiences, etc.

Question 24 is the opposite of Question 23. It allows respondents to choose what they think are the shortcomings of different social platforms. This makes the questionnaire more comprehensive, combines both sides of the question, and the examination is no longer extreme.

3.3 Interview

To enrich the research resources and enhance the depth of the study, this study invited Ms. Xu for a special interview. Ms. Xu is Chinese and a graduate of the Media Communications major at the UAL. She is deeply knowledgeable about Chinese social media and how topical content is disseminated. Furthermore, Ms. Xu is a dedicated musical theater enthusiast, having seen musicals from various countries and languages, including China, the UK, the US, and France. She also participated in and performed with musical theater clubs during her student life.

The interview was relatively open, with two sections: an analysis and recommendations for media platforms, and an analysis of the different functions of these platforms. Ms. Xu offered her professional perspective on which social media platforms are best suited for disseminating musicals and related topics to achieve the best overall impact. The interview also guided Ms. Xu in categorizing common social media functions and providing guidance. Since the interview was recorded, the researcher considered the difficulty of transcribing it. Furthermore, in accordance with Ms. Xu's wishes—she did not wish any

original transcripts or interview content to appear in the article—the article will be entirely paraphrased, integrating Ms. Xu’s input while preserving her original perspectives.

4. Results

This survey yielded 390 valid responses. The complete results also the description of questions can be found in the Appendix. Thirteen responses that answered “no” to Question 1, “Are you a musical theater fan?”, were deleted because this study targeted musical theater enthusiasts—those with some familiarity with musicals.

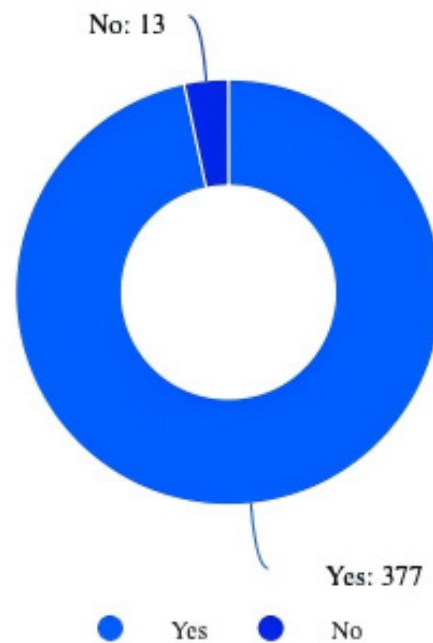


Fig. 1 Doughnut graph of questionnaire result, Question 1

After screening, the number of valid responses remained at 377, and the data for this paper will be compiled based on these 377 responses. Question 2 mentioned the gender of the respondents, and as many as 94.43% of the respondents chose their biological sex as female.

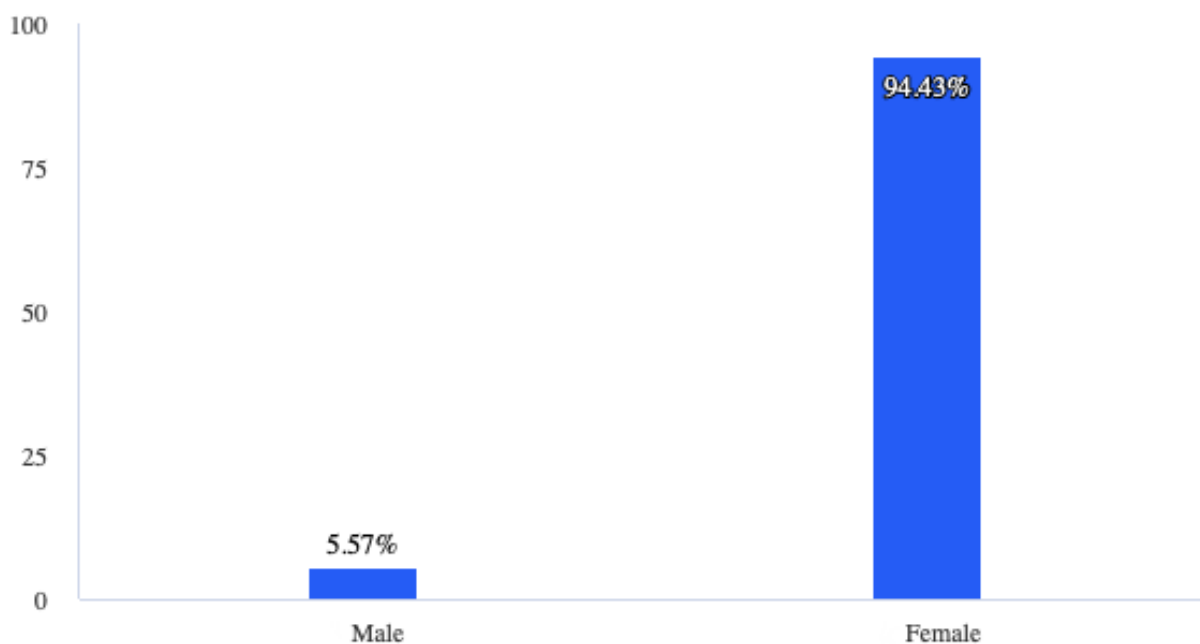


Fig. 2 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 2

In Question 3, the results showed that 69.23% of the musical fans interviewed were between the ages of 18 and 25.

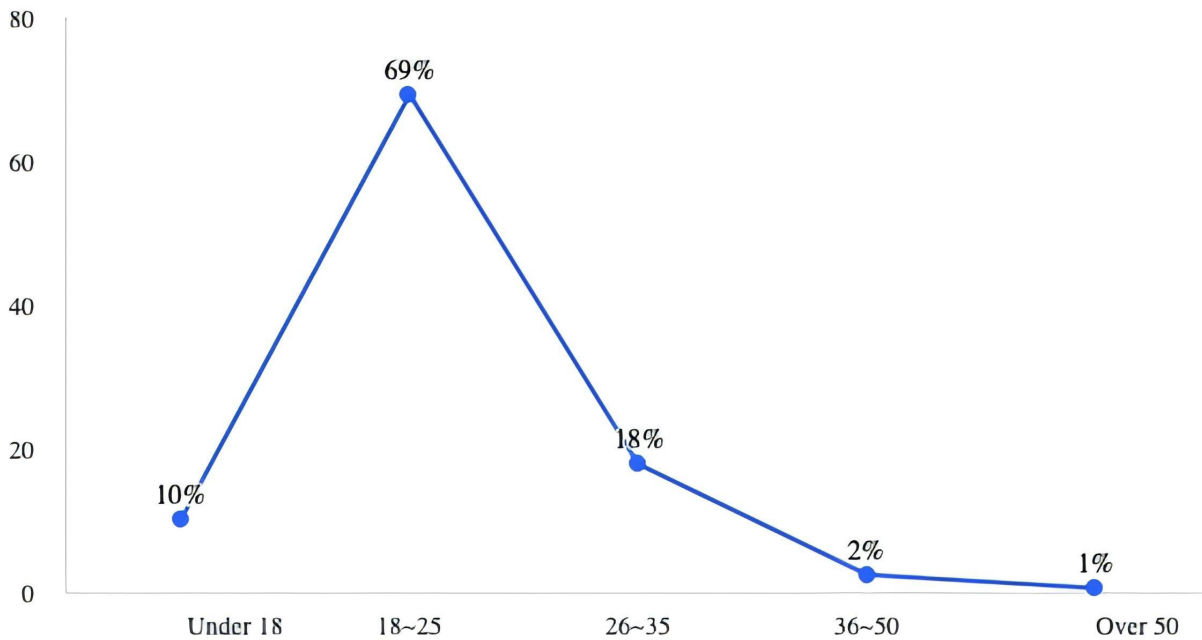


Fig. 3 Line graph of questionnaire result, Question 3

4.1 Platform Distribution

Based on the results of Questions 9 and 10, WeChat, Weibo, and Rednote have different usage preferences and content dissemination preferences for musical theater fans.

Question 9, a ranking question, ranked the three platforms by relative browsing time. 84.59% of respondents ranked Rednote first, 61.02% ranked WeChat second, and 66.87% ranked Weibo third. Therefore, the overall ranking is: Rednote, WeChat, and Weibo.

choices	scores	first place	second place	third place	sum
Rednotes	2.75	313(84.59%)	40(10.81%)	17(4.59%)	370
WeChat	1.76	47(13.28%)	216(61.02%)	91(25.71%)	354
Weibo	1.22	17(5.12%)	93(28.01%)	222(66.87%)	332

Fig. 4 Table of questionnaire result, Question 9

Question 10 was a multiple-choice question, and the results were surprisingly consistent: 89.66% of respondents chose Rednote as the platform most likely to help them browse musical-related topics, while WeChat and Weibo

ranked at 6.37% and 3.98%, respectively. Based on the two questions, the three platforms' effective usage ranked in descending order: Rednote, WeChat, and Weibo.

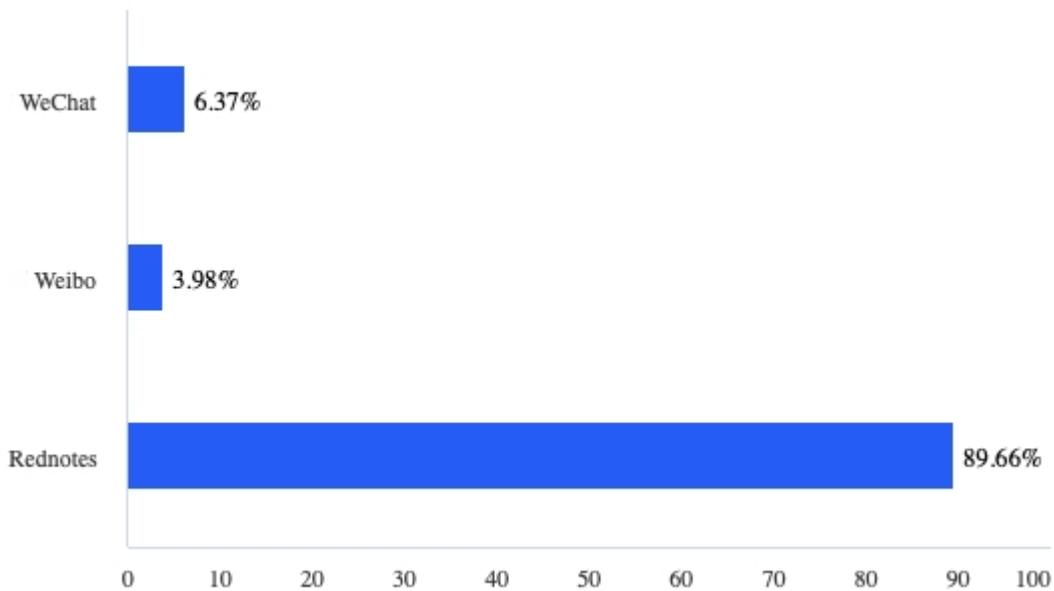


Fig. 5 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 10

4.2 Interaction Functions

Questions 11, 15, and 19 were multiple-choice questions, focusing on platform interaction on WeChat, Weibo, and Rednote, respectively. For details on the skipping mechanism, please refer to the Questionnaire section of the

Methodology. According to the responses, over 70% of respondents chose Like for all three questions, making it the recognized “highest interaction” option. Strikingly, 54.17% of respondents chose to search for related content after viewing it on WeChat, making it the second most popular option, ahead of Comment and Forward.

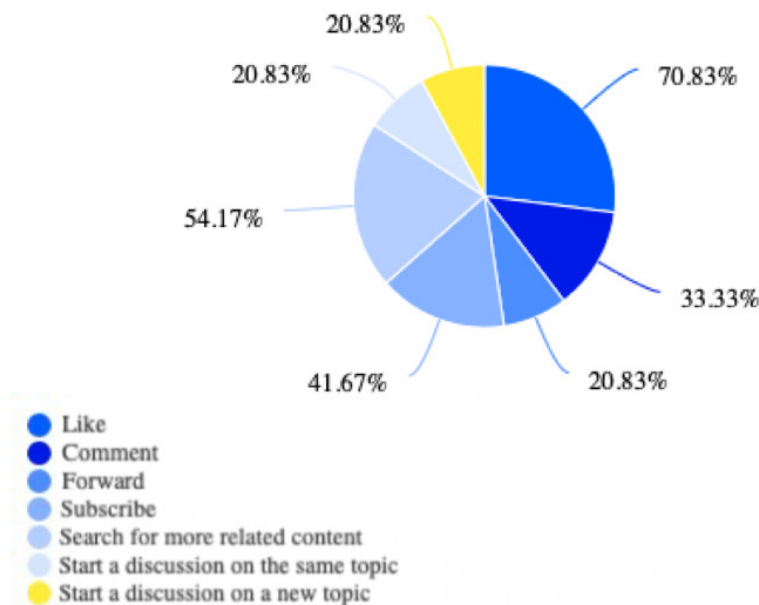


Fig. 6 Pie chart of questionnaire result, Question 11

For Question 15, the number of respondents who followed the poster and forwarded the content after viewing the musical on Weibo reached a similar 53.33%, respectively.

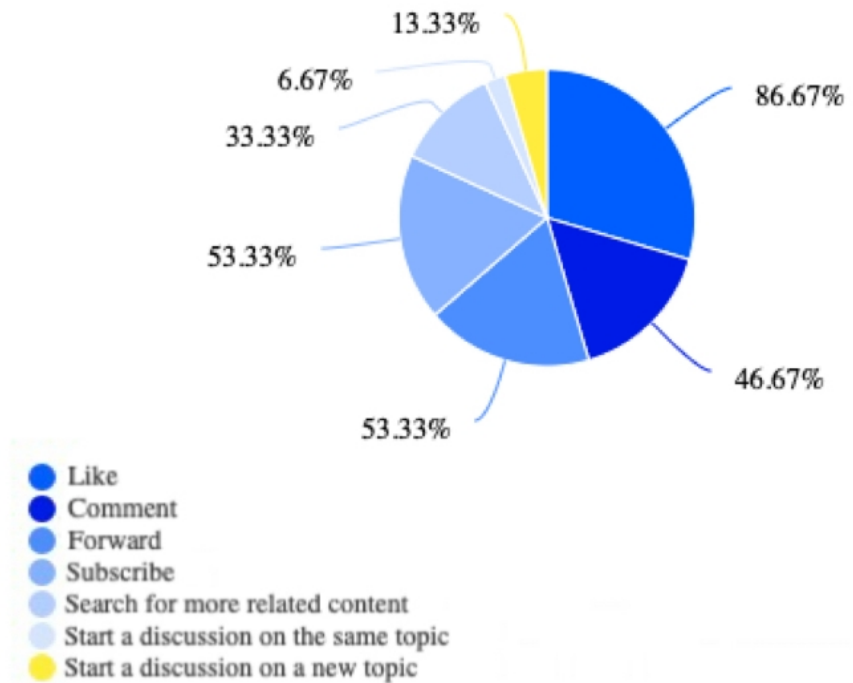


Fig. 7 Pie chart of questionnaire result, Question 15

For Question 19, 63.61% and 61.83% of respondents chose to Comment and Search for related content on Rednote, respectively, while 51.78% chose to follow the

poster. Overall, the Like function on all three platforms is highly used, followed by following the poster and searching for related content.

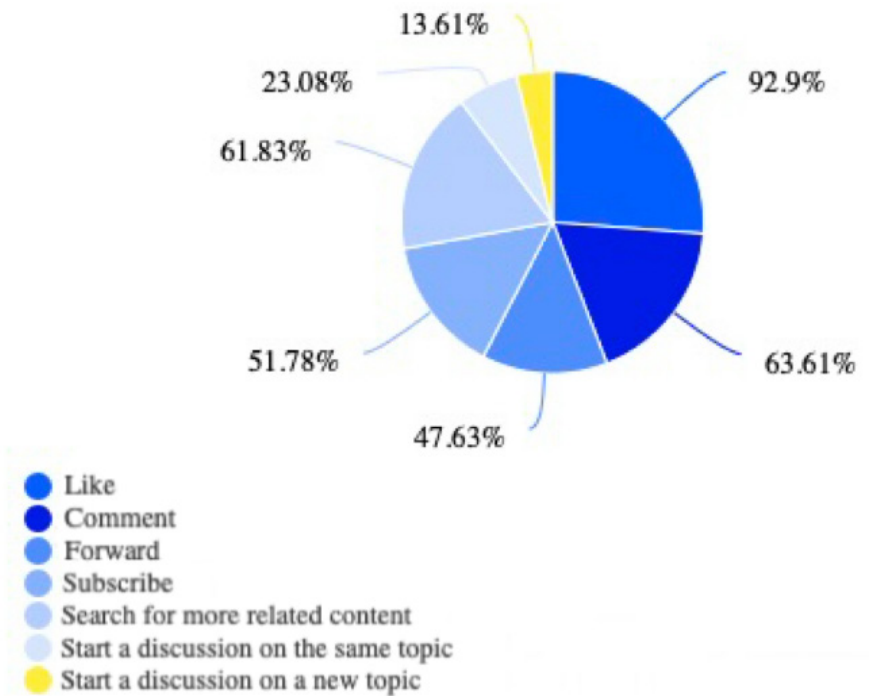


Fig. 8 Pie chart of questionnaire result, Question 19

The paper suggests that the frequency of use of the Like, Comment, Forward, and Follow functions is influenced by

the platform's page layout, with visibility and convenience being the fundamental factors. The Search function relies on the platform's push algorithm. Its usage may be affected by whether the platform pushes relevant search terms in real time based on currently viewed content, allowing users to search directly without having to formulate their own terms.

4.3 Media Communication Effects

To examine media communication effects, the paper analyzes the three processes of topic initiation, topic diffusion, and topic closure.

Firstly, regarding topic initiation, Questions 12, 16, and 20 were specifically designed for this purpose. Since the response trends for these three questions were largely consistent, only Question 20 was selected for comparison. A staggering 93.69% of respondents indicated that they initiated a topic out of interest. They believe that when they are interested in an event or topic, they post to discuss it, becoming topic initiators. Social hot topics and official announcements may also drive discussion initiation, but the percentage of respondents who agree with these factors is not as high.

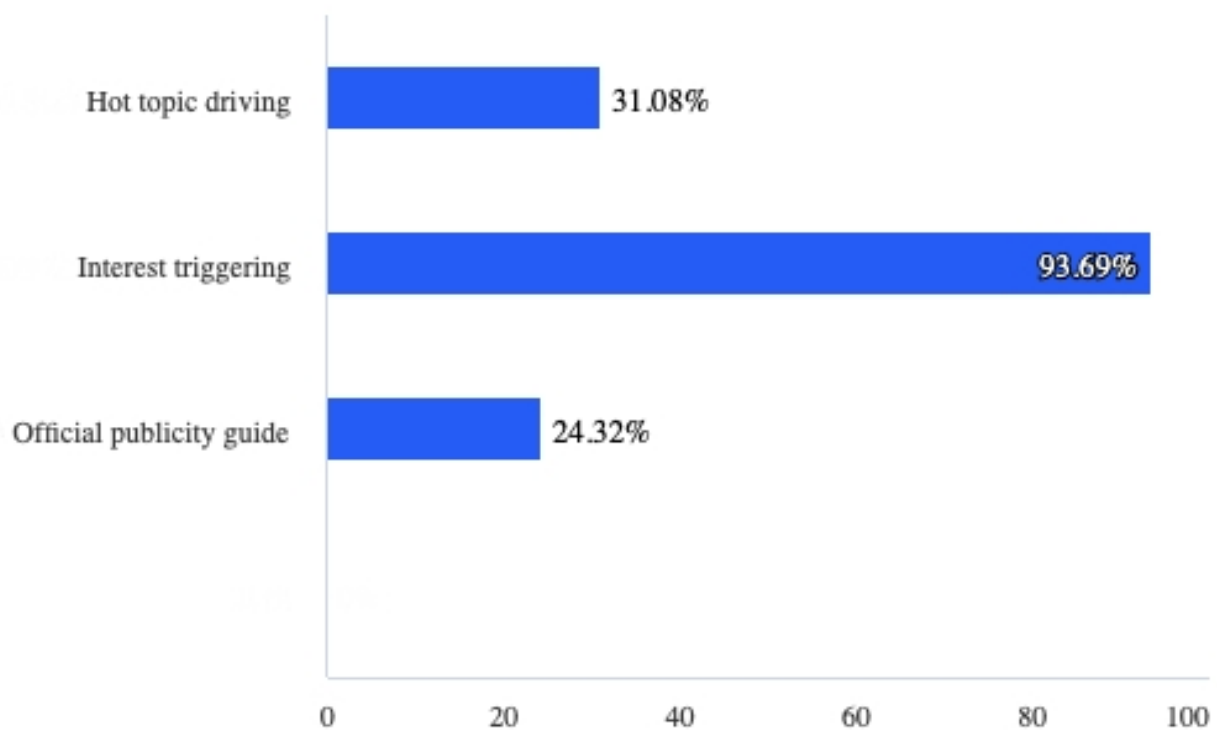


Fig. 9 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 20

Secondly, regarding topic diffusion, Questions 13, 17, and 21 align with the topic of discussion. Respondents who chose WeChat, Weibo, and Rednote generally believed that Forward information was the most effective communication behavior for spreading a topic. Only on Rednote did approximately 1% of respondents believe that secondary creation and interactive derivative works were more

effective than forwarding information. However, this difference in numbers is minor and can be ignored for now. However, it is undeniable that, according to the survey data, secondary creation and interactive derivative works also ranked second in effectiveness on WeChat and Weibo.

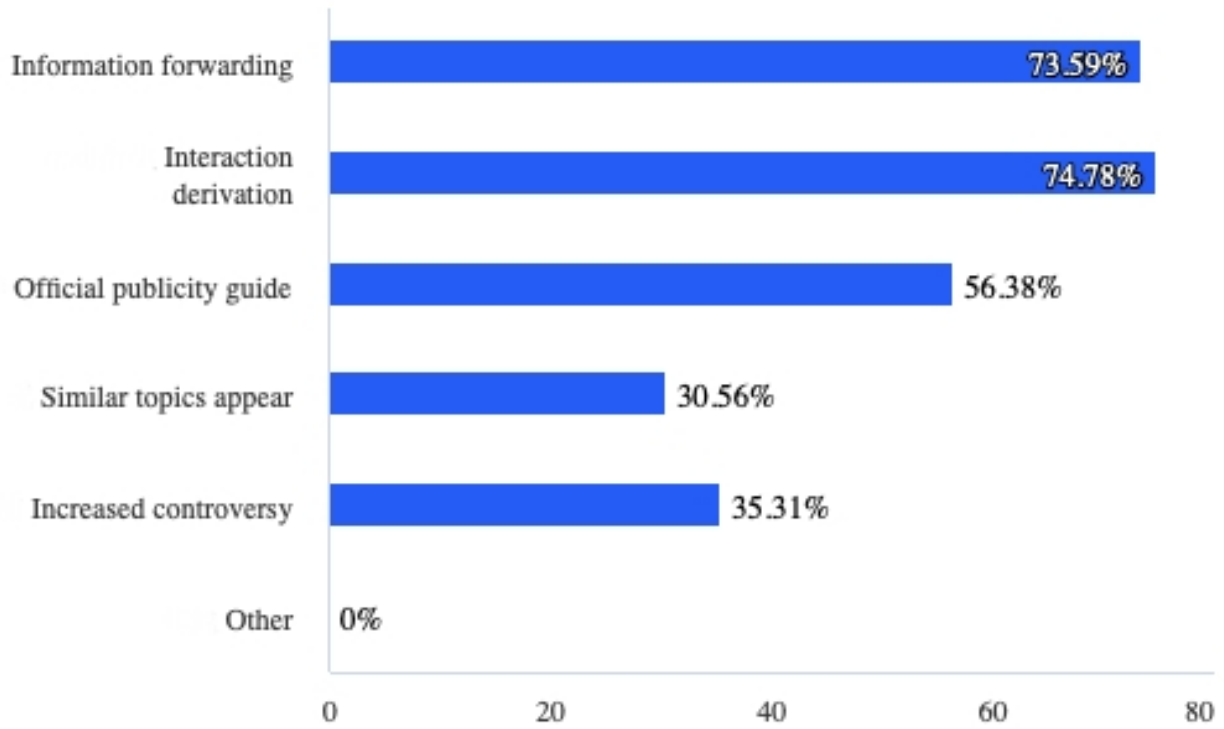


Fig. 10 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 13

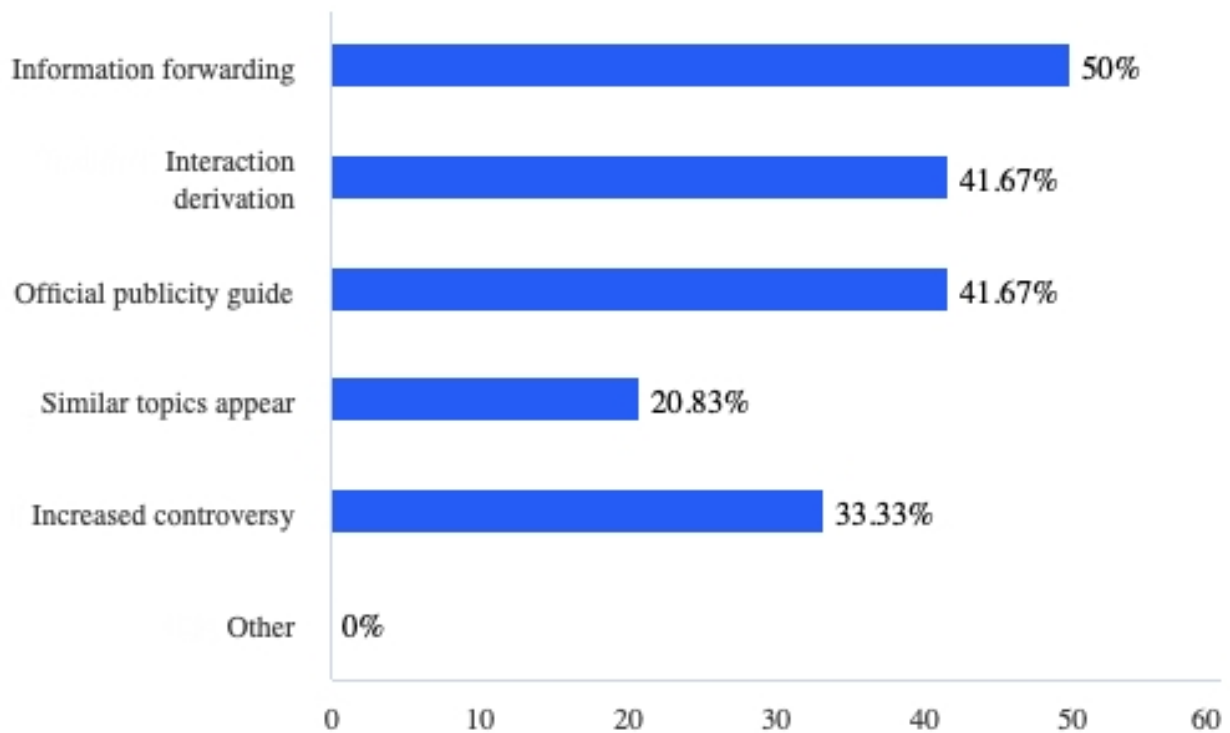


Fig. 11 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 17

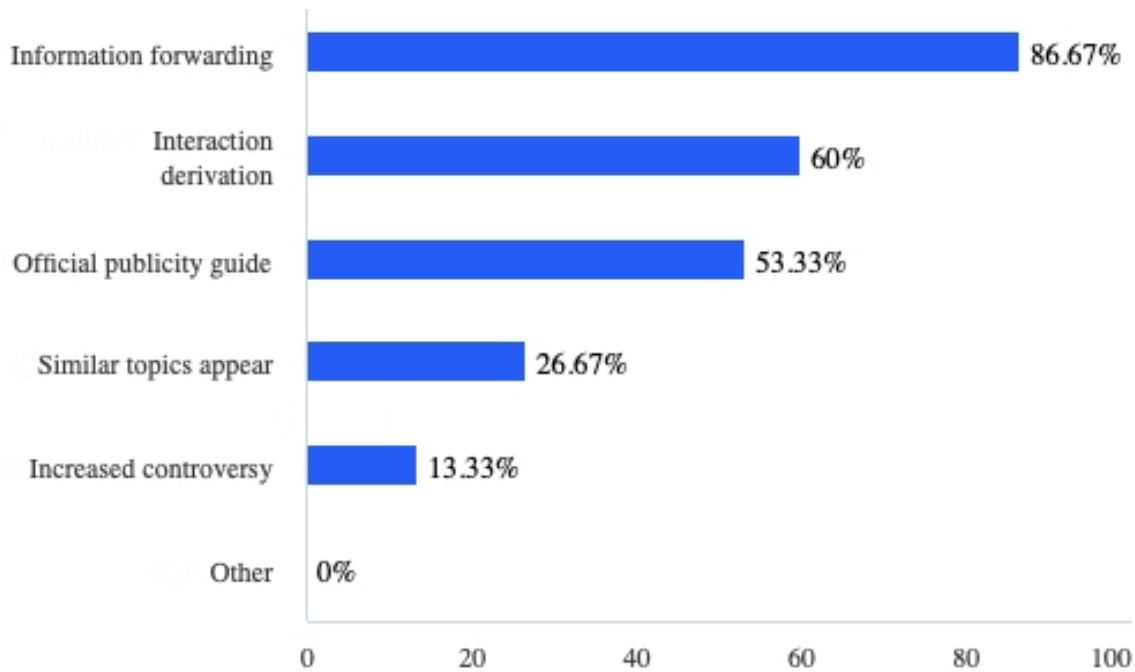


Fig. 12 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 21

In addition, Questions 14, 18, and 22 were designed to investigate respondents' attitudes toward the end of a topic. Over 70% of respondents responded in this way on all three platforms, indicating that a topic's demise is often

caused by a loss of buzz. A smaller number of respondents also agreed that a topic can end when a consensus is reached.

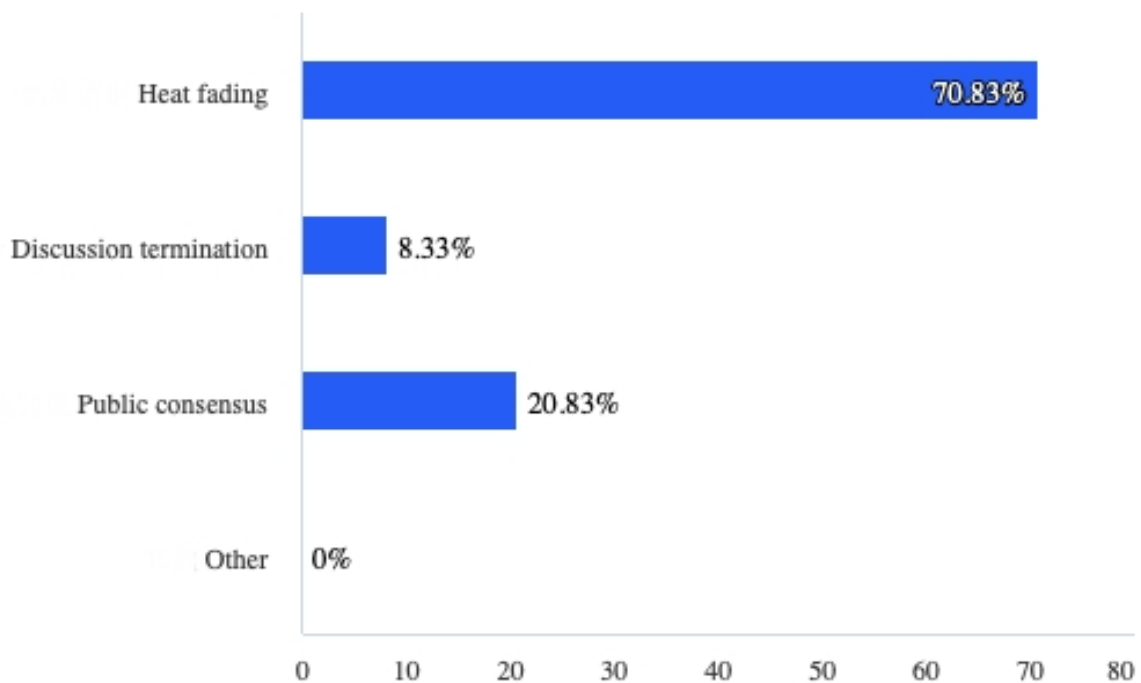


Fig. 13 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 14

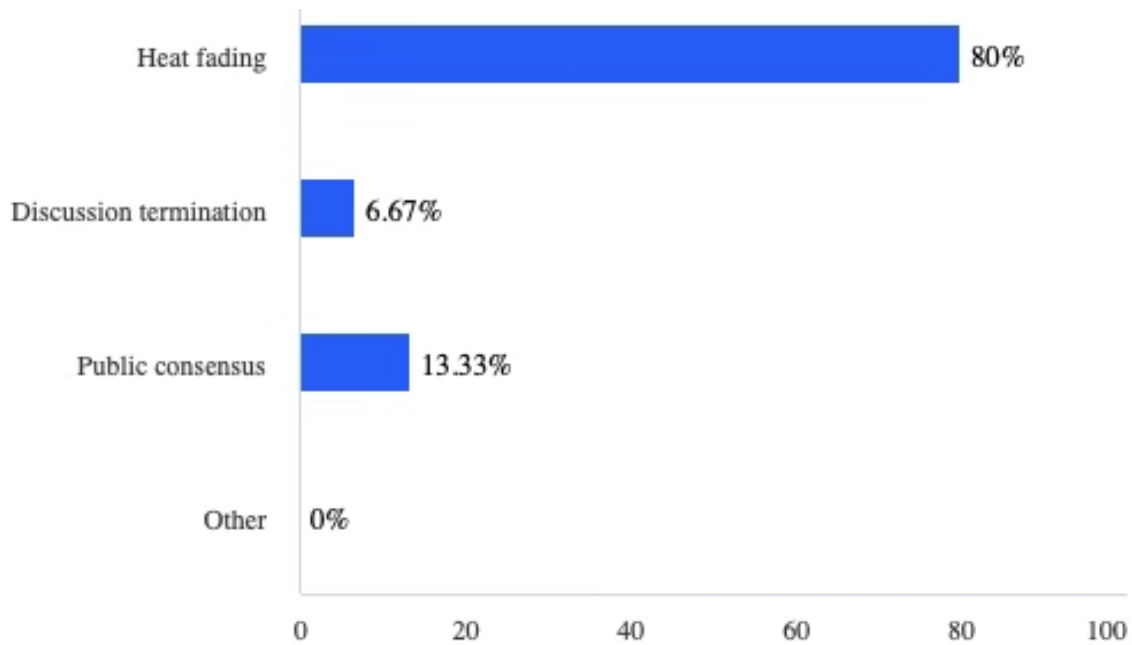


Fig. 14 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 18

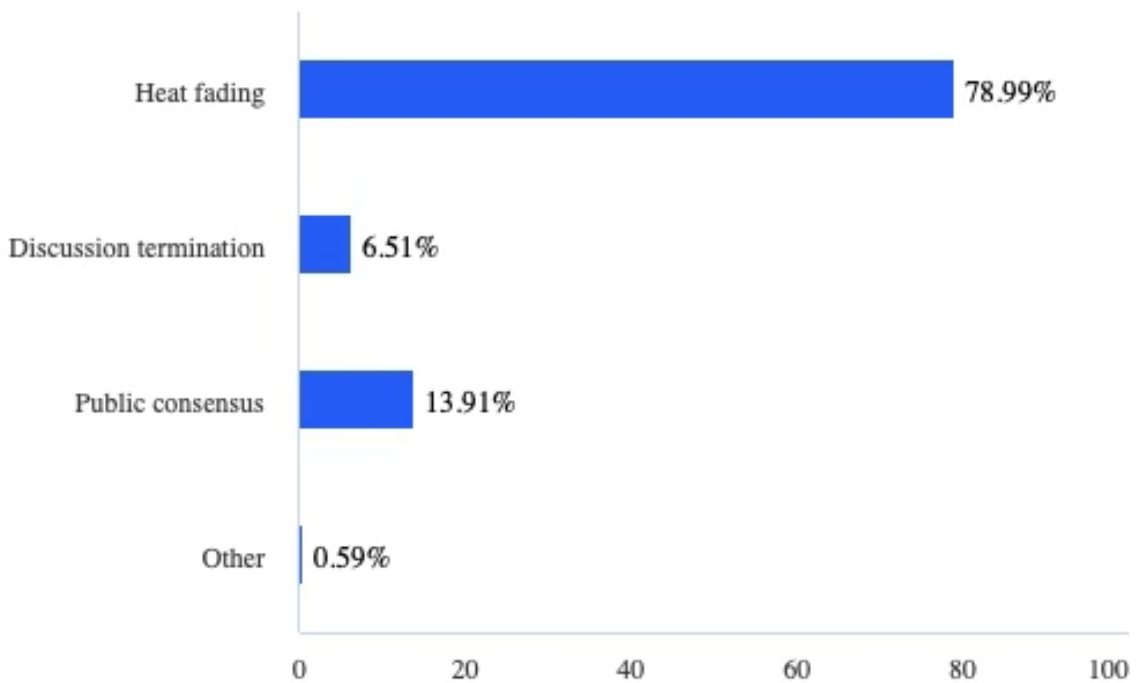


Fig. 15 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 22

In summary, the survey results show that respondents generally believe that interest can trigger their interest in a topic, that forwarding information is the most effective way to spread the topic, and that the end of a topic is caused by a decrease in buzz, meaning a decrease in discussion and attention.

4.4 Advantages and Disadvantages

Questions 23 and 24 were specifically included to provide feedback on existing social media communication platforms. On the one hand, respondents responded to the multiple-choice question, “Which social media features are most helpful in obtaining information about musical-related topics?” Rednote’s hashtags, followlist push,

and recommendation algorithm received significantly more votes than other features on the same platform and

other platforms. WeChat's group chat and one-on-one private chat features were also highly cited.

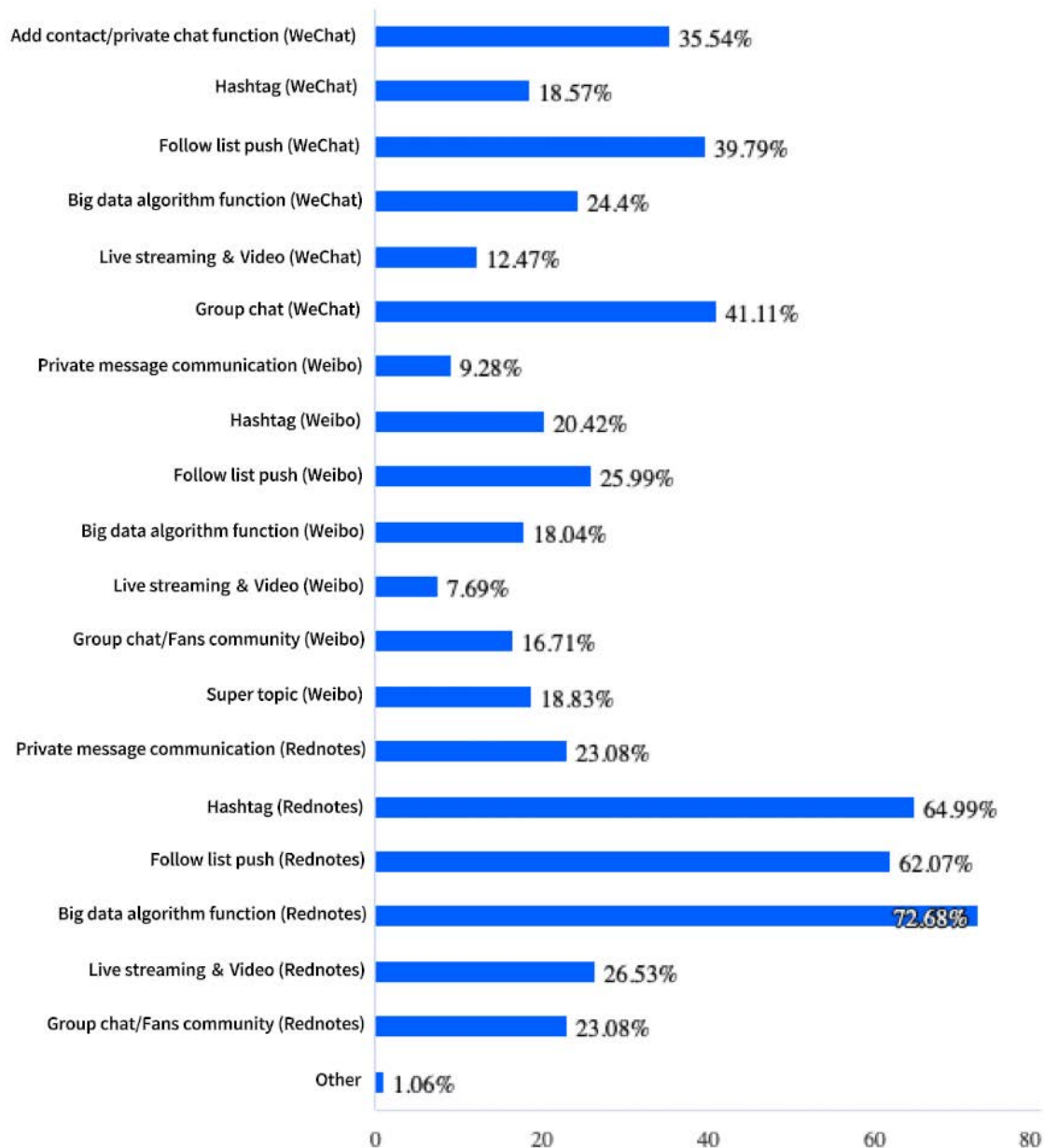


Fig. 16 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 23

On the other hand, Question 24 asked what areas of social media platforms covering musical-related topics could be improved. 68.97% of respondents reported that the quality of topic content was inconsistent. Furthermore, the Search function was also criticized, with respondents feeling that the results it returned were sometimes inaccurate and not what they were looking for. However, of particular interest to this study, one respondent, in the “Other (optional)”

option, mentioned the platform's lack of timely promotions and that expired promotions were frustrating for the respondent—a point not initially considered in the questionnaire design.

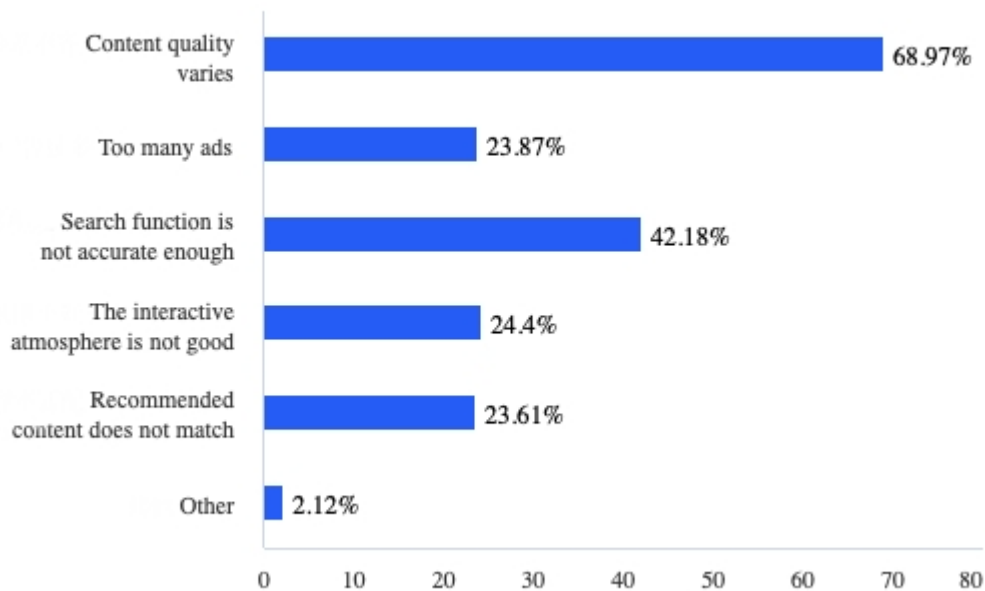


Fig. 17 Bar chart of questionnaire result, Question 24

5. Discussion

5.1 Musical Audience Profile

The information from Result part shows that the gender and age characteristics of Rednote, the main user group of this social media, are highly consistent with those of musical fans.

After excluding the responses from non-musical fans, the results show that the majority of respondents are female; therefore, one could conclude that in China, women are the majority of those interested in the musical industry and related topics. Furthermore, according to the results of Questions 9 and 10, respondents prefer Rednote as a social media platform for socializing and interacting about musicals. Women are Rednote's primary target audience [26], making it the most suitable and preferred social media platform for musical audiences.

As for age, the "2022 Annual Consumer Report" released by Qingshan Capital shows that 22% of WeChat users are under the age of 24, ranking second among all user age groups. Weibo's primary user group is also under the age of 24, accounting for 35%. Rednote's user age group is roughly the same as Weibo's, with 31% under the age of 24 [33]. This report, combined with the results of Question 3 of the survey questionnaire for this study, shows that Weibo and Rednote are more frequently used by younger users than WeChat, which aligns with the user profile of musical fans.

5.2 Comparison of Interactions

The authors collected data on platform interactions in the three sections of the questionnaire. Among the options, there are interactive features such as Like and Comment. Like expresses agreement, enjoyment, or interest in the information being viewed, while Comment is an action where users express similar or opposing opinions or attitudes through text or emojis. Other interactive behaviors, such as Forward and Follow, fall into this category of user feedback. However, Like and Comment, as representatives of these, reflect different levels of user willingness to participate in social interaction. The former, achieved through the click of a button, is a "low-level of engagement" interaction, while the latter, requiring appropriate organization of information and explanation of viewpoints in response to the information being viewed, is a "high-level of engagement" interaction [16]. Meanwhile, the Follow feature is also categorized by the author as a "low-level of engagement" interaction, as following a publisher generates no new information. Additionally, since searching for related content is a subjective decision made by users, it leads to a desire to browse more content related to the topic. However, this may not result in new posts, but it demonstrates the user's subjective desire to continue learning and browsing more content, which is both a process and a result of dissemination and highly relevant. Ms. Xu believes it does not qualify as "high-level of engagement" interactive behavior. High-level interactions are more helpful for this study because they involve the release of new information, increase discussion and

exposure, and more effectively achieve the goal of promoting dissemination. Therefore, the following discussion will focus on the functions of high-level interactions.

Firstly, the Like feature is the most popular choice across all three social media platforms, which is closely related to user behavior. More importantly, however, is the prominent and easy-to-use nature of the Like button on social media platforms [25]. In the interview, Ms. Xu, a fan of the Like function, stated that social media platform interaction is experiencing an “inflationary” phenomenon in the new media era. In other words, basic and convenient actions like Like no longer hold universal value. People simply Like as often as possible, making Like interactions less researchable and failing to provide valuable information.

Secondly, on Weibo and Rednote, over half of the users choose to follow a publisher, indicating a certain level of usage. Due to the platform’s promotional mechanisms, following a publisher leads to viewing more posts from the same publisher, rather than the same topic. Therefore, it is not particularly helpful for disseminating similar topics and the cultural significance behind them.

Furthermore, Rednote’s data for the Comment function, a highly interactive behavior, surpassed those of the other two platforms. In this regard, the three platforms’ page settings provided the same level of convenience for Like, Comment, and Repost, suggesting no discrepancies in the choice of Comment functions due to psychological fluctuations induced by page settings. Online commenting can spark large-scale discussions, both in depth and breadth, by influencing users’ cognition and subjective judgment [24] or generating conflict, thereby stimulating discussion. Ms. Xu believes that the Comment function holds significant research value. On the one hand, a single comment has the potential to generate additional comments from like-minded users. This “ice-breaking” comment can help overcome the shyness of most users, encouraging them to speak out and engage in in-depth discussion, thereby increasing discussion on the topic and ultimately disseminating and promoting information. On the other hand, user comments are often based on subconscious or subjective assumptions. Therefore, due to the uncertainty and falsity of the internet, people cannot interact face-to-face, making it difficult to truly appreciate the tone and other additional information of a Comment. Gong mentioned in her article that comments can easily evoke negative emotions such as envy and frustration [9]. Therefore, such comments can easily provoke confrontation and thus have the characteristics of “diffusion” and “infectiousness”. This can lead to misunderstandings among other users, sparking rebuttals and increasing discussion, which, in turn, can negatively impact the spread of content. Therefore, Rednote’s Com-

ment feature, likely due to its high popularity, has a strong spreading ability.

Finally, on both Rednote and WeChat, the number of people who continue searching for related content is second only to the number of likes, demonstrating the appeal of these features. Based on the above points, the Like function cannot highlight the differences between the various platforms and should be ignored; the follow publisher function shows that Weibo and Rednote are highly used. At the same time, WeChat and Rednote users have a higher continued search behavior, which also achieves a certain degree of spread. However, in terms of the Comment function, Rednote’s usage rate and spread are far ahead. Therefore, on the whole, Rednote is slightly better in the comparison of platform interactions and can achieve a stronger spread.

5.3 Communication process and content

In the Results section, the survey results indicate that respondents, as a representative sample, generally believe that initiating a topic is motivated by interest, leading the discussion. This echoes the literature review’s observation that individuals can be topic initiators and leaders of discussions focused on their interests [21], rather than simply official propaganda or guidance from authoritative organizations. Regarding the depth and breadth of topic initiation, the wider the platform’s user base, the greater the volume of topic initiation, and the more significant the resulting dissemination effect. An analysis of differences across platforms revealed that WeChat’s user base is more comprehensive and balanced across age groups and genders [48]. While Weibo’s profile of individual users is less well-defined, individual users still account for a significant proportion compared to authoritative accounts. Meanwhile, Rednote is favored by young people and female users [7]. In terms of platform user distribution, WeChat is more suitable for interest-based topic initiation.

From the perspective of topic diffusion, respondents more often chose forwarding information as the most effective method of dissemination. Just like the current craze for short videos, more convenient and accessible methods attract netizens to spread content, as simpler actions often yield higher rewards [3], providing greater emotional value. To address this, the buttons or methods for Forward on different platforms need to be compared, and consideration will be given to which platforms offer more convenient Forward channels compared to other interactive methods. This paper will analyze and capture screenshots of posting pages on various platforms, based on mobile client versions updated before August 20, 2025. On a WeChat official account, the Forward button is located in

the same location as the Like and Comment buttons. The same color and similarly designed pattern give it equal prominence, and neither feature stands out in terms of convenience. Video accounts are nearly identical to official accounts, except that the Like button is split into two types, resulting in four interactive buttons, with Forward accounting for only a quarter of them. Furthermore, the Moments page currently lacks a Forward function. Weibo's Forward function is simple and clear, placed in the same position as Comment and Like, even further to the left, with the same color and lines, similar button styles, and the same level of convenience. However, on Rednote, the Forward function is not intuitively visible on the posting page. The page only has a few functions, such as Like, Comment, Favorite, and even Follow. To forward, you need to click on the expansion bar in the upper right corner to expand it, which is somewhat inconspicuous and inconvenient. From this perspective, Weibo attaches more importance to the Forward function than the other two platforms, perhaps making it more suitable for spreading topics.

5.4 Findings from discussion

Based on several points from the Discussion section, Rednote is the platform with the greatest overlap with musical theater fans, making it the most suitable platform for this demographic. Regarding interactive features, the study focused solely on high-level interaction features, namely Comment and Search. In these two areas, Rednote's usage rate is higher than the other two platforms, indicating a stronger level of interactivity. Regarding topic formation and dissemination, WeChat is more suitable for interest-based topics, while Weibo is more conducive to the spread of topics through reposting.

After comparing these four points, Rednote has a slight advantage over the other two platforms in two areas. Therefore, compared to the other two social media platforms, Rednote is more suitable for musical theater fans and better meets the needs of spreading musicals and related topics.

6. Evaluation

Of course, there are some limitations in the research. During the questionnaire design and data collation for the primary research, several issues emerged. First, the questionnaire should be shortened. This questionnaire consists of 25 questions. While different responses will result in different numbers of questions, a long questionnaire can still cause respondents to lose interest. Second, the question logic needs further consideration. The questionnaire lacks strong connections between the previous and sub-

sequent questions, which can be confusing. Third, some instructions were not clearly defined, misleading some respondents in the final question. The explanation and definition of "social media" should be included in a larger font so that respondents don't mention representative platforms for video and music media in open-ended questions. There are also some shortcomings in the selection of interviewees. While the interviewee was appropriate, their authority could be improved. Because the interviewee was a university graduate in a relevant field, not an industry expert or celebrity, their authority may not be as strong as it could be.

However, this study still has its highlights. First, the study successfully filled a research gap. The results of the study showed the most suitable platform for the dissemination of musicals and related topics, which was also a point that had not been discovered in previous studies. Second, the questionnaire collected 390 results, and they were all valid. More data can reflect the reality more closely, so the results reflected by the data of this survey are very real and almost unbiased. Third, this study combines multiple sources of information, including secondary research, as well as questionnaires and interviews in primary research. Multi-channel information sources can more comprehensively support the analysis and conclusions of the study, so this study has multi-party support.

7. Summary

The dissemination analyzes data collected from questionnaires and interviews, along with supporting literature and multiple resources. The conclusion is that, compared to WeChat and Weibo, Rednote is the social media platform most likely to promote the development of musicals. Its user base closely matches the characteristics of musical fans, and its "high-level of engagement" function is used more frequently. In addition, the study successfully classified different interaction functions into two types. The "low-level of engagement" functions include Like and Follow, while Comment and Search belong to the "high-level of engagement" functions. This research aims to help musical audiences overcome information asymmetry and lower the barrier to entry for individuals to engage with niche culture. It also aims to improve the efficiency of musical practitioners and the musical industry, expanding their marketing and promotional efforts. Ultimately, it aims to promote the popularization of musical culture, allowing previously niche musicals to break through their limitations and reach a wider audience, thereby gradually increasing their recognition and acceptance in society.

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