



# A Dataset of Young People's Perception on Dissemination of Government Propaganda and Socialist Culture Content in China

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DATA PAPER

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## ABSTRACT

This dataset serves as a resource for analyzing Chinese youth's preferences on short video media platforms, their perception on the dissemination of government messages and socialist cultures. The data were collected through a web-based questionnaire distributed primarily to young people aged 18–30 in mainland China. A total of 331 valid data were collected and stored in Mendeley Data. This data can be fully utilized in the study of contemporary issues such as Chinese youth's cultural choices, Chinese youth's perceptions of mainstream culture, and culture and short video platform.

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## KEYWORDS:

Mainstream culture;  
Subculture; China; Douyin;  
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CONTEXT

(1) Mainstream culture and subculture

Mainstream culture is the culture that dominates a society or plays a leading role among many cultures and can integrate and lead other cultures. China’s mainstream culture is the socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, which is guided by Marxism and draws on the traditional culture of the Chinese nation and the world’s cultural heritage (Lu, 2007). As a concept opposite to mainstream culture, the formation of “subculture” is often accompanied by a marginalized group’s rejection and escape from real society (Chow, 2017; Ye & Xu, 2024). In China, research on new media and youth subcultures is both numerous and wide-ranging, with youth subcultures such as “online games”, “otaku”, “spoofing”, “anime fans”, “online subtitle groups”, and “homoeroticism” as topics of particular interest to academics (Ma, 2013). In these subcultural circles, youths are free to express their own ideas about cultural concepts, aesthetic interests, socialization styles, etc., thus forming their own cultural labels and social networks (Wang et al., 2023).

(2) Short video platforms

With the popularization of the Internet, the information media has been developed tremendously, and new media forms continue to emerge. Online media has become an emerging communication channel in China, such as Weibo, Douyin, etc. They have become an important way for people to obtain news and information, and subcultures have begun to rely on new media platforms to show their own characteristics. The emergence of the Internet has also further provided more freedom and innovative space for the creation and sharing of youth subcultures, and young people can express their views and creativity on the Internet without the limitations and constraints imposed by traditional media and cultural institutions (Wang et al., 2023). Douyin, a representative short video medium in China, has developed rapidly. Regarding the short video market share, according to the QuestMobile platform data in June 2019 (Figure 1), Douyin’s monthly number of users was 486 million as of 2019, gaining a much larger market share than that of other short video giants like Kuaishou, Tencent, and Baidu. Therefore, this study chose Douyin as a research platform to collect short video preferences of young users in mainland China to understand their cultural choices.

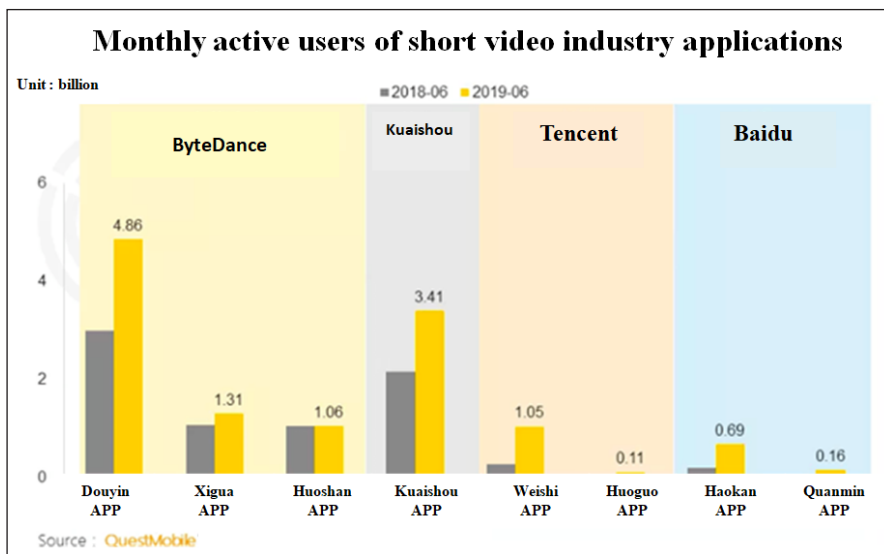


Figure 1 Monthly active users of short video industry applications.

In the process of mobile short video development, the conflict between youth subculture and mainstream culture has brought many problems, and it is urgent for academia and industry to explore how to solve these problems (Huang, 2021). This dataset utilizes China’s most popular social media short-video platform, Douyin, to investigate the content preferences and attitudes of young people in mainland China towards short-videos, as well as the intrinsic motivations

that influence their choices. It provides empirical support for the study of mainland Chinese youth's attitudes toward mainstream culture and mainland Chinese youth's cultural choices in short video platforms.

## 2. METHOD

The methodology and experimental design employed in this study allowed for an examination of mainland Chinese youth's media consumption habits (Chen & Song, 2017). The structured questionnaire, diverse participant selection, and rigorous data screening processes ensured the reliability and validity of the collected data. The dataset was generated via a five-step process:

### (1) SOFTWARE AND INSTRUMENT

The questionnaire underwent a thorough modification process, resulting in a final version containing 14 questions. These questions encompassed various formats, including single-choice, multiple-choice, question and answer, seven-dimensional scale questions, and screening questions (see survey instrument – Questionnaire in the supplementary material). The questions covered demographic information, media consumption behavior, content preferences, and attitudes towards mainstream culture (Zhang, 2007). The questionnaire was distributed on a China-based version of Credamo, a global intelligent research platform. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was first pre-tested on a small scale with 80 respondents. The questions and length of the survey were adjusted based on data from a pretest. This ensured that the questionnaire was understandable and accurate.

### (2) SAMPLING STRATEGY

To ensure the comprehensiveness and diversity of the data, this study utilized a simple random sampling strategy, which is a type of sampling in which  $n$  units are arbitrarily drawn as a sample from a total population of  $N$  units so that each possible sample has an equal probability of being drawn (Wang, 2001).

It was also hoped that the respondents would be comprehensively representative of the youth population in mainland China, so the main requirements for sampling were:

- i. Respondents must be residents of mainland China.
- ii. Respondents must be young people between the ages of 18-30. According to “Huge Amount of Arithmetic” (2020), the number of people aged 18-30 account for a high proportion of users of the Douyin. In addition, the Target Group Index (TGI) of the group aged 19-24 and the group aged 25-30 were the highest, reaching 123 and 103, respectively, and the TGI (Target Group Index) reflects the strength or weakness index of target groups in the specific research scope. Therefore, the age of the respondents was set between 18 and 30 years old.

### (3) COLLECTION PROCESS

Questionnaire was made accessible to all eligible participants in mainland China aged 18-30. As an incentive, each respondent received a prize of two RMB upon completing the questionnaire.

### (4) DATA SCREENING

After releasing the questionnaire, 500 responses were collected. To ensure data quality, a meticulous screening process was implemented. Manual screening removed 5 responses, while an additional 164 were filtered out through an automated process. This screening primarily aimed to eliminate incomplete, irregular, or fabricated responses. Ultimately, 331 valid responses were retained for analysis.

Based on Figure 2, we know that the geographical coordinates of 331 respondents are from 135 cities in China.

Table 1 shows respondents' basic demographic information.



**Figure 2** Coordinate map of respondents' locations.

CHARACTERISTICS	PERCENTAGE
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	31.12
Female	68.88
<b>Age</b>	
18–20	19.34
21–23	32.93
24–26	23.26
27–30	24.47
<b>Education</b>	
Primary school	0
Junior high school	1.21
High school	7.55
Undergraduate	82.48
Postgraduate	8.46
PhD student	0.3
<b>Occupation</b>	
Student	43.5
State-owned enterprises	10.88
Business unit	9.97
Civil servant	2.11
Private enterprise	29.91
Foreign enterprise	3.63

**Table 1** Sample Characteristics.

## (5) QUALITY CONTROL

This data was collected on the CREDAMO platform, and quality control was performed using the platform's quality control features, including viewing the respondents' credit scores and intelligent human verification. We removed any data that was manipulated or not standardized. In the end, 331 valid data were obtained.

## 3. DATASET DESCRIPTION

### REPOSITORY NAME

Mendeley Data

## OBJECT NAME

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## FORMAT NAMES AND VERSIONS

Raw data (.CSV file), data dictionary -Codebook (.pdf file), survey instrument – Questionnaire (.pdf file).

## CREATION DATES

2021-8-31—2021-9-28

## DATASET CREATORS

Li Xinyu, who was responsible for conceptualization, research design, data extraction and validation, dataset creation, is affiliated with the centre for Research in Media and Communication (MENTION), Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

## LANGUAGE

All variable names are in English. Some short video account names and blogger names are in Chinese.

## LICENSE

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## PUBLICATION DATE

2023-12-25

## 4. REUSE POTENTIAL

Given the multiple variables and sample size of 331 participants, as well as the statistical representativeness of our survey, these data allow for further statistical analysis:

- (1) These data can be analyzed using data-mining approaches to reveal participant groupings based on the variables (Patwary et al., 2021). Association chains can be extracted, for example, between sociodemographic variables, habits, behavior, and attitudes (for the variables, see data dictionary -Codebook).
- (2) Variables in the data include attitudes, intrinsic motivation, etc., so it can help to understand Chinese youth's preferences on short video media platforms and their attitudes towards the dissemination of government propaganda and socialist culture (Hu, 2021) through Douyin, the most popular short video platform in China (Chang & Tian, 2018).
- (3) These data can be analyzed independently in combination with media consumption habits data (Gan & Wang, 2018) from China Internet Network Information Centre (CNNIC) or with socioeconomic variables (including correlation analysis, regression analysis, etc.), to draw novel conclusions.
- (4) The dataset can be utilized by researchers for various statistical analyses who can conduct quantitative analyses, such as correlation and regression analyses, to uncover trends in Chinese youth's cultural choices and their influencing factors. This research can illuminate the current state of mainstream culture and subculture in China, as well as its global implications in terms of cultural exchanges and competition.

## 5. LIMITATIONS

The data was collected in the Chinese language to ensure that the respondents fully understood the questions. While the researchers made significant efforts in ensuring the translation of

data to English when writing this paper, is as accurate as possible, we cannot deny that there are challenges in finding words to reflect the true connotations and denotations. In addition, although Douyin is the largest short video platform in mainland China in terms of market share, it should still be considered whether different platforms have influenced consumer habits, which we have not studied. It is also important to note that government censorship, company regulation, and short-video pushing methods such as algorithms may have an impact on cultural choices. Therefore, we hope that future researchers can conduct more in-depth studies in these directions.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Li Xinyu: Conceptualisation, Methodology, Original Draft Preparation.

Sabariah Mohamed Salleh: Supervision, Reviewing and Editing.

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