

Influence of Social Media Reviews on Movie-Watching Intentions among College Students

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Abstract:

With the popularity of the social media platform Xiaohongshu in the daily lives of college students, some researchers have found that its content influences the public's film-watching decisions. However, there is still a lack of a unified explanation for the problems with its word-of-mouth content. The research topic of this article is the relationship between the word-of-mouth on Xiaohongshu and college students' willingness to watch movies. The research method of this article is to combine questionnaire surveys and data collection. Hypotheses are made from three dimensions: positive emotions, interaction volume, and blogger identity. Descriptive statistics and other analyses are conducted to verify the data. The research results show that positive emotion film reviews can better stimulate the interest in watching movies, highly interactive notes have a greater influence, and the word-of-mouth effect of certified bloggers is significantly stronger than that of ordinary users. The research findings further confirm the significant influence of social media reviews on college students' willingness to watch movies, providing theoretical and practical references for future studies on user response differences and the analysis of film reviews and commentaries.

Keywords: Xiaohongshu; college students; social media; willingness to watch movies.

1. Introduction

In contemporary society, an increasing number of college students frequently use social media platforms such as "Xiaohongshu" in their daily lives. The content on these platforms unconsciously influences users' living habits, consumption behaviors, and

social interaction methods, and gradually permeates into multiple aspects of their personal lives. With the changes of the times and the advancement of technology, the presentation methods and technical means of digital communication have been constantly updated and improved. Against this backdrop, films not only serve as an important choice for people's leisure and

entertainment, but also play a significant role in stimulating domestic demand and promoting consumption. They have become one of the core pillars of the cultural industry system, possessing undeniable cultural dissemination power and economic driving force. Although the film industry has already entered a mature stage of development, it still has considerable room for growth and there are extensive untapped markets. It has great potential for development [1]. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of which content types and presentation methods on “Xiaohongshu” have a significant impact on college students’ willingness to watch movies, as well as the formation path and specific manifestations of this influence mechanism.

This study aims to explore how college students, while browsing social media platforms such as Xiaohongshu, can influence their movie-watching intentions and decision-making through obtaining relevant movie content and comments on the platforms. In the contemporary university community, films not only serve as an important form of leisure and entertainment, but also become an important medium for emotional communication, social interaction, and cultural consumption. Whether it is for relaxation and stress relief, enhancing emotional connection with peers, or keeping up with the latest trends, watching movies in cinemas has gradually become an integral part of college students’ daily lives, constituting an important part of their cultural experience. As one of the most popular forms of leisure and entertainment among college students, movies also influence the values of college students in a unique way [2].

Therefore, the research topic of this article is to clarify the relationship between college students and the use of Xiaohongshu, and to explore which aspects of the review content on Xiaohongshu influence the willingness of college students to watch movies, and to analyze how these factors determine the movie-watching and consumption intentions of the college student population. This article mainly employs the following research methods: literature analysis, questionnaire survey, and social media collection. Firstly, the literature analysis method was used to study the literature findings, which revealed that there is an emotional connection between people, and emotions are essentially information [3]. By conducting a search and reading of relevant materials and literature, this method has the advantage of being able to obtain the research content of related achievements in this field by conducting a search of domestic relevant literature. Secondly, the questionnaire survey is direct. It can directly obtain the opinions of college students on the movie reviews and other contents on Xiaohongshu, proving the subjective attitudes, viewing intentions, and perception of the repu-

tation content of Xiaohongshu among the college student group, which is targeted and efficient. Finally, the social media collection method. The film review data on Xiaohongshu, a social media platform, truly reflects the viewing attitudes and behaviors of college students. Through the interaction data, Xiaohongshu was selected as the data collection platform, and content highly relevant to the research topic was screened out for the social media analysis of the social media data collection from Xiaohongshu.

The ultimate goal of this research is to prove that social media platforms like Xiaohongshu have an impact on the movie-watching intentions of college students. To achieve this goal, a method combining questionnaire surveys and social media data analysis was employed. Promote the coordinated development of college students’ movie-watching intentions and the film reviews and comments on Xiaohongshu.

2. Research Hypotheses and Data Collection

2.1 Research Hypothesis

2.1.1 Positive reviews and movie-watching intentions

When searching for movie reviews on Xiaohongshu, numerous comments will be presented along with the popular pictures and videos. Among these comments, there will inevitably be both positive and negative reviews. This study focuses on the role of positive reviews. Chintagunta’s research found that the ratings given by film critics significantly influence the viewing intentions of movie consumers [4]. Lipizzi’s research has demonstrated that the greater the number of online film reviews, the more positive an impact it will have on movie consumers [5]. Moul argues that the film’s reputation has an impact on the information dissemination among consumers, and a positive reputation interacts with the expectations of the audience [6]. Based on the above survey results, for this research topic, the following hypothesis is proposed: H1: Positive sentiment-oriented film review content can enhance the willingness of college students to watch movies.

2.1.2 The number of likes and collections and the willingness to watch the film

Articles with high likes and collections on Xiaohongshu are more likely to generate consumption intentions among college students. Whether a film can attract a sufficient number of people to watch it is closely related to its reputation. Especially in the era of the Internet, various online film reviews have a significant impact on consumers’ willingness to watch the film [7]. For this research topic, the

following hypothesis is proposed: H2: Notes with higher numbers of likes and collections are more likely to influence college students' movie viewing choices.

2.1.3 Film review blogger and movie-watching intention

The film review bloggers on Xiaohongshu have a significant influence on the movie-watching intentions of college students. Feng Xiaotong pointed out that in the context of the Internet era, various forms of word-of-mouth dissemination such as website ratings, recommendations by experts, and opinions from social clusters have a positive impact on the attitudes of movie consumers. This not only boosts box office revenues but also promotes and stimulates the emergence of social phenomena and triggers network cluster effects. The continuous proliferation of on-line film reviews and public opinions in the network and in daily life, as well as within social circles, can also exert a social pressure and herd mentality on movie consumers, thereby influencing their subjective norms [8]. For this research topic, the following hypothesis is proposed: H3: College students are more likely to be influenced by the reputation of the bloggers in the Xiaohongzhi book series rather than ordinary users.

2.2 Data Collection

2.2.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire design of this study closely follows

the scope of the topic. Based on relevant research on the viewing intentions of college students and those on Xiaohongshu, as well as the design of questions on the Questionnaire Star platform, the questionnaire section mainly consists of the following four parts:

The first part is the personal information section, which is in the form of multiple-choice questions.

The second part is designed based on three different hypothetical scenarios. These sections also adopt the multiple-choice questionnaire design. The aim is to more directly and clearly demonstrate how various factors affect the willingness of college students to watch movies. A total of 101 valid questionnaires were collected across the country. Based on the collected questionnaire results, analysis can be conducted and the conclusion of the questionnaire survey can be drawn.

2.2.2 Analysis of Questionnaire Results

H1: The influence of positive film reviews on the willingness to watch movies: 59% of college students stated that when they saw a large number of positive reviews, their willingness to watch movies "increased" or "significantly increased"; 57% of college students agreed that they would be more inclined to watch movies due to the positive emotions expressed in the reviews, and 69% of college students believed that positive film reviews had a "significant impact" or "definite influence" on their movie-watching decisions. As shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Three Scheme comparing

Table 1 Analysis of Positive Emotional Movie ReviewsTitle	Option	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
5, When you come across a movie on Xiaohongshu and find that there are numerous positive reviews, how will your willingness to watch the movie change?	weaken	11	11	11
	uniformity	26	26	37
	distinct weakening	6	6	43
	significantly enhance	21	21	64
	Having been strengthened	36	36	100
6, Would you be more likely to watch the movie because of the positive emotions expressed in the film reviews?	no	41	41	41
	yes	59	59	100
7, How much do you think the positive reviews of the film influence your decision to watch it?	A certain influence	40	40	40
	little influence	15	15	55
	great influence	29	29	84
	no influence	16	16	100
Total		100	100	100

H2: The influence of likes/favorites count on movie viewing decisions: 67% of college students are more inclined to favor movie review notes with higher likes/favorites counts, 59% of college students believe that “notes with

a high number of likes/favorites are more reliable”, and 59% of college students will decide to watch the movie based on “high likes/favorites”. As shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Analysis of likes and favorites counts title

Table 2 Analysis of Likes and Favorites CountsTitle	Option	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Would you prefer to refer to the notes of film reviews with a higher number of likes?	No	33	33	33
	Yes	67	67	100
When you see that a note has a high number of likes and collections, do you think its content is more reliable?	No	41	41	41
	Yes	59	59	100
Would you decide to watch a movie just because a certain note about it has a high number of likes and favorites?	Never	8	8	8
	Seldom	23	23	31
	Sometimes	46	46	77
	Often	23	23	100
Total		100	100	100

H3: The difference in reputation between bloggers and ordinary users: 77% of college students will watch a movie based on the recommendation of a certain blogger. However, college students’ reputation perception towards

bloggers and ordinary users is relatively similar, and even some college students may prefer ordinary users. We need to expand the sample collection. As shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The Difference in reputation between bloggers and ordinary users title

Table 3: The Difference in Reputation between Bloggers and Ordinary Users Title	Option	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Which type of users on Xiaohongshu do you trust more to post movie reviews?	Neither of them believes	27	27	27
	Normal user	31	31	58
	The specific content determines	12	12	70
	Famous blogger	30	30	100
When the videos posted by the blogger are inconsistent with the opinions expressed by ordinary users, which one do you tend to believe?	Neither of them believes	20	20	20
	blogger	27	27	47
	normal user	46	46	93
	The specific content determines	7	7	100
Would you watch a movie because of a recommendation from a certain blogger?	Never	8	8	8
	Seldom	15	15	23
	Sometimes	23	23	46
	Often	54	54	100
Total		100	100	100

2.2.3 Social Media Data Collection

Collect the comment keywords of high-heat articles about

different movies on Xiaohongshu. 60 comment sections of different hot movie reviews were collected. As shown in Table 4.

Table 4. The Difference in reputation between bloggers and ordinary users' titles

Table 4 Data Collection of Assumption Content Category	Blogger ID	The Number of the Blogger's Followers	Number of Likes	Number of Favorites	Comment Key-words
Positive movie review	Aspirin	2.3w	1460	587	Recommend
	Axuexueya	2.9w	1427	866	Nice
Number of likes, number of favorites	The spiritual world of July	4w	9874	1806	Wonderful
	Hall 7	3.8w	2017	437	Re-watch
Blogger influence	Jiji Movie	4.5w	1.2w	1639	
	Yiwei Pavilion	1.6w	8394	812	

Collect the keywords of the same popular movie (Hello Mrs. Li Huanjing) on Xiaohongshu. They are divided into positive and negative categories. A total of 140 film reviews were collected within the time range of 2023-2025, covering blogger users and ordinary users, different interaction levels, and reviews with different emotional tendencies. There are various contents described in different comments, such as evaluations of the movie and emotions related to the movie.

3. Analysis Methods and Hypothesis Verification

3.1 Analytical Method

Descriptive statistical analysis involves describing and summarizing the basic information of the survey subjects and the valid sample data collected. It presents the characteristics of the data and the relationships between variables in the form of charts, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the basic features of the surveyed population and the collected data [9].

Chi-square test is used to examine whether there is a statistically significant correlation between two categorical variables. In this topic selection, it is applied to the relationship between likes and shares and movie viewing choices.

Reliability analysis usually encompasses two aspects: re-test reliability and internal consistency test. In this study, internal consistency was used to verify the consistency of the items. The Cronbach's coefficient can reflect the degree to which the data is affected by random errors. Generally, if alpha is less than 0.35, the reliability is extremely

low and cannot be used for analysis; if alpha is between 0.35 and 0.7, it indicates a certain level of reliability; and when alpha is greater than 0.7, it indicates good reliability [10].

Word cloud chart presents the frequently used keywords in the comments in a visual way. By conducting statistics and organization on these keywords, it helps understand the users' emotional expressions and key concerns regarding the film.

3.2 Hypothesis Verification

3.2.1 Positive Reviews with a Favorable Sentiment Significantly Enhance College Students' Willingness to Watch Movies

Based on the data collection from the social media platform Xiaohongshu, Descriptive statistical analysis was employed to compare the average number of likes and collections for the two groups of reviews with different emotional categories. The statistics show that the average number of likes and favorites for positive reviews on Xiaohongshu is 64.17 and 19.51 respectively, while the average number of likes and favorites for negative reviews on Xiaohongshu is 45.05 and 5.45 respectively.

Among the 70 different types of film reviews, the average number of likes and collections for positive reviews was significantly higher than that for negative reviews. This indicates that positive reviews are more likely to stimulate the desire to watch movies.

For the verification of Hypothesis One, the chi-square verification analysis method was also employed here. Based on the data obtained from the questionnaire survey, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. The impact of positive emotional expression on changes in movie viewing intention cross analysis results

Project	Name	Will people be more likely to watch movies because of the positive emotions expressed in the film reviews		χ^2	p
		yes	no		
The degree of change in the willingness to watch a movie when there are a large number of positive reviews	Significantly enhance	17(28.330%)	5(12.200%)	18.690	0.001**
	Having been strengthened	28(46.670%)	8(19.510%)		
	No change	9(15.000%)	17(41.460%)		
	Weaken	4(6.670%)	7(17.070%)		
	Distinct Weakening	2(3.330%)	4(9.760%)		

Using the chi-square test to investigate whether the positive emotions expressed in the movie reviews would lead to a difference in the degree of change in the willingness to watch movies when there are a large number of positive reviews. From the above table, it can be seen that: the p-value is $0.001 < 0.05$, and the chi-square value is 18.69. This indicates that there is a significant difference between the data and a certain tendency. Assuming that H1 holds

true.

3.2.2 Notes With High Numbers of Likes and Collections Have a Greater Influence on The Choice of Movies

The questionnaire data regarding this part of the hypothesis from Questionnaire One were input into SPSSAU for reliability analysis, and the results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Reliability Analysis Title

Table 7 Reliability Analysis Title	Correlation of Correction Terms (CITC)	The deleted alpha co-efficient	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
Would you prefer to refer to the film reviews with higher ratings?	0.714	0.676	0.784
When you see that a certain note has received a high number of likes and favorites, do you think the content of that note is more reliable?	0.64	0.725	
Would you decide to watch a certain movie just because the number of likes and favorites for that note is high?	0.715	0.736	

As can be seen from Table 6, the reliability coefficient value is 0.784, which is greater than 0.7. This indicates that the reliability quality of the research data is very good. It proves that Hypothesis Two is valid.

From the comment section of Questionnaire 2, we extracted the user comments and created a word cloud for the high-traffic articles. We calculated the proportion of the mentioned keywords based on word frequency and manual annotation. The result is shown in Figure 1.



Fig. 1 Word cloud chart

The conclusion drawn is that the occurrence rate of positive reviews on the word cloud is significantly higher than that of negative reviews, indicating that the highly popular notes can more effectively influence the movie-watching choices of the college student group. Hypothesis H2 is thus confirmed.

3.2.3 The Content Posted by Bloggers Has a Greater Influence on College Students' Film Viewing than that on Ordinary Users

From the questionnaire, 60 pieces of diverse film review data were extracted and divided into the blogger group and the ordinary user group based on the author's identity. Blogger group (42 items): Fan count ≥ 1000 , Ordinary user group (18 items): Fan count ≤ 1000 . Comparing the number of collections, the blogger group: Total collection count is 32,456 times, with an average of about 773 collections per item. General User Group: The total number of collections is 521 times, with an average of about 29 collections per item. The blogger, due to their larger fan base and professional content output, has a significantly higher number of film review collections than ordinary users. This confirms the conclusion that "bloggers have more influence on word-of-mouth than ordinary users." Assuming that H3 holds true.

4. Conclusion

The emotional tone of the film review, the level of user interaction, and the author's identity determine the willingness of college students to watch the film. Specifically, positive reviews tend to arouse the interest of viewers more effectively. Notes with high numbers of likes and collections are more persuasive. Moreover, the content posted by bloggers has a stronger influence on word-of-mouth than that of ordinary users. Thus, the research conclusion drawn is that social media platforms such as Xiaohongshu can affect college students' movie-watching decisions. The combined effect of emotions and social interaction plays a role in the formation process of their consumption intentions. This research provides many valuable references for future studies in this field, mainly focusing on the optimization path of film marketing strat-

egies for college students and the supplementation of key points of film content on social platforms. Future research should focus more on the differences in user responses across various film platforms, as well as the comprehensive influence of the content of the comments in film review videos on the willingness to watch movies. This will enable a deeper exploration to build a more comprehensive system for analyzing social media user behaviors.

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