Discuss the Social Pressure of Douyin on Female Hair Removal Behavior through Questionary

Feiyang Li

Greater Atlanta Christian School, Norcross, United States

Abstract. The research discusses the impact of Douyin, a popular social media, on the pressure of female hair removal behavior. It opens with an introduction to the Douyin platform and the characteristics of its pushing mechanism, including personalized content recommendations and homogenized content with big data. The author summarizes and analyzes the results of eighty questionnaires administered to female users of Douyin, taking into account the status of women as aesthetic objects in Chinese history and the evolution of beauty standards.

Keywords: Douyin; social media; beauty standard; feminism; evolution.

1. Introduction to Platform (Douyin)

The Douyin app was launched in China in September 2016; as of August 2020, Douyin has over 600 million daily active users worldwide. It has changed the traditional social media mechanism in this media era and attracted a wide range of young users. The emergence of personalized videos has transformed communication from a passer-centric approach to a user-centric one, and the development of big data and artificial intelligence has given rise to algorithmic mechanisms that push videos that may be of potential interest to individual users [1]. However, big data algorithmic pushing mechanism brings disadvantages while maximizing users' experience: the media industry is strongly guided, and Douyin's purposeful delivery of specific information to users means that it puts social pressure on users [2]. This paper discusses the social and aesthetic pressures that Douyin exerts on female users, specifically in terms of hair removal, and its connection to feminism's development in China.

2. Ideological Background

2.1 The Development of Women's Status in Chinese History

Traditional Chinese society is composed of a fundamentally male value system that has developed over thousands of years. In the traditional social system of ancient China, men dominated the family, held property, inheritance and surname rights, and enjoyed a near monopoly of commercial and educational resources. Women, on the other hand, were considered temporary by their families from birth, as eventually the entirety would be relegated to the property of their husband's family[3]. Women are usually considered unworthy or incapable of receiving an education. A woman's behavior had to follow the "three obediences": as an unmarried girl, she had to obey her father and brothers; as a married woman, she had to obey her husband; and as a widow, she had to obey her son. In summary, the gender difference between men and women in ancient China was so great that a woman was expected to treat the men she came into contact with the same way she treated her superiors, maintaining absolute meekness and patience in order to maintain social and family harmony.

During the May Fourth Movement, pioneering communist leaders put an end to long-standing polygamy and prostitution and promoted the freedom of marriage [3]. This is considered the first spark of feminist awakening in China, and educated women in the cities vigorously supported it, fighting for their own liberation in thought and life.

In the twenty years or so immediately following the founding of New China, people were motivated to fight for the progress of the country, and it was during this period that women joined the production. No longer confined to their traditional domestic roles, they began to make their own contributions to the country's economic development and to fight for the ideal of communism [4].

However, precisely because women's domestic work became collectivized during this period (collective nurseries, collective canteens, etc.) and took on an individual role in society, women were condemned to be irresponsible towards their families. And single women over the age of thirty were stigmatized as lesbians.

During the Cultural Revolution, "what men can do, women can do" became the main policy, and Chinese society was committed to the masculinization of women during this period. Affection for children and the pursuit of romance were despised, yet women were still expected to perform their functions as wives and mothers [3].

After Deng Xiaoping implemented his policies of modernization and market economy reform, ideally, women's status in the workplace and social environment should have been gradually elevated through policy changes: more job opportunities, higher wages, and more equal treatment, for example [3]. However, in the actual workplace, women continue to struggle. When companies make decisions to lay off employees, women are less able to protect their positions than men; when companies hire, women are less competitive in the marketplace than men. Anti-discrimination laws were issued at this time, and the situation for women was required to improve in the public domain, but in the real world depending on the individual employer.

In today's society, the problems women face still exist. Women in the workplace are expected to be treated the same as men in the workplace, and "independent womanhood" becomes a goal, but still needs to be adapted to the role of wife and mother. And because women are expected to be responsible for their families, they are often asked by employers during their working hours to ask about future marriage and childbirth plans. Women are perceived as troublesome employees, at risk of being distracted at work or even quitting at any time for the sake of their families, and this directly contributes to women's vulnerability in job search [3]. And the constant amendment in the maternity policy is also the state's validation of women's family identity, encouraging women to commit and dedicate to the role of motherhood. However, due to the opening of internet social platforms, women have more say in many social events and the rise of feminism has made women conscious to fight for getting the same job and promotion opportunities as men, subverting the traditional family roles and defining the new era of women [4].

2.2 The Evolution of Female Beauty Standards in Chinese history

In ancient China, aesthetic standards for women were harsh. The most notorious one was foot binding, in which adults were made to break the toes of girls at an early age and tightly wrap them in cloth to inhibit the growth of the girl's feet and achieve deformed, small-sized feet [5]. Such feet were the aesthetic standard of the time, born from the morbid pursuit of men.

During the Cultural Revolution, special requirements for women's appearance were embodied in the development of the new China: women had to wear clothes that did not reveal their curves, and were held to the male way of walking and behaving. Clothing was uniformly dark blue or olive green, and hair was uniformly not to extend beyond the ears [3]. A woman who had lived in the party committee sector during the Mao era began her quest to regain her youthful appearance in her fifties, as her generation of women was required to focus on building socialism and was asked in the collective to be oblivious to the purposefulness of appearance [6]. Her husband has had affairs with several much younger women, so she tries to keep him by reversing her appearance into old age. This is yet another manifestation of the male gaze on women's appearance: men pursue younger women, leaving women anxious about the marks that time, a factor beyond their control, leaves on their bodies.

In modern China, a "beauty economy" for women has developed, referring to everything from beauty pageants and modeling contests to advertising, cosmetics, plastic surgery, cosmetic and health services, and television and movies, all of which link women's beauty to the economy [6]. In traditional gender concepts, female beauty is used to attract men and reproduce; however, in today's society, women's quest for beauty standard is for the individual to follow trends and be praised, and society's artificial advancement for economic development. Women stuff themselves into specific frames to gain attention and validation. china has developed rapidly in recent decades and needs to

raise its status in the world economically, so society imposes normative aesthetic judgments and raises awareness of beauty and health to develop consumerism. And the emergence of Douyin has made the exertion of both pressures more efficient, ultimately leading to increasingly strict and restrictive shackles about the female body [7].

3. Research Methodology

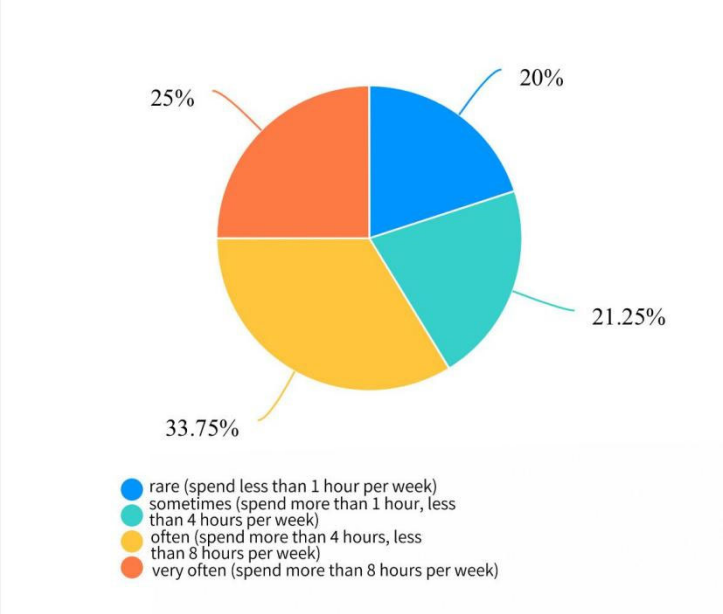
3.1 Questionnaire Survey

In order to explore the impact of Douyin on the new standard of female hair removal, the author published a questionnaire for women on the Chinese Internet, which included the frequency of seeing women being shamed by comments about their body hair, the frequency of seeing women advocating hair removal or promoting hair removal products, personal feelings after watching such content, and personal ratings of the topics discussed in the questionnaire.

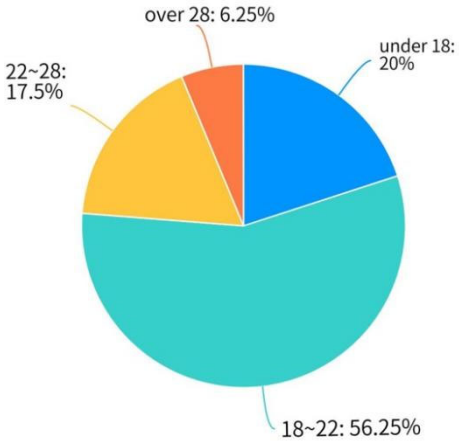
A total of eighty valid questionnaires were obtained and the graphs are presented below.

3.2 User Demographic

Question 1: How often do you use Douyin?



Question 2: How old are you?

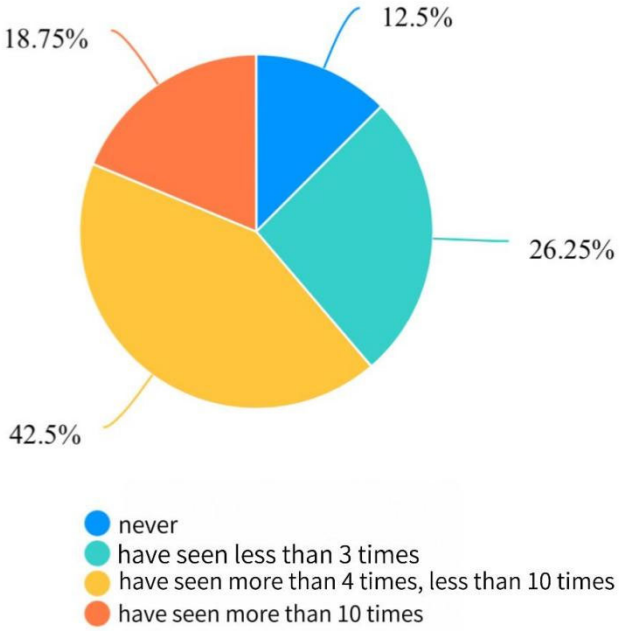


The above two charts show the frequency and age distribution of the questionnaire participants, which shows that the distribution of the questionnaire population is concentrated in the range of

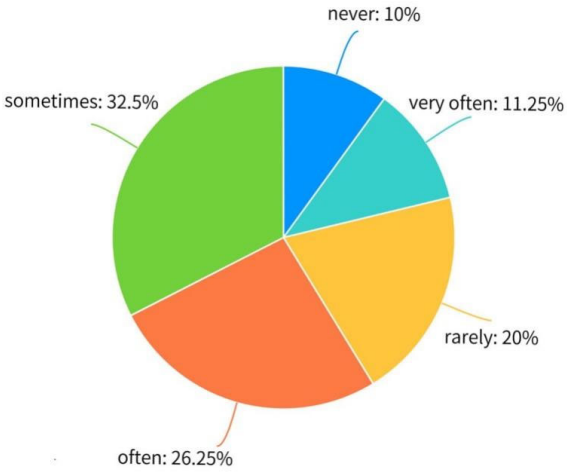
minors to 22-28 years old, with a total of 93.75%; in the frequency of using Douyin, the percentage of people who choose frequent and frequent reached 58.75%, which means that more than half of the questionnaire respondents use Douyin for more than four hours a week. This means that more than half of the respondents use Douyin for more than four hours a week. These two figures show that Douyin's female users are mainly from the younger generation, and they spend a considerable amount of time in their daily lives.

3.3 Related Content

Question 3: How often do you see content on your for you page about women's shaving/hair removal products promoting (encourage women to shave)?



Question 4: How often do you see comments in the comments section of videos featuring a woman who has exposed parts of her skin covered in body hair (such as her calves, armpits, etc.) that criticize her for not having this behavior?

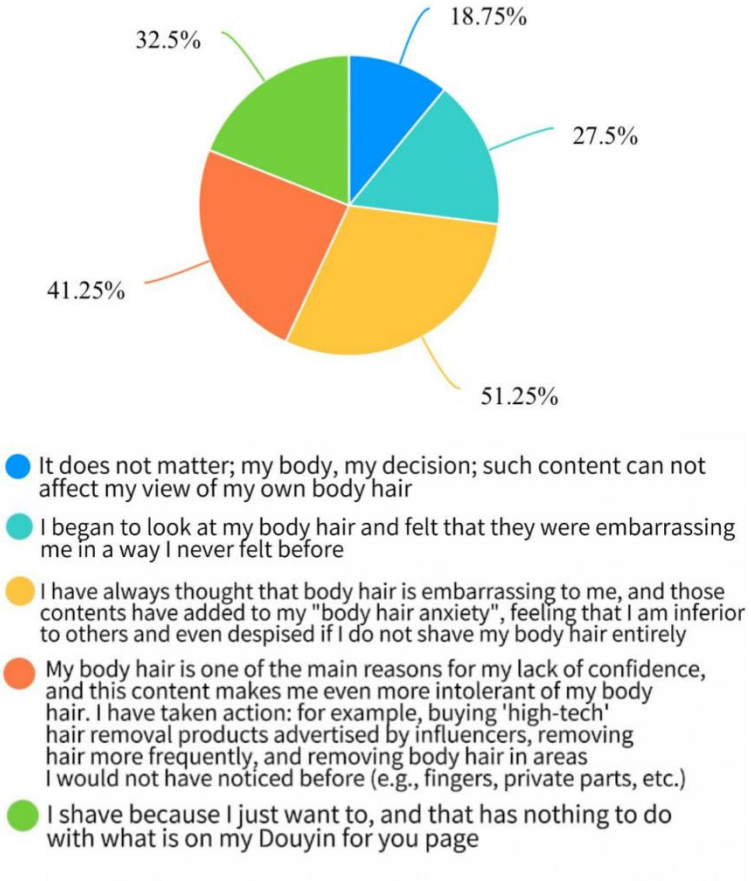


Both charts above show the frequency of Douyin's tweets to questionnaire users (young women) covering hair removal promotion. When asked how often they saw content directly promoting hair removal/selling hair removal products, 61.25% of users chose one of the options "seen more than four times, less than ten times" and "more than ten times". When a video showed a woman's bare skin covered in body hair, respondents were asked how often they saw comments criticizing women for

not removing their hair. 26.25% chose "often" and 11.25% chose "frequently. 26.25% chose "often" and 11.25% chose "often".

3.4 Individual Pressures

Question 5: Please check at least one description that you think best matches the personal influence of this type of content on you.



In the fifth question, users were asked to choose at least one option that they felt most closely matched their own feelings after viewing this type of content. 51.25% chose "I have always thought that body hair is embarrassing to me, and these contents have increased my 'body hair anxiety'; I am starting to feel that I am less than others if I do not remove my hair. 41.25% chose "My body hair is one of the main reasons for my lack of confidence, and this content makes me even more intolerant of my body hair. I have taken action: for example, buying 'high-tech' hair removal products advertised by bloggers, removing hair more frequently, and removing body hair in areas I would not have noticed before (e.g., fingers, private parts, etc.)." 27.5% chose "I have started to look at my body hair and feel that they are embarrassing to me in a way that I didn't before."

This result significantly indicates that for a large number of users, this cotent exerts varying degrees of pressure on them, regardless of their original state of mind prior to being exposed to video content promoting hair removal.

4. Summary

The Douyin format is extremely attractive to the younger generation, as is clearly evident from one or two points in the questionnaire. It occupies people's attention with its constant mobile short videos and pushes content about promoting hair removal to young women through personalized recommendations after big data analysis [1]. The status of Chinese women has changed over the

course of history, yet they have always existed as aesthetic objects, pursuing beauty under the pressure of long-standing gendering.

There are three main reasons why Douyin exerts so much "shaving pressure" on women, one is that netizens as opinion leaders initiate short videos on the topic of hair removal, and their fan base leads to a large number of users agreeing and even expanding the content, which is pushed to other user interfaces without interruption [8]. When a huge amount of homogeneous information comes, women are guided and implied by this network cluster and choose to weaken or even abandon the process of filtering information and self-thinking, and change their opinions and behaviors in order to be in line with the group. Second, when non-hairless women post video content, there are comments in the comments section that ridicule body hair. Users attribute the attacks on the creator to the presence of her body hair, and young women who also have body hair will self-substitute feelings of embarrassment and shame, and to avoid potential attacks, women will begin to remove their hair [9]. Thirdly, there is a huge industry behind hair removal: vendors of hair removal creams, razors, hair removal devices and other products hire influencer on Douyin to steer the trend and create anxiety among the target group (in this case, young women) in order to stimulate sales.

To alleviate this pathological pressure on women, Douyin officials should first realize the unhealthy nature of this type of content, stop relying so heavily on algorithmic pushing and throwing users under the bus, and start scrutinizing video content more strictly. Not only should the hair removal content discussed in this research be filtered out, but any other content that tries to lead public opinion while ignoring the social implications [8]. At the same time, female influencers themselves should be aware of the anxiety crisis facing the group they belong to and not succumb to advertising payoffs to promote unnecessary beauty anxiety [10]. Finally, not only that, departments within the government concerned with media work need to strengthen the supervision and management of mobile short video platforms through the rigid hand of rule of law when necessary, to make up for the lack of self-restraint of mobile short video enterprises.

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