

Explore the Interplay Between Social Media Marketing and Audience Reception for Female-Centric Asian Films

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Abstract: With the popularity of social media, the interplay between the marketing of female-centric Asian films on social media and audience acceptance becomes a topic worth exploring. This study aims to explore how the marketing strategies of female-centric Asian films on social media affect audience acceptance and analyze the mechanisms of interaction between the two, which adopts the method of literature analysis and empirical research. First of all, the relevant literature is combed and analyzed to understand the existing research results and theoretical framework. Secondly, through experimental design and data collection. In female-centric Asian film marketing posts, and how these factors affect audience acceptance. The study found that there are some high-frequency words in social media posts related to Asian films featuring women that could have a potential impact on addressing gender inequality. At the same time, different content types and phrasing influence audience preferences and behaviors, thus influencing their interactions on social media platforms. In addition, the study found that female-oriented films have had a significant impact on positive changes in society's perceptions of women, revealing and addressing several social issues and inequalities. This study on the social media marketing of female-centric Asian films has important implications for changing social perceptions, addressing gender inequality, and increasing the visibility and word-of-mouth of films.

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the boom in film and television productions centered on Asian feminism has been fueled by the pervasive influence of social media. After the severe impact of the epidemic on the traditional Asian film market, there is a clear recognition of the commercial potential of this genre. Filmmakers are increasingly using social media platforms as a key channel for film marketing, amplifying the pursuit of equality and freedom through the unique perspective of women, bringing these films and the social phenomena they reflect to wider attention (Venkat, 2016). Among the demographic factors, age was found to influence the effectiveness of social media reviews which included Facebook and Twitter. Additionally, it was found that age influences the effectiveness of IMDb and Book My Show reviews. These findings give critical insights to movie makers and production houses to

keep track of user-created social media content as these can influence the decisions of people in choosing whether to watch or skip a movie (Abdul, 2019). It uses observational and experimental data to test the influence of cast racial composition on consumers' perception, their willingness to spread word-of-mouth, and the film's performance. Therefore, it concludes that the evidence of persistent discrimination in Hollywood cannot be attributed to the preferences of consumers, but instead reflects bias among employers (Shrikant, 2020). Legislators were attempting to structure an immediate association with the potential voters on Facebook and Twitter by posting and tweeting normally, the dynamic clients then again started to captivate one another on the political front. Social networking was not just a path for our nets to have any kind of effect, however, it likewise allowed individuals to grasp one another's psyche set and impact sentiments by offering learning and spreading mindfulness on an

individual level. Indian legislators emulated the strides of Obama and carefully utilized the hashtag system on Twitter. Slanting hashtags like #electio2014, #namo, and #arvindkhejriwal made individuals mindful of the most recent race advancements (Alexandri et al, 2023). Based on the formulation of the problem, the writer determines as follows: "How is the construction of meaning in the short film entitled "Tilik" related to semiotic analysis". Then the problem posed can be concluded as follows: the film "Tilik" has a socio-cultural meaning and value construction that it can analyze further, such as in social reality and representations of Javanese women's behavior. From the scene and the storytelling, interpretation, and meaning can be obtained in the scene and the characteristics of the players.

2 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

In recent years, the vibrant growth of films and television productions centered around Asian feminism has been propelled by the pervasive influence of social media (Jin, 2020, Coulter, 2022).

This surge has ignited a heightened sense of solidarity among women, fostering the courage to re-evaluate personal values. In the aftermath of the pandemic's severe impact on the traditional Asian film market, there is a discerned recognition of the business potential within this genre (Bellini, 2021). Filmmakers are progressively embracing social media platforms as the pivotal channel for film marketing, amplifying the pursuit of equality and freedom through the unique lens of women.

However, the zeal for social media marketing has led to the emergence of polarised discourse and, regrettably, a dilution of the authentic essence behind these films. Presently, there remains an insufficient depth of research on the social media marketing strategies and societal impact of Asian feminist-themed films.

The text of social media marketing posts on female-centric Asian films will be observed and analyzed from multiple emotional dimensions, primarily targeting Mainland China, the regions of Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, as well as Japan and Korea. Simultaneously, the study will explore modern social marketing strategies and their potential impact on bringing about positive or negative changes in social inequality issues for female audiences from Mainland China and the regions of Hong Kong,

Macau, and Taiwan. Furthermore, the focus will extend to examining how the differences in regional culture between Mainland China and Hong Kong influence social movie marketing posts on Weibo and TikTok and their societal effectiveness, considering factors of conservatism or open-mindedness. The study aims to address three key questions:

Q1: To what extent can marketing texts on social media get recognition from female consumers and contribute to addressing gender inequality in society?

Q2: Does social media marketing for women-centric Asian films play a pivotal role in addressing societal inequality for women, and is this marketing effective in yielding tangible results?

Q3: When comparing the distinct regional cultures of mainland China and Hong Kong, how do these cultural differences influence social media strategies for promoting women-centric Asian films?

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Hypothesis

In response to the first key question of the inquiry, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1a: High-frequency Vocabulary Impact: This study aims to identify high-frequency vocabulary in social media posts related to women-centric Asian films on Weibo and TikTok, evaluating their potential impact on addressing gender inequality issues.

H1b: Emotional Intensity Analysis: The experiment involves multidimensional analysis of emotional intensity in marketing posts for women-centric films, aiming to reveal trends in negativity, neutrality, and positivity.

H1c: Audience Interaction Understanding: This research seeks to understand audience preferences and behaviors, especially how different content types and wording influence audience interaction on social media platforms.

In response to the second key question of inquiry, the following hypothesis is drawn.

H2a: Impact on Social Cognition: This study aims to discover the significant contributions of women-centric films to positive changes in societal perceptions of women, revealing their role in addressing and resolving social issues and inequalities.

H2b: Marketing Strategies: The study predicts effective marketing and monetization methods for films related to women's social issues, emphasizing the importance of unique narratives and positive

community interactions in enhancing visibility, reputation, and viewership rates.

In response to the third key question of the inquiry, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H3a: Celebrity Effects and Cultural Differences: This research highlights the influence of female film stars and directors on Weibo and TikTok, observing audience preferences and differences between mainland China and Hong Kong.

H3b: Mainland China and the Greater China Region exhibit a trend of less optimistic marketing effectiveness due to cultural openness and innovation deficiencies.

3.2 The Impact of Text Marketing

To explore Q1, the materials and tools used are as follows: This section utilizes Python for web scraping and quantitative sentiment analysis, focusing on posts related to Asian films with female-centric themes on Weibo and TikTok (Liang et al, 2023, Novak, 2022). The primary goal is to identify high-frequency vocabulary within these posts and evaluate whether they contribute significantly to potentially addressing long-standing gender inequality issues or exacerbate such societal phenomena. Additionally, this section examines the frequency of audience interaction under different post types to ascertain the level of platform marketing necessary to secure approval from female consumers and foster substantive behavioral changes in support of equal social rights.

This section presents a multidimensional analysis of the emotional intensity of the vocabulary used in marketing posts on Weibo and TikTok, featuring 20 female-centric films from mainland China and the regions of Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan. For each film, two posts from each platform will be collected. The author will conduct A/B testing: Group A will consist of 20 Weibo and 20 TikTok posts related to 10 mainland Chinese films, while Group B will include 20 Weibo and 20 TikTok posts for 10 films from Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan. Furthermore, this section will rank the emotional intensity of the selected vocabulary based on its usage frequency, and it will present trends in negativity, neutrality, and positivity in the form of bar charts.

A secondary survey involving 60 respondents will be conducted to understand their preferences for content types and to ascertain if these contents have substantively changed their attitudes and behaviors. This section will also observe the level of audience interaction, including likes, comments, and shares, under various post patterns, with a particular focus on the influence of different content wording types.

Regarding the impact of content wording on audience response, the research draws the following primary findings: The use of the term "women" in the promotion of female-centric films from mainland China on Weibo and TikTok generates more intense discussions and responses in the comment section. The most frequently used term in the marketing content of female-centric films from Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan is "movie," which is likely linked to regional cultural factors discussed in the third section. Marketing posts for female-centric films in Hong Kong on Weibo and TikTok tend to focus more on the "director" as a promotional highlight compared to mainland China.

3.3 Social Media Marketing Impact

This study aims to analyze the data to speculate on the answers to Question 2 and its related aspects.

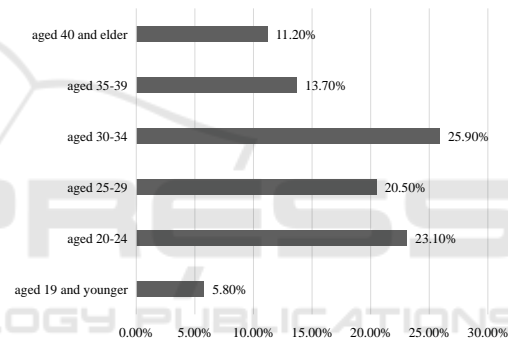


Figure 1. Audience age structure (Novak, 2022).

The required data for this study were obtained from Chinese film reports and surveys (Figure 1). According to recent surveys, audiences aged 20-34 make up approximately 70% of the total film viewership. Therefore, this study considers the opinions of this age group as general, representative, and typical. The questionnaire survey conducted for this study targeted film viewers aged 20-34, with 30 respondents from mainland China and 30 respondents from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, totaling 60 participants.

Since all 11 questions in the questionnaire survey were set as mandatory and consisted of multiple-choice questions, there is no need to eliminate blank data during data preprocessing. The collected data also does not have any redundancy issues and can be directly used to establish the database.

The results of these questions are as follows:

73% of people believe that film and television works play an important role in revealing and addressing women's social issues and inequality.

Twenty percent believe that film and television play a role in exposing and addressing social problems and inequalities for women.

Seven percent believe that films and television are not effective in exposing and addressing women's social problems and inequalities.

62% of respondents are very excited about films about women's social issues.

Thirty percent of respondents expect films about women's social issues.

Eight percent of respondents do not expect films about women's social issues.

Forty percent of respondents said they were disgusted by the use of women's social issues as a selling point on social media platforms, 47 percent supported it, 5 percent did not care about it, and 8 percent had their own opinions.

Among the 60 respondents, for the effective social media marketing means to attract the public to watch movies, 41 people chose to interact and discuss on Weibo, 30 people chose to publish short videos on Douyin, 25 people chose to publicize on wechat public accounts, and 2 people choose other methods.

When asked about the reasons for their decision to watch female-related movies, 55 respondents chose publicity on TikTok and Weibo, 22 chose publicity on wechat public accounts, 21 chose recommendations from friends, 8 chose posters, and 1 chose others.

Since all these questions are multiple-choice, this study used data visualization to transform the data from the database into charts to present the survey results. Additionally, pie charts and bar charts were utilized to highlight the key points and comparisons in the data analysis more clearly and swiftly.

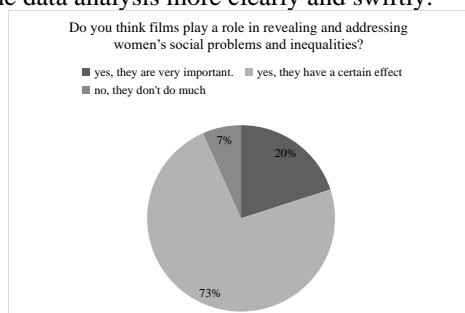


Figure 2. Intention distribution of questionnaire questions(a) (Picture credit: Original).

Caption of Figure 2. 93% of people think that films about women's social issues contribute to revealing and addressing social issues such as

inequality faced by women, and 20% choose the option that this type of film is very important, based on this, it can be inferred that most people believe that films related to women and women's social issues have played a certain role in revealing and addressing women's social issues and inequality.

After seeing the publicity, are you looking forward to seeing movies about women's social issues and inequality?

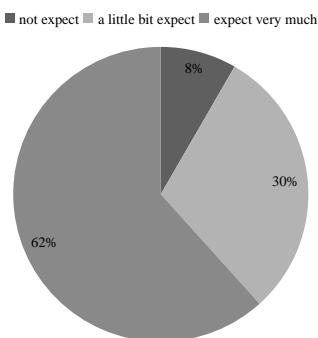


Figure 3. Intention distribution of questionnaire questions (b) (Photo/Picture credit: Original).

When seeing Chinese films promoting women's social issues as a selling point on social media platforms, your attitude is:

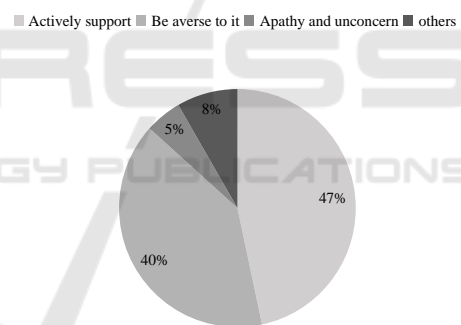


Figure 4. Intention distribution of questionnaire questions (c) (Photo/Picture credit: Original).

Caption of Figure 3 and Figure 4. Ninety-two percent of respondents expected films about women's social issues, but four in 10 were offended when film marketing used women's social issues as a selling point on social media platforms., based on this, it can be inferred that for films centered around women, publicity strategies that emphasize female protagonists and women's social issues can effectively attract public attention, raise expectations. However, excessive feminist marketing can also generate public antipathy and negatively impact reputation and public perception.

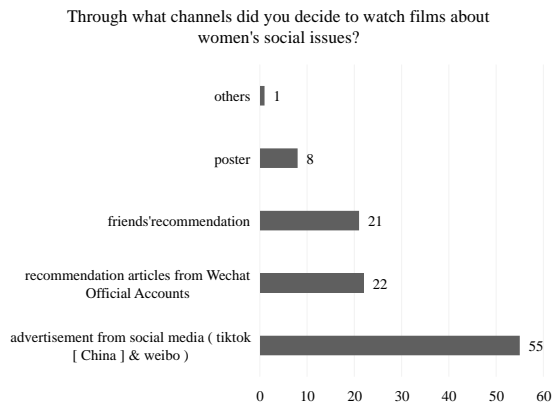


Figure 5. Intention distribution of questionnaire questions (d) (Photo/Picture credit: Original).

As shown in the figure 5. Respondents believe that marketing on the two platforms of Douyin and Weibo, such as interacting with users and releasing short videos related to movies, can effectively attract the public and improve the movie viewing rate, which is the most effective marketing method. However, about 30% of respondents still rely on the recommendation of friends to watch movies. Based on this, it can be inferred that film marketing utilizing social media platforms to invite users to participate in discussions and interact with users can effectively resonate with the audience, enhance the film's visibility, improve viewership rates and box office performance, and promote monetization. However, word-of-mouth recommendations remain one of the important factors driving people's film choices, so films need to pay attention to moderation and authenticity in marketing to maintain a good public reputation.

Comparing the findings from the data analysis with the hypotheses previously proposed in this study, it is discovered that in terms of their impact on social cognition, films centered around women have made certain contributions to positive changes in society's perception of women - revealing and addressing social issues and inequality, which is consistent with the hypotheses.

In terms of marketing strategies, when promoting films related to women's social issues on social media, active community interaction can resonate with the audience, enhance the film's visibility, improve viewership and box-office performance, and promote monetization. This aligns with the hypotheses. However, one aspect not considered in the hypotheses is that marketing and film reputation interact with each other. Appropriate and genuine marketing can effectively enhance reputation, but

excessive or false marketing will be detrimental to maintaining a film's reputation. Negative reputation lowers the effectiveness of subsequent social media marketing for films.

3.4 The Impression of Cultural Differences

This section will be divided into two parts to elaborate on Question 3. The study selects two representative films with female themes from the past two years for in-depth analysis, including "Lost in the Stars" from mainland China and "Little Blue" from Taiwan. Additionally, to further explore the influence of regional cultural differences on the effectiveness of social media marketing, this study collects 200 marketing posts related to the two films from the TikTok and Weibo platforms as analytical data. It includes post sources, types, word counts, platform user distribution, and others. Furthermore, feedback from 70 audiences in mainland China and Taiwan regarding the consumption of female-themed films was also collected.

Firstly, celebrity influence plays an irreplaceable role in the social media marketing communication of female-themed films in mainland China. Based on this preliminary conclusion, the data collection reveals that public figure accounts have become the most frequently used channel for marketing female-themed films on Weibo in mainland China, accounting for 32%. (View Figure 6) Similarly, on TikTok, 34% of marketing posts also come from public figure accounts. (View Figure 7) In contrast, advertisers and sponsors post the most marketing content for female-themed films in Taiwan on Weibo (30%) and TikTok (28%). (View Figures 8 and 9) It is related to the factors considered by audiences in different regions when selecting this type of film. According to Figure 10, 45% of mainland Chinese audiences pay more attention to the cast list of female-themed films because they believe that the lead actors have higher social influence and commercial value. On the contrary, 39% of Taiwanese audiences believe that the filming background of female film directors is a key factor in determining the quality of a female-themed film. (View Figure 11) Female directors may better understand the raw materials needed for female protagonists and may establish better connections with other female characters in leading roles (Karniouchina et al, 2023). Additionally, through the observation of analytical data, the study also finds that mainland Chinese film producers are more proficient in utilizing public figures' experiences of

inequality in daily life and intense behind-the-scenes footage to generate high exposure and discussion. Based on survey data, 65% of mainland Chinese audiences stated that the unequal experiences of public figures are more likely to pique their interest in learning about or consuming a film. However, 54% of Taiwanese audiences oppose using this "sympathy-selling" approach to boost box office revenue and believe that the director's authority is the key factor in determining box office results. Therefore, the greater the director's authority, the higher the total box office, highlighting the differences in consumer behavior of audiences in mainland China and Taiwan due to regional cultural differences in the soil (Fetscherin, 2010). Secondly, the cultural openness difference between mainland China and Taiwan is a crucial determinant in whether the social media marketing strategy of female-themed films can change the

regional social issues concerning women. The survey results show that 75% of mainland Chinese audiences believe that female-themed films play a very crucial role in alleviating social gender inequality issues and phenomena. The social public opinion generated by film marketing also becomes one of the main catalysts. In contrast, 68% of Taiwanese audiences still maintain the traditional view that deeply rooted female inequality issues are difficult to properly resolve in a short period. On the other hand, the paper surprisingly found that on Weibo, 60% of users participating in the marketing posts for mainland Chinese female films are women. Similarly, 75% of female users make significant contributions to the marketing of films on TikTok. However, in Taiwan, male users become the main group participating in the interactive marketing posts of such films.

Movie Marketing Sources on Weibo (Lost in the Stars)

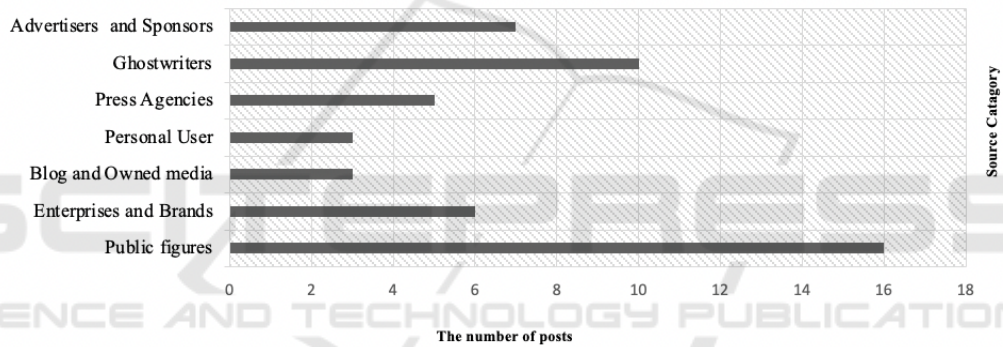


Figure 6. Movie Marketing Sources on Weibo – Lost in the Stars (Photo/Picture credit: Original).

Movie Marketing Sources on Tiktok (Lost in the Stars)

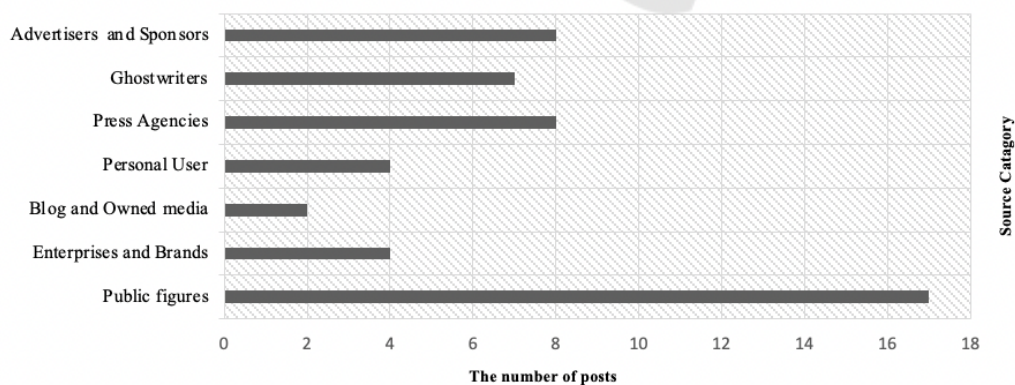


Figure 7. Movie Marketing Sources on TikTok – Lost in the Stars (Photo/Picture credit: Original).

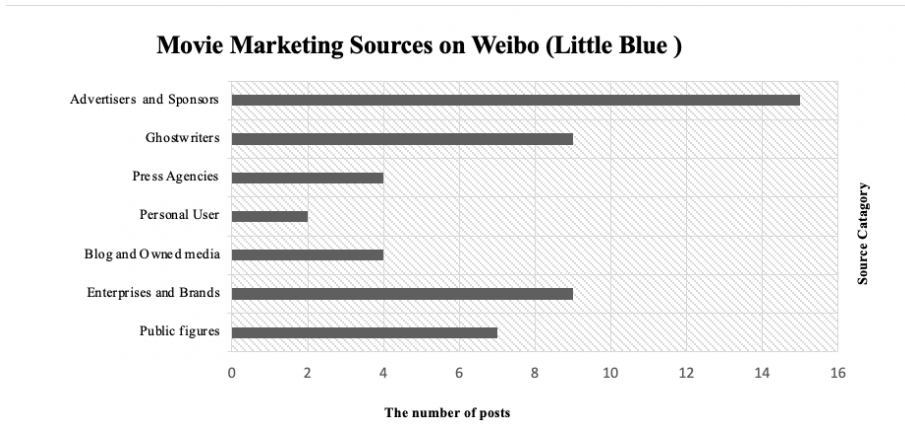


Figure 8. Movie Marketing Sources on Weibo – Little Blue (Photo/Picture credit: Original).

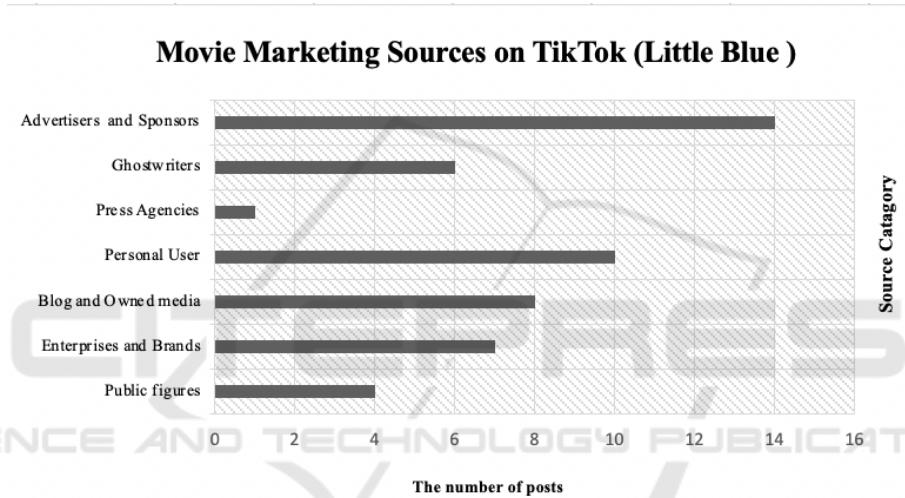


Figure 9. Movie Marketing Sources on Tiktok – Little Blue (Photo/Picture credit: Original)

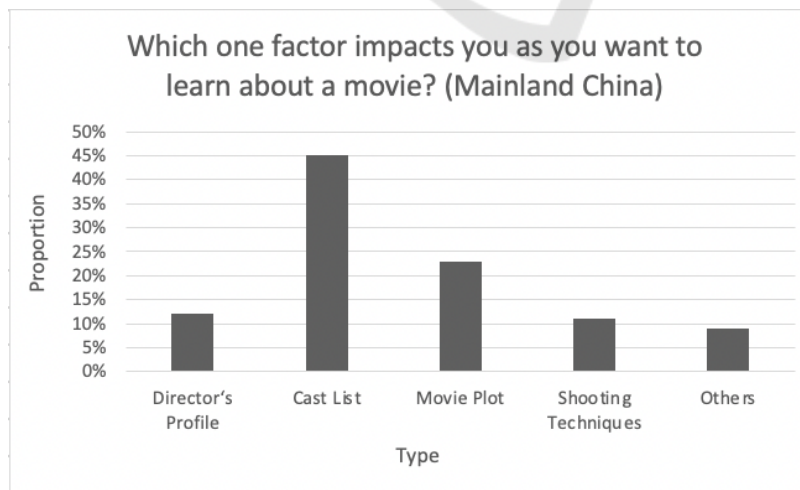


Figure 10. Key impact factors on Mainland China audiences (Photo/Picture credit: Original).

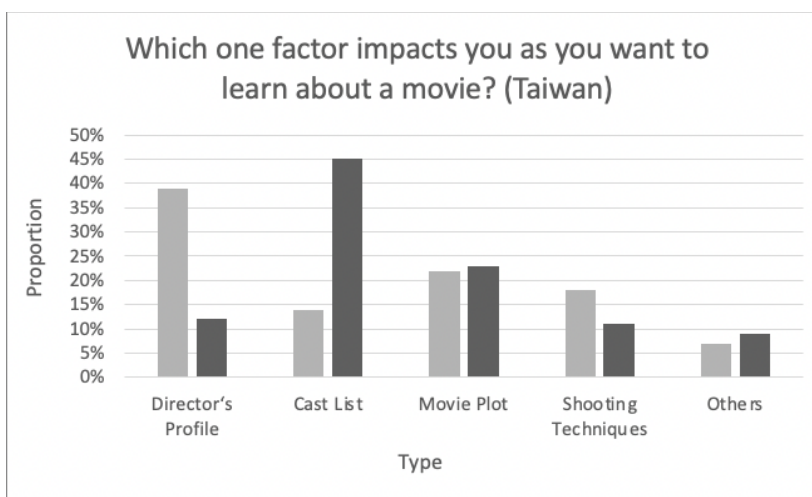


Figure 11. Key impact factors on Taiwan audiences (Photo/Picture credit: Original).

Furthermore, the paper also found that the most frequently focused social issue in mainland China in the past five years is employment inequality, while in Taiwan, the ongoing concerns are family violence and the social issue of favoring males over females. At the same time, the status of women in Taiwan is considered subordinate, as women must adhere to the "Three Obediences and Four Virtues." (Hsieh et al, 2009). In traditional Taiwanese society, domestic violence against wives is socially accepted (Heise et al, 1999). Therefore, the phenomenon of male dominance and female subordination in Taiwan is still a controversial public issue, which is not conducive to further expanding the marketing scope of female-themed films in the Taiwanese market to alleviate women's predicaments in society. In comparison, mainland Chinese audiences prioritize similar social issues more than those in Taiwan, and the social media marketing effectiveness of the former is more ideal.

4 DISCUSSION

Films related to feminism have instigated significant positive shifts in addressing social issues faced by women, drawing public attention to these concerns, and facilitating the disclosure and resolution of women's social problems and inequalities. However, when producing and marketing such films, particularly those adapted from real events or individuals, it is crucial to prioritize accuracy over sensationalism. Exaggerating facts or vilifying characters for the sake of publicity and trending topics is inappropriate. The narrative should

effectively advocate for women's causes rather than merely using feminist themes as a marketing strategy to boost box office numbers, especially when the film's content does not genuinely engage with women's issues. It's important to note that the data samples analyzed in this study, derived from questionnaires and China Film Daily, introduce some subjective limitations to the data analysis presented in this article. For instance, individuals' decisions to watch movies may be influenced by various factors, including ticket prices and interests.

The content is not professional enough, because it is an open we-media platform, everyone has freedom of speech and can express different opinions, and not all are professional film critics or film professionals. But it also maintained a different view of one thing. And then because of gender, there is a big subjective factor in it. Another limitation is our study. The data used is that there is no way to avoid the subjective emotions of the respondents. It is not only the film itself, but also his marketing decision may have the ticket price, the director, and the actor's love degree.

5 CONCLUSION

In summary, the purposeful study outlined several anticipated outcomes across three key research questions. The first set of objectives (Q1) involves identifying high-frequency vocabulary impact, analyzing emotional intensity in marketing posts, and understanding audience interaction on Weibo and TikTok related to Asian films with female-centric themes. The second set (Q2) anticipates findings related to the impact of female-oriented films on

societal perceptions as well as recommendations for effective promotional strategies. Lastly, the third set (Q3) focuses on the influence of female film stars and directors on social media platforms, exploring cultural differences and the impact of censorship regulations on marketing content. Collectively, these expected outcomes aim to provide comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of marketing Asian films with a female-centric theme, taking into account cultural nuances, audience engagement, and the broader implications for societal perceptions and gender equality. Ongoing experimental validation is expected to further refine and substantiate these anticipated findings.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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