

## The "Silver Wave" in Douyin: Media Practice and Self-Presentation of Chinese Retirees

Huanhuan Dou<sup>1</sup>, Dr Asif Mahbub Karim<sup>2</sup> and Dr Vijayer Raj<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PhD Researcher, Binary University of Management & Entrepreneurship, Malaysia,

<sup>2</sup>Professor & Dean, Binary Graduate School, Binary University of Management & Entrepreneurship, Malaysia and <sup>3</sup>Lecturer, Binary University of Management & Entrepreneurship, Malaysia

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i11/15649> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i11/15649

**Published Date:** 11 November 2022

### Abstract

Douyin, a new and easy-to-use medium, is deeply addicted by the elderly. Through participatory observation and in-depth interviews, this study examines the daily practice of Douyin among Chinese retirees and explores the characteristics and motivations of retirees' self-presentation. The study found that: Retirees use account profiles, video posting, and comment interaction to present themselves and adopt strategies to shape their images. Their primary motivation for self-presentation is to maintain acquaintances. Douyin relieves from lack of social participation and enhances their social connections, significantly improving their sense of well-being.

**Keywords:** Douyin, Retiree Douyin Blogger, Media Practice, Self-Presentation, Acquaintances Socializing

### Introduction

The "video society" has quietly arrived. The scale of video platforms and mobile short video platforms is vast, and video has been integrated into people's daily lives. In early studies of mobile video, O'Hara et al (2007) found that it was time-consuming for users to search for different content, and some long-running episodes also affected the viewing experience. This discovery shed light on future mobile video development. Douyin was known as a video-focused social networking service that was launched in 2016 by ByteDance in China. Then TikTok (Douyin's international version) appeared in the media application store in 2019 and attracted millions of users (Omar and Dequan, 2020; Kaye et al., 2021). The number of short video users has reached 934 million in China (CNNIC, 2022), while nearly 680 million users are active on the Douyin platform (liMedia, 2022). Douyin's popularity is due to a variety of reasons. On the one hand, Douyin allows users to create videos using unique add-ons, stickers, visual effects, and animations (Kaye et al., 2021). This UGC model (User-Generated-Content) has mobilized users' enthusiasm for participation and expanded the scope of creative content.

Moreover, it blurs boundaries between producers and consumers, which plays an active role in constructing the users' identity like other SNS (social networking sites). Zhang and Wang (2019) pointed out that it is a self-presentation. On the other hand, Douyin improves the efficiency of obtaining information. The player time of the Douyin video is about 15 seconds to 1 minute, which means low-cost production and low time-consuming to users. Furthermore, the user interface of Douyin is accustomed to users' habits by sliding up and down (Bhandari and Bimo, 2020). The most important reason is that Douyin relies upon algorithms production and distribution to satisfy users' immersive experience (Liang, 2022, Bhandari and Bimo, 2022).

An interesting phenomenon is that elderly users have received attention from Douyin. Since 2020, Douyin has focused on penetrating users over the age of 45 by launching the "Silver Shine Plan." It undertook public welfare training to teach older adults to consume and produce short videos on Douyin (Xinhua, 2021). These incentives are successful, and older users have created about 600 million videos until April 2021 (CCTV, 2021).

The new media represented by Douyin is reshaping human behavior and changing the way of thinking. However, the study on the impact of media on human behavior mostly takes young people as the research object, and the communication practice of the elderly group has long been on the margins (Yuqiong and Fen, 2021). Moreover, the communication image of the elderly group created by traditional media is always stereotyped (Ding, 2012). Recently, Douyin provided a stage for the elderly to "self-presentation," so what are the characteristics of the media practice among elderly adults? How do they present themselves through impression management strategy? What is the motivation for self-presentation? These questions are of great theoretical research value. Some scholars have conducted a field survey in villages in North China and found that the short video practice of rural elderly adults is a dynamic new way of life (He and Dong, 2021). However, how elderly adults manage their image and the motivation for self-presentation still needs to be explored. This study focuses on the urban retirees through observation and in-depth interviews, examining their daily practice on Douyin and then exploring the motivation of the elderly to present themselves, which can expand the current research knowledge of aging communication.

### **Literature Review**

Goffman first proposed self-presentation in his masterpiece, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. He studied social interaction from the perspective of theatrical performance, explaining that everyone plays a specific role in public, and Goffman refers to each person's "play" as self-presentation (Goffman, 2002). Moreover, this process of guiding and controlling the presentation of a particular impression in the minds of others by trying to adjust role-play according to different scenarios is self-presentation, sometimes called impression management, which can be detected from the clues of verbal and nonverbal symbols (Goffman, 2002). Jones et al. expanded on the importance of intrinsic psychological factors that Goffman ignored in symbolic social interactions (Jones and Jones, 1964). Though some scholars broaden impression management from self-presentation (Schneider, 1981), most researchers confirmed that self-presentation and impression management are interchangeable concepts (Leary and Kowalski, 1990).

Undergrounded by the development of radio, television, and other electronic media, Joshua Meyrowitz put forward the general principle of the relationship between media, scenes, and behaviors based on the Theory of Goffman and McLuhan. He pointed out that the public and the private scene are integrated into the shared information system provided by electronic

media, which changes the performers' self-presentation (Meyrowitz, 1986). Until now, short videos are revolutionary forms of information media, creating a visual ecology that gives birth to a new interaction mechanism between users and media. Bhandari and Bimo (2020) pointed out that TikTok has created a new social networking model, the "algorithmized self." Some scholars believe that the short video platform represented by Douyin is a theater that assembles fragmented real life, imitating modern life and fictional storyline (Chen and Hu, 2020). Such scenes provide users with a more decadent imagination space, the elderly adults are also deeply involved, and the self-presentation of the elderly in the network environment has gradually become a new topic for scholars. According to the CNNIC49 report, as of December 2021, the scale of elderly netizens aged 60 and above in China reached 119 million, the Internet penetration rate reached 43.2%, and the application of video (including short video) was liked by 84.8% of elderly netizens (CNNIC, 2022).

At present, silver-haired Internet celebrities in China are building a unique discourse strategy through the head net red accounts and actively shaping the image of elderly adults (Wang, 2022; Ren, 2022). Furthermore, the self-presentation of the silver-haired Internet celebrities also enhances mutual cognition and communication between generations (Wu and Jiang, 2021). Some scholars found that the ordinary elderly users in short videos and silver-haired Internet celebrities consistently attribute self-presentation, and both have the psychological appeal of pursuing youth and self-appreciation (Wenjing, 2021; Islam et al., 2019). The short video platform provides a way of social entertainment and a new place for the elderly to live physically and mentally. Meanwhile, elderly adult users gradually rejuvenate their psychological state and enhance their sense of self-identity by showing various "physical technologies" (Feng, 2020). After examining the daily practice of short video Apps in middle-aged and elderly users, Jin et al (2021) believed that they enhance the social participation ability of the elderly.

In summary, the research focusing on aging communication has gradually attracted attention with the broad vision of technology and humanistic interaction. Although some scholars have researched silver-haired Internet celebrities, most of the elderly who are "invisible" in the new media should be deserved more comprehensive and lasting attention, especially with a rapidly ageing population (Wu and Jiang, 2021). Some scholars have discussed the daily practice among rural older adults (He and Dong, 2021); meanwhile, the media practice and self-presentation of urban retirees are also worth studying. Therefore, this study will answer the following research questions: RQ1: What is the specific representation of daily practice in urban retirees? RQ2: What kind of group image characteristics do urban retirees present on the Douyin platform? RQ3: What is the motivation of urban retirees to idealize their self-presentation? In order to provide a reference value for promoting the digital integration of the elderly in the Chinese aging society.

## **Research Methods**

### **Study Design**

In this ethnography research, the researchers became insiders among the older adult community in Douyin. We applied participatory observation and in-depth interview methods to obtain data. The participatory observation took six months, from January to June 2022. Therefore, 26 Douyin accounts were selected (Table 1) through purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (a) accounter belongs to a retiree user aged 60 and older. (b) the accounter should be active every day, and finally, we selected a most liked video from each account and collected 26 videos totally from 2222 videos.

Table 1

*Basic information of participatory observed accounts*

Username	Gender	Age	Follers	Following	Number of videos (2022.1.1~2022.6.1)	likes
岁月蔓延	Female	75	6511	1w	923	20.4w
昆仑草	Female	65	1170	2045	211	6204
明月踏清风	Female	65	3669	1437	122	2w
鹰豪	Male	70	2565	1323	1099	3.8w
木鱼石传说	Male	65	61	440	1	24
高山流水	Male	60	2092	3102	215	4.9w
春晖	Male	69	284	414	247	8268
建辉	Male	61	2867	5886	99	2.3w
淡淡的春	Female	64	162	217	28	462
白沙	Male	64	289	247	108	3213
腊梅	Female	71	2912	1936	1434	27.5w
荣	Female	65	1021	1498	284	1.3w
guirong	Female	66	229	274	83	3038
虎哥	Male	60	1827	2615	62	2.1w
年年好心情	Female	67	1691	2652	244	3.5w
惠惠	Female	62	804	712	77	8591
英姿	Female	63	548	161	2132	6.7w
倒数第一	Female	63	345	779	60	2625
高原红	Female	64	828	2181	218	7966
给我一个微笑	Female	67	1033	582	696	2.3w
米粒粒	Female	65	61	89	37	353
彭英财	Male	65	367	968	46	2190
凌雲	Female	75	1032	2099	477	1.3w
彦姐	Female	64	2335	3229	365	5.0w
紫丁香	Female	65	2264	1572	4209	17.2w
佟哥	Male	64	509	345	397	1.6w

In-depth interviews were also conducted to collect data about the motivation of the self-presentation of older adults. A short statement introducing the study's purpose was provided before the interview. The informants were announced and allowed to stop anytime if needed. Thus, 13 informants were recruited by snowball sampling, comprising four men and nine women aged 60 years and older, with the oldest informant aged 75 (table 2). All interviews were carried on by voice call on the Douyin and recorded. The in-depth interviews were informal, and the open discussion was centered on the meaning and importance of Douyin in their daily life and their strategies to post videos reflecting on the motivation and their self-presentation.

Table 2

*Respondent's Basic Information*

Interview code	Gender	Age	Education	Whether living with children
F01-XCY	Female	65	Middle school	NO
F02-NN	Female	67	Middle school	NO
M01-GSLS	Male	67	Middle school	NO
M02-MYS	Male	65	Middle school	YES
M03-PYC	Male	65	Elementary	NO
M04-CH	Male	69	Middle school	NO
F03-ZDX	Female	65	High school	NO
F04-R	Female	65	High school	NO
F05-LY	Female	75	College degree	NO
F06-GR	Female	66	Middle school	YES
F07-YZ	Female	63	Middle school	NO
F08-DDDC	Female	64	High school	NO
F09-WX	Female	67	Middle school	NO

**Data Analysis**

According to the platform characteristics of Douyin, a self-presentation evaluation system is constructed from the two dimensions of "basic personal information" and "short videos"(Wang and Wu, 2022). Based on Merowitz's theory, the study believes that the account comment is also essential for self-presentation. Therefore, the study takes "comment interaction" to "basic personal information" and "short videos " as three primary forms of self-presentation on Douyin. Thus, the text message includes username and self-introduction; Image information includes profile pictures, photos, and emojis. Video information evaluates the number of people in the video, the shooting scene, the audio and video special effects, and the video captions.

To ensure the anonymity of each participant, the study assigned each interview a number. In addition, the interviews were recorded and transcribed, and researchers read and noted to comprehend deeply. Then, the data were coded following Strauss and Corbin's techniques and procedures(Corbin and Strauss, 2014). Moreover, the coding categories were validated by three experts.

**Results****Self-presentation in the profile: Sharing happiness, authenticity, and accessibility****Profile photo: living closely with nature and embracing Society**

Of the 26 accounts, two accounts do not have profile photos; ten accounts do not have self-introduction. Therefore, a total of 24 profile photos and 16 pieces of self-introduction.

The study found that: (1) 50% of profile photos are mainly candid photos taken on outdoor tours or indoor playground scenes. The photos show that retirees love traveling. They are living close to nature and embracing Society; (2) 12% of profile photos are artistic, sending young and beautiful images; (3) 38% of profile photos show no one but plants, animals, and buildings, which shows the Douyin blogger's inherent interests and hobbies. In particular, it is worth mentioning that one Douyin blogger designed a logo based on his username to decorate his profile page.

**Username: a simple and approachable living symbol**

A username is an identity symbol in the virtual world that promotes interpersonal interaction. It is also a meaningful code for Douyin bloggers to present themselves in a virtual network. Most of the usernames have simple meanings, such as "the spread of time," lofty mountains and flowing water," "give me a smile," and so on (Table 2). These usernames result from the Douyin blogger's selection carefully. "Our life is bumpy, but I think the grass that grows on Kunlun Mountain is so tenacious, and we must be as tenacious as it is. So, 'Kunlun Grass' is my username." (F01-XCY); "The username is my ideal, I want to be in a good mood every year" (F02-NN). Besides, usernames are also derived from the Douyin blogger's real name or nicknames in real life, such as "Brother Tong," "Brother Tiger," "Hui Hui," and so on. It is worth mentioning that other age group bloggers often take English letters or Emojis in their usernames, whereas only one person adopts Bopomofo, and the other 25 usernames are named in the way of pure Chinese characters.

Table 3

*Naming of username*

	Naming rules	Numer	Percent
Username	Real name	2	7.69%
	Nickname in real life	11	42.31%
	Virtual name in Douyin	13	50%
Total		26	100%

***Self-introduction: self -confirmation of honesty and outgoing***

The profile photo is a visual image of the identity, while the self-introduction in the Douyin provides us with language clues that can be disassembled into the searchable self-presentation, such as age, gender, and education. The study found that most Douyin bloggers' profiles are mainly basic personal information such as age, address, mood, and education. For example, the Douyin blogger "明月踏清风" introduced herself: "Hello friends! I am from Xining City, Qinghai, I like to share happiness with everyone on this platform every day, and I love to sing lip-sync. I am 65 years old, and my zodiac is chicken"; The Douyin blogger "春晖" conveys his mood in this way: "spending the rest of life happily and I want to be happy every day."

Interestingly, some Douyin bloggers are conscious of paying attention to interacting with followers in their profiles. As the Douyin blogger "紫丁香" said, "I am Lilac, I hope that friends from all over the world will like me and encourage me heavily"; Douyin Blogger "腊梅" not only expresses her gratitude to the fans but also frankly shares her principle of interaction, "thank you for your attention. If you give me a like and I will return in seconds." These seemingly honest self-introductions are unintentional "intentional" strategies for impression management. Several Douyin bloggers bluntly told the researcher that they would beautify their introductions, "I am 65 years old, but I introduced 54 years old" (F01-XCY). "Who does not like to be young, and I think no one care whether it is true." (F06-GR). Shirley Turkel(2014) pointed out that we appear as authentic images on Facebook, but in reality, we tend to glorify ourselves in the introduction as someone else—the person we want to be.

The other 10 participants do not write any self-introductions. These Douyin bloggers may be because they are not proficient enough in Douyin, which can draw from other bloggers' profiles with mispronounced characters, punctuation misuses, and incomplete expressions.

**Self-presentation in the video: positive, young, and fashionable**

Twenty-six accounters posted an average of 85 videos from January to June 2022, while Douyinblogger "紫丁香" shared a total of 449 videos admitting that "I will die lonely without Douyin" (F03-ZDX); this feeling has also been certified by many other bloggers, "I cannot live without Douyin, because my daily life is boring." (F05-LY). This study selected 26 videos with the highest number of likes in each participant account for analysis.

The study found that these videos show the following characteristics: first, the scenes in the short videos of the retirees playing outdoors or having dinner with friends. The characters in the videos are optimistic and passionate, showing a personality of embracing nature. Second, most retirees shoot videos like "shooting the same style" and "mouth to mouth," which are the popular editing template of Douyin. Only a few bloggers use the Capcup App to edit videos; Third, the male Douyin bloggers and the female bloggers have a different sense of lens. The male bloggers act as bystanders to observe the world in their videos. Therefore, their videos conclude with flowers, birds, and friends. However, female bloggers stand in the object position to show their bodies. They usually adopt many filter stickers and beautify special effects in their videos. "I love filters because they bring me back to my youth" (F06-GR). Douyin also pushes retirees to manage their physical images. "To share a beautiful video, I always put on makeup, change several outfits, and perform many times in front of the camera" (F04-R). Douyin is convenient for them to present their ideal body; Fourth, they rarely share videos about their offspring. They have a clear boundary with the younger generation, "I use Douyin to record my life, and I can watch it in my later life. " (F09-WX). In addition, they distrust the social relations network on Douyin, "What should I do if bad guys kidnap my grandson because of exposure? " (F01-XCY)

Table 4

*Short video item analysis*

Items		Number	Percent
Number of persons in the video	Single	14	53.85%
	Double	4	15.38%
	Multiplayer	8	30.77%
Shooting sense	Indoor	10	38.46%
	Outdoor	16	61.54%
Whether or not audio and video special effects	Yes	22	84.62%
	No	4	15.38%
Whether or not it has a caption	Yes	19	73.08%
	No	5	19.23%

The study analyzed these videos in four items, as Table 4 shown. There are four findings. (1) The characters presented in the short videos are mainly selfies, followed by friends. Besides, the videos usually are static picture exhibitions with two people to express their intimate relationship. (2) The shooting scenes are mainly tourist attractions, city squares, and parks, and very few videos expose personal houses. (3) Though most videos have special effects with relatively clumsy editing skills, they do not have a clear "frontstage" and "backstage" boundary. Instead, the videos have a sense of uncontrolled realism, which express a positive sense of integration into the virtual world. (4) Most videos are released with captions to express their feelings, such as "I hope we will be together for a lifetime and wishing lovers in the world who will eventually become dependents." After analyzing 19 video captions, it was

found that the retirees usually added # topic into their captions to express their feelings and gratitude to fans, "# good morning, my friends # Sing, whenever you want to sing #Thank those who silently give me likes # Shake up and have fun # Happy every day and love yourself." An interesting phenomenon is that a blogger also used the social marketing tool, Dou+, to gain more browsing numbers. "I wish my video to be hottest. Then I can do a live broadcast on Douyin." (M01-GSLS). Some people deliberately do not write the caption, " Not writing a caption can arouse the curiosity of fans so that they will leave a message under the video. " (M04-CH)

### **Self-presentation in the comment: courtesy and humility**

The video's number of views, likes, and comments can be quantified, indicating whether it is the ideal self-presentation. Of which "comments" are more complex in operation than "likes," so they can better highlight the quality of interaction between Douyin bloggers and users. The comment area connects the "frontstage" of the performance in video and the "backstage" of the bloggers' real life, which meets the user's social interaction needs and provides the adjustment basis for the impression management of the bloggers.

Douyin bloggers respond to user comments promptly, and the reply is often a reproduction of user comments. If the user is accustomed to commenting with multiple identical Emojis, the bloggers use Emojis to reply; Users take text comments, and the bloggers also comment with text. This behavior reveals the interactive principle of interpersonal relations." Replying to the users have to do because of the tradition of etiquette." (M01-GSLS) "I am afraid that if I do not reply, they will not comment again, and it seems disrespectful." (F03-ZDX).

The study also found that users and bloggers like to use the words "beautiful relatives," "beautiful sisters," "beautiful sisters," "beautiful women," "handsome friends," "handsome brothers," "handsome relatives," and "beautiful," "lovely" etc., Interestingly, these words rarely appear in the context of the young generation. The phenomenon may reveal that although the elderly entered the digital world late, it also has a chance to develop a language system belonging to the elderly bloggers. In addition, The comments of female and male bloggers are subtly different, as figure 1 shows. Male Douyin bloggers do not interact as frequently and timely as female bloggers. Regarding interactive content, male Douyin bloggers are more restrained in their wording than female Douyin bloggers.



## Self-presentation motivation of retirees on Douyin



Figure1: Differences in the comment section for male and female Douyin bloggers

**The self-presentation motivation of retired Douyin bloggers****Maintaining acquaintance socialization: the primary motivation of retiree Douyin bloggers**

The primary motivation for the self-presentation of retirees Douyin bloggers is the maintenance of acquaintance social interaction. The Research found that their social network follows the Pattern of Difference Sequence. The Douyin bloggers divide social relationships into acquaintances, general, and stranger relationships. Most informants said that they played Douyin because their friends logged in. "I still have to play with them daily, and I do not want to be out" (F01-XCY). Besides, they also need to withstand peer pressure from Douyin. Douyin is famous for its algorithm technology, which can track the bloggers' real social networks and distribute their videos among acquaintances. "I sent likes to my familiar friends once I saw their videos." (F09-WX ; M03-PYC ; F05-LY) Some interviewees also said they were forced by peer pressure and could not balance it well. " If I interact with one of my friends frequently on Douyin, the other will be jealous." (M04-CH) "some Friends even asked me face to face why I did not give her short videos likes, which always make me embarrassing." (F07-YZ) Therefore, the retiree Douyin bloggers often adjust their image management strategy to meet social expectations and maintain acquaintances' relationships. "I used to post a short video of myself singing every day, but since my mother died, I did not post a video in three months. Because I realized that if I shared videos, as usual, my friends would look down upon me for breaking the traditional Xiao Tao." (F06-GR)

The Douyin bloggers are not motivated to develop stranger relationships even though their videos attract many strangers. " It takes much energy to make a new friend. we do not like younger need to make new friends because we are old." (F05-LY) They do not interact with strangers actively, and they ignore strangers' private messages. " Strangers who want to communicate with me in private chat box makes me uncomfortable. I just reply to strangers in the comment section for being polite." (M04-CH) " Douyin is virtual, and I do not trust strangers." (F04-R) Although they do not actively interact with strangers, they still browse strangers' profiles and videos.

**Self-expression: The secondary motivation of retiree Douyin bloggers**

The retiree Douyin bloggers are full of gratitude for Douyin. "I felt my friends forgot me, but now I feel like people remind me again through watching my short videos." (F06-GR). Besides, Douyin not only provides a space for self-expression and self-entertainment but also takes the ideal presentation of the retiree as a reality. "To post beauty videos, we become energetic, active, and pay more attention to dressing and making up." (F07-YZ) For most elderly people, Douyin is also a way to collect their memory, "I am too old to remember some experience. Now, Douyin reminds me of many details when I traveled with my friend." (F01-XCY)

Douyin's algorithm mechanism and social design empower the elderly to express themselves and make the lives of retiree bloggers more fulfilling. On the one hand, the quantitative likes and comments have brought positive feedback to them. "I am proud of myself when people compliment on my videos." (M04-CH); On the other hand, the beauty filters of Douyin create a beauty fantasy. "After posting my short video, I will watch it again and again. I enjoy myself in the video which looks young and beautiful." (F07-YZ) Once the beauty filter becomes the new social rule everyone follows, it has a "real" effect.

**Entertainment: The individual psychological needs of the retiree Douyin bloggers**

Douyin satisfies the retiree Douyin bloggers' psychological needs to entertain themselves and enhance their sense of happiness. This study found that the individual psychological needs of the retirees for entertainment are different. The retiree Douyin bloggers pay more attention to the following six main categories of bloggers: (1) Talent display, such as singing and dancing; (2) tourist scenery, such as natural scenery and humanistic architecture; (3) news and information; (4) Emotional mediation (5) Life skills: such as cooking; (6) Selected film and television drama.

The individual psychological needs of the retiree bloggers are different, mainly due to personal interests, physical skills, and real-life needs. Furthermore, Douyin amplifies the difference in depth. "I used to love singing and dancing. Since the vocal cords were broken, I can not sing again. Thanks to Douyin, I can do lip-synced videos." (F06-GR) At the same time, Douyin makes up for the regret of the elderly's physical absence. "I love to travel, but I'm too weak to travel. I enjoyed short travel videos on Douyin which looks like I went there." (F06-GR) "Douyin gave me much yearning" (F08-DDDC).

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The qualitative study describes the daily life Douyin practice and self-presentation characteristics of retirees based on Goffman's self-presentation theory. Moreover, the study explores the motivation of self-presentation of retiree Douyin bloggers. The ideal image characteristics of the retiree Douyin bloggers are: optimistic, fashionable, willing to share, friendly, and humble. Additionally, Maintaining acquaintance relationships, self-expression, and entertainment are the primary motivations for the self-presentation of retiree Douyin bloggers.

The social exposure of the elderly group is insufficient, and they can only accept the fabrication of their image by other groups (Ren, 2022; Islam, 2021). However, this study found that retiree Douyin bloggers actively present their image, show self-confidence, and do not care about negative comments. Previous studies have shown that older people deliberately show grumpiness and even foul language in response to stereotypes (Ng and Indran, 2022).

The female Douyin bloggers in this study are keen to use a variety of beauty filters to present a youthful and fashionable personal image, but this may reinforce the idea, as Jin et al (2021) said, there is a particular physical ideal body image to which individuals ought to conform. Scherr and Wang (2021) found that novelty is the most relevant motive for using TikTok among all users. However, the study is inconsistent with this point. The study revealed that the retiree Douyin bloggers' primary need is maintaining the acquaintance relationship. It reminds scholars to consider age an essential factor when studying social media research. Findings from this study present several implications for future research. In China, the retired with educated live more affluently than other older adults. Although more older adults have adopted Douyin since the pandemic, they are only a tiny part of the large user base. When studying the diffusion of Douyin in older adults, demographic factors such as education and socioeconomic status need to be considered.

As growing older, people's social networks become smaller. However, ICT offers a bright future for older adults to develop and enhance social connections (Fingerman et al., 2020). The study found that older adults were inspired by their friends to log in and adopt Douyin. This is consistent with the study of (Cotten et al., 2016). They learned that older adults enjoy learning from peers with similar shared experiences.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

Some limitations should be informed. First, our study is to explore the retiree Douyin bloggers' features and motivation for self-presentation. The participants are from China. Thus, the findings of this study might not be generalized to other countries, nor can it fully explain the differences in other elderly users in China. Future studies could explore the differences in self-presentation between different countries or age groups in detail. Second, we found that male and female bloggers prefer to create different short videos, but we did not probe why. Omar and Dequan (2020) said that the intention to create content might be personality traits affecting users' intention to create content. Therefore, scholars could explore the factors influencing content creation for Douyin bloggers. Third, While retiree Douyin bloggers have a large online following, this study did not explore followers' demographics or audience acceptance of their short videos. It is meaningful for future research to compare and analyze older and younger followers' differences. It also can conduct audience research to explore the audience's consumption of elderly blogger videos. These studies will enrich the aging communication on the topic of social media.

### **References**

- Bhandari, A., & Bimo, S. (2020). TikTok and the "algorithmized self": A new model of online interaction. *AoIR Selected Papers of Internet Research*, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.5210/spir.v2020i0.11172>
- Bhandari, A., & Bimo, S. (2022). Why's Everyone on TikTok Now? The Algorithmized Self and the Future of Self-Making on Social Media. *Social Media+ Society*, 8(1), 20563051221086241.
- Cctv. (2021). *Short Video Users Reach 888 Million, Silver-Haired People Over 60 Contribute "New Traffic"*. Retrieved from: <https://jingji.Cctv.Com/2021/08/27/Artiska5vlef2ednlzpxiqik210827.Shtml>
- Chen, Q., & Hu, Y. (2020). Users' Self-Awareness In Tiktok's Viewing Context. *Journalism Research*, 79-96.

- Cnnic. (2022). *The 49th "Statistical Report On Internet Development In China"*. Retrieved from: <https://www.tellerreport.com/news/2022-02-25-cnnic-released-the-49th-%22statistical-report-on-internet-development-in-china%22.H1bzEuzLxq.html>
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2014). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Sage publications.
- Cotten, S. R., Yost, E. A., Berkowsky, R. W., Winstead, V., & Anderson, W. A. (2016). *Designing technology training for older adults in continuing care retirement communities*. CRC Press.
- Ding, Z. (2012). Media Literacy Education for The Elderly In The New Media Environment. *Journalism Bimonthly*, 116-121.
- Feng, Z. (2020). Body Consumption and Its Diversified Presentation—Taking Douyin And Kuaishou Short Videos As Examples. *Journal of Southwest University for Nationalities (Humanities And Social Sciences Edition)*, 41, 156-161.
- Fingerman, K. L., Birditt, K. S., & Umberson, D. J. (2020, September). *Use of technologies for social connectedness and well-being and as a tool for research data collection in older adults*. In *Mobile technology for adaptive aging: Proceedings of a workshop* (pp. 67-84). National Academies Press.
- Goffman, E. (2002). The presentation of self in everyday life. 1959. *Garden City, NY*, 259.
- He, Z., & Dong, H. (2021). Short Video's Popularity In The Countryside And The reconstruction Of The Elderly's Daily Life: A Field Investigation Of A Village In North China. *Journalism & Communication Review*.
- limedia, R. (2022). *Douyin Aims To Reach 680 Million Daily Active Users This Year* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.limedia.cn/C1020/78071.html>
- Islam, M. T. (2021). Applications of Social Media in the Tourism Industry: A Review. *SEISENSE Journal of Management*, 4(1), 59-68.
- Islam, M. T., & Aswajit, B. O. R. O. (2019). Tourism Marketing via Social Media in India: The Most Effective Marketing Strategy to Evolve Indian Tourism. *Journal of Tourism Intelligence and Smartness*, 2(1), 39-46.
- Jones, R. G., & Jones, E. E. (1964). Optimum conformity as an ingratiation tactic. *Journal of Personality*. 32(3), 436–458. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1964.tb01351.x>
- Kaye, D. B. V., Chen, X., & Zeng, J. (2021). The co-evolution of two Chinese mobile short video apps: Parallel platformization of Douyin and TikTok. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 9(2), 229-253.
- Leary, M. R., & Kowalski, R. M. (1990). Impression management: A literature review and two-component model. *Psychological bulletin*, 107(1), 34.
- Liang, M. (2022). The end of social media? How data attraction model in the algorithmic media reshapes the attention economy. *Media, Culture & Society*, 01634437221077168.
- Meyrowitz, J. (1986). *No sense of place: The impact of electronic media on social behavior*. Oxford University Press.
- Ng, R., & Indran, N. (2022). Not Too Old for TikTok: How Older Adults are Reframing Aging. *The Gerontologist*. 62 (8), 1207–1216.
- O'Hara, K., Mitchell, A. S., & Vorbau, A. (2007, April). Consuming video on mobile devices. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems* (pp. 857-866).
- Omar, B., & Dequan, W. (2020). *Watch, share or create: The influence of personality traits and user motivation on TikTok mobile video usage*. Retrieved from: <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/216454/>.

- Ren, S. (2022). Self-Presentation Of Middle-Aged And Elderly Groups On Short Video Platforms Taking "Silver-Haired Internet Celebrities" As An Example. *New Media Research*.
- Scherr, S., & Wang, K. (2021). Explaining the success of social media with gratification niches: Motivations behind daytime, nighttime, and active use of TikTok in China. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 124, 106893.
- Schneider, D. J. (1981). Toward A Broader Conception. *Impression Management Theory And Social Psychological Research*, 23.
- Wang, C., & Wu, K. (2022). The Self-Presentation Characteristics Of Japanese Adolescents On Short Video And Analysis Of Cultural Factors: Taking Japanese Version Tik Tok As A Case. *Journalism & Communication Review*.
- Wang, Y. (2022). *Exploring the Popular Password of Douyin Silver-Haired Net Red Based On Grounded Theory*. Audience's Attention, Emotion and Recognition. *New Media Research*.
- Wu, W., & Jiang, Y. (2021). The Internet Practice And Subject Pursuit Of Silver-Haired Internet Celebrities——Based On The Research On The "Old Up" Group In Video Social Scenarios. *News And Writing*.
- Xinhua, F. (2021). *Report On The Use Of Short Videos For Middle-Aged And Elderly People Released, Using Douyin As A New Form Of Social Participation For The Elderly*.
- Yongai, J., Wenli, L., Menghan, Z., Donghui, W., & Wenbo, H. (2021). Short Video APP Use and the Life of Mid-age and Older Adults: An Exploratory Study Based on a Social Survey. *Population Research*, 45(3), 31.
- Yuqiong, Z., & Fen, X. (2021). From Ageing to Aging: A Mainstream Imagination in The Field Of Marginal Research. *News and Writing*.
- Zhang, H., & Wang, Y. (2019). Douyin Users' Identity Alienation and Production and Dissemination Differences. *Youth Journalist*, 12-13.