Perception and consumption of tourism products in the age of the wanghong economy

an explorative qualitative study

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Abstract

With the development of the Internet and technology, various social media have appeared in our daily life, which allows all kinds of information to be spread wider and faster than before. Compared to the past, the way how people gather information has changed as people mainly receive information from social media now. The post-90s generation has also grown up during the development of social media platforms. They are regarded as the first generation of the Internet in China and became the main consuming force. Their purchasing power also shows in the tourism field. Therefore, all the contexts mentioned above have formed the characteristics of the post-90s generation, which are relatively different from previous generations. Furthermore, these characteristics also affect their perception of various products as well as their consuming behavior, especially in relation to wanghong.

Wanghong refers to online celebrities who gained popularity from the internet are also taking advantage of social media to advertise products. Wanghong has been confirmed as having a strong impact on consumers' consumption of daily commodities. My research was conducted to find out how the post-90s generation reacts to the tourism products advertised by wanghong, and, to what extent, wanghong's opinions could affect the post-90s' perceptions and consumptions of tourism products. To do so, I first examined the literature about the wanghong economy and the main characteristics of the post-90s generation in China, looked at the relationship between social media and consumption in China, and presented theories about tourism experience in the era of social media. To collect my data, I used semi-structured interviews and 10 respondents joined my research. I then used thematic analysis to organize and interpret my data. The results show that wanghong's influences are different in affecting the post-90s' perception and consumption of daily commodities and tourism products. Besides wanghong's opinions, their consumption of tourism products is also influenced by spare time and financial power. Meanwhile, some of this generation's characteristics also play an important role in affecting their consuming decision-making.

Keywords: social media, wanghong, post-90s generation, tourism consumption

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1. Introduction

Currently, in China, it seems that Internet celebrities have become more famous than those movie stars and singers who are regarded as celebrities in the traditional sense. In the past, movie stars and famous singers were usually invited to join in the opening ceremonies of business events, which could help attract more attention to the activities and the relevant companies. However, nowadays, they are not the only choice anymore. Companies and manufacturers turn to cooperate with Internet celebrities or those who are regarded as having certain influence online to promote their products and activities. It can even be seen on the news that Internet celebrities were invited by those movie stars and famous singers to their newly open restaurants to help advertise. According to CBN Data, Weiya, a well-known Internet celebrity in China, gained gross sales of 140 million euros by selling products through live streaming during the biggest Online Shopping Festival on Nov.11, 2020 (C. Zhang[1] & Gu, 2020). The products sold by Internet celebrities include clothes, cosmetics, food, daily necessities, digital products and so forth. Various companies and manufacturers have gained considerable benefits by cooperating with Internet celebrities and started investing more and more money in cooperation (Yang, 2020). In China, those Internet celebrities are called *wanghong*, which means Internet fame in the Chinese language. The Wanghong economy is the digital economy based on marketing those Internet celebrities' influence and it is flourishing (Tenba Group, 2020).

However, the influence of wanghong not only exists in leading the trend of consuming daily products but also has expanded to the tourism field. As everybody knows, due to the outbreak of Covid-19, the tourism industry was blown to a standstill. Various tourism-related organizations and companies have been suffering from great losses. But it is surprising that tourism in China is reviving thanks to the wanghong economy. On April 15, 2020, Liang Jianzhang, the CEO of Ctrip which is one of the famous online travel agencies in China, cooperated with two wanghong in selling tourism products through live streaming. During

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[1] According to the APA reference system for Chinese names, the first letter of the author's first name is also added to avoid homonymy.

that period, 2.89 million people had watched the live streaming, and 2.75 million euros of sales had been reached (Cao, 2020).

Moreover, in November of 2020, a boy called Ding Zhen became the new craze sweeping the Internet because of a 10-second short video on Tiktok, which made him become a new wanghong. This short video was taken by accident by a photographer when Ding Zhen was on his way to buy instant noddle (Xin, 2020). Ding Zhen is from an ethnic minority group and lives in the countryside. The boy, who has facial features not typical of the average Chinese person, has become famous because of his exotic and beautiful face (Sohu News, 2020). Besides this, thanks to his growing popularity, a lot of tourism attention has been brought to his hometown, and the relevant searches of his city had jumped by 620% in one week (Chen, 2020). Moreover, due to the popularity of Ding Zhen, his hometown Li Tang town became the most popular attraction in Sichuan Province in the past holiday of May 1st. The number of touristic transactions nearly doubled compared with the same period in 2020 and more than tripled compared with the same period in 2019 (He, 2021).

In tourism studies, there is a growing interest in tourism dynamics, production and consumption processes that involve new tourism markets such as India or China. However, many aspects of these new markets are still underexplored. In this thesis, I analyze why and how the influence of wanghong has become so strong, and how do people perceive the things related to or recommended by wanghong? Moreover, as mentioned that wanghong has become very active in promoting daily commodities online, whether this kind of influence affects tourists' consumption of tourism products. However, due to the time limitation, this thesis will only focus on the group of so-called 'post-90s generation' because they are often referred to as the main force of tourism consumption in China (Sohu, 2020). For these reasons, my research question was formulated as follows:

In the age of the wanghong economy, how does the Chinese post-90s generation perceive and consume tourism products advertised by wanghong?

From the academic perspective, this thesis wants to contribute to the studies on the influence of wanghong and social media in the field of tourism. Moreover, the findings may also give a contribution to practitioners, as its sample group, the Chinese post-90s generation, has not yet been studied in relation to perception and consuming behavior in the age of the Internet, yet it constitutes the most prominent slice of the Chinese tourism pie. Moreover, from the practitioners' perspective, it can provide a frame of reference for tourism-related

organizations and companies in Europe to carry out relevant marketing strategies, which might help them attract more Chinese tourists after the pandemic.

In order to answer my research question, I would like to conduct my research building on the main research question as well as the sub-questions formulated below:

1. What role does the post-90s generation peculiar situation -that of having been born in an age of fast globalization and technologization- play in perceiving and consuming the products introduced by wanghong?

2. How do the post-90s tourists perceive the tourism product wanghong introduced?

3. How is tourism-related product placement affecting the post-90s' consumption of wanghong products?

4. What kind of role do social media platforms play in affecting the Chinese post-90s generations in perceiving and consuming tourism products?

This thesis will first look into the previous literature related to the post-90s generations, wanghong, social media as well as tourism, according to which the relevant theoretical concepts will be provided. Previous studies help set the groundwork for the analysis as well as the discussion and conclusion part. Then the methodology section will follow, which explains what kinds of methods were chosen to conduct the research and analyze the data collected. The main findings will be presented in the results section. Lastly, the discussion part will offer an analysis of the data collected, and, in light of the literature, present the answers to the research question. Moreover, relevant implications, limitations and recommendations will be also outlined for further research.

2. Theoretical framework

As mentioned in the introduction wanghong have a strong influence in affecting peoples' consuming behaviors, especially in the current market that there are too many products to choose from. Wanghong's recommendations influence the choices consumers make, which leads to the phenomenon of the wanghong economy. However, the post-90s generation does not always perceive the information released by wanghong in a positive way. Because the generation of people born after 1990 grew up in a complex situation, in China, their relationship with social media, and wanghong in particular, is equally complex. In the era of social media, tourists prefer to gather tourism information mostly on social media (Wu, 2020), which owns more credibility in their opinion (Murphy, Moscardo, & Benckendorff, 2007), and the information released on social media have been confirmed as having a strong influence in affecting tourists' consumption of tourism products as well as choosing tourist destinations (Leung, Law, van Hoof, & Buhalis, 2013).

2.1. The wanghong economy and the post-90s generation in China

Nowadays, as everyone has equal access to social media and has the freedom to exchange information, in theory, each individual has the possibility to become a wanghong. Compared to traditional celebrities who have gained attention and popularity mostly through Tv and movies, wanghong are those who gain popularity through the Internet (Sun &Wang, 2019). With the development of the Internet and the continuous improvement of social networking processes and platforms, followers, celebrities, businesses, and media have formed wider connections and a more complex interactive relationship (Cai, 2015). In this complex and fragmented environment, wanghong provide various information on commodities, which turns out to have the potential influence on consumers' decision to buy certain products (Gao, 2015). Zhai (2020) also stressed that consumers start paying attention to wanghong and buying products recommended by them because of their popularity. In his opinion, the more popular the wanghong are, the more wealth can be generated.

Wanghong gather their popularity on social media by presenting their talents and then turn their followers into purchasing power (Wei, 2016). Consumers will show their love for wanghong through consuming the products they offer, and, in a way, turn their emotions such as admiration and devotion into commodities (W. Li & Lv, 2014). Moreover, Zhai (2020) also pointed out that, with the improvement of income and quality of life, consumers' requirements

for all aspects of products are also gradually including concerns towards safety, practicality, environmental protection and beauty. Meanwhile, products have become numerous and complex. Because they have their disposal at a wide variety of commodities, sometimes it is difficult for consumers to choose the product they need. Under this circumstance, personality belief will reveal its value that the consumers would like to purchase the products advertised by the wanghong they like. Compared to the properties of the product itself, consumers prefer to follow the recommendation and advice from wanghong (Zhai, 2020). This business revenue-generating behavior, which is based on the relationship between followers and wanghong, can be defined as 'wanghong economy', and it mainly happens on e-commerce platforms and social media (Wei, 2016).

According to Wang (2016), when netizens experience products recommended by wanghong, they do not feel that they are consuming and are completely immersed in the enjoyment of consuming such products. There is no doubt that wanghong has a strong power in promoting commodities and generating revenue, which has a positive impact on economic growth. However, Lu and Zhang (2020) noted that the cost for wanghong to promote commodities is low but the benefits return is relatively high, which induces some wanghong to sell fake and poor quality products. This has a negative impact on the overall credibility of the wanghong economy.

The main driving force of the wanghong economy is the group of people defined as the "post-90s generation" that includes all those born from January 1, 1990, to December 31, 1999, which accounts for about 11.7% of China's total population (Gao, 2015). According to a report published by Jingdong Big Data Research Institute (2020), over 300 million people were born in the 1990s, and they will gradually become the main force in various fields. This report also shows that the post-90s generation is fond of consumption and has become the mainstay of consumption at present. Moreover, they not only purchase for themselves but also for their family. The post-90s generation's consumption power can not be underestimated (Jingdong Big Data Research Institute, 2020).

In Chinese society, the post-90s generation has been labeled and discussed a lot. Compared to the previous generations, the post-90s generation was born under the One-child Policy, which was introduced by the Chinese government to limit population growth in 1979 (Cameron, Erkal, Gangadharan, & Meng, 2013, p. 953). Moreover, during the formative years of the post-90 generation, China has been going through great changes as well, especially the

development of technology. The growth of the post-90s generation is accompanied by the rapid development of the Internet. They have been affected by the Internet in many aspects such as life, travel, entertainment, social contact and consumption. The post-90s generation has been surrounded by various electronic products that have been updated at a very fast speed and new things from various fields almost occur every single day, like new designed electronic products, new applications, new social media platforms and so forth. Because of this, the post-90s generation is labeled as 'the first generation of the Internet' (Y. Zhang, 2020).

Compared to that previous generations, the post-90s had access to social media at a very young age and they could surf the Internet to check information instead of reading newspapers and TV news receiving information passively. The development of smartphones provides them the possibility to check information at any time. Indeed, they have a different way to receive information and perceive the world (Jingdong Big Data Research Institute, 2020). In terms of the Internet and online information, the role of social media can not be ignored. As is known to all, social media have been widely used around the world. It has been revealed that the top 4 of the most popular Apps globally were all social media, including Tiktok ranked in the first place, followed by Whatsapp, Facebook and Instagram (Businessofapps, 2021). There is no surprise that the situation is similar in China, the social media applications WeChat and QQ ranked TOP2 on the app download list, Tiktok and another short-video platform are both on TOP 10 (Wangyi, 2020). It also should be pointed out that, compared to previous generations receiving information through traditional media like books, TV, magazines, etc., the post-90s generations mainly gather information through social media (Li, 2020). However, due to the different national situations, there is a different context of social media in China.

2.2. China, social media and consumption

In the past, in the age of traditional media, the Chinese public could not participate in the production of media content and was in a state of metaphorical "aphasia" because they can not express their opinions freely and there was even no channel for the public to speak out. The media were state-owned or state-controlled (Guo, 2021). However, nowadays, social media allows people to exchange views, opinions, insights and comments with each other freely (Fu et al., 2021). Even though compared to the past, the Chinese public has more

chance to express their points of view, the Chinese government has still been playing an important role in controlling the affairs around social media. In China, there are more than 800 million Internet users. However, most of them have never used western social media. Due to the riots in Xinjiang in July 2009, Facebook has been blocked in mainland China since then. The Chinese government believes that the separatists use Facebook to communicate and it has become a tool for fomenting separatism (Allen, 2016). Even though China has not opened the door to all kinds of social media around the world, this political situation leads to the rapid development of Chinese social media within China. It is obvious that social media have a strong influence and this kind of influence can not be ignored. As Li mentioned above that the post-90s generations mainly gather information through social media (2020).

It has been defined that, by providing people with a scale of group size and degrees of privacy, social media has colonized the space between traditional broadcast and private dyadic communication (Miller et al., 2016). It seems that social media has brought much more convenience for people to gather information. However, Liang (2021) has critical opinions on social media. He pointed out that social media has fostered a habit of fragmented reading, which might be negative and in turn lead to the result that people might have less patience in looking for information and consuming information that is not bite-sized. Moreover, social media might also make people have a superficial understanding of information that is often complex overall. Liang (2021) pointed out that social media diminish our capacity of following articulate readings so that reflection and critical understandings are rarely carried out. It is also remarked that social media has a huge audience base and all users are from different backgrounds, which leads to a large number of fake information, which in turn might affect people's perceptions of certain affairs (Liang, 2021).

2.2.1. Social media marketing and consumption

While discussing the wanghong economy, online shopping can not be ignored. As one of the most important novelties in 21 century, online shopping has been playing a significant role in people's daily life, which has changed most people's consumption habits. In China, people are getting used to purchasing items online. How to advertise commodities on social media and encourage consumers to purchase online has become more and more important for many producers and companies. As Zhao noted (2014), besides the information sharing and communicating function, social media platforms have also added payments, finance and other

functions, which significantly leads the users to spend much more time on social media. In the age of the Internet, social media are easier to be accessed, not only for the public but also for companies and organizations. Social media is no longer a place for people to exchange information but also has a strong power in marketing. In other words, with the advent of social media, the communication of business-to-business, business-to-customer and customer-to-customer has changed a lot (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

Besides the people's perceptions of certain affairs being influenced by social media as mentioned above (Liang, 2021), some of their behaviors have been affected or even formed by the new technologies, especially the Internet and social media. According to the 2019 Analysis Report of Wanghong Economy, 70% of consumers have been in some capacity influenced by social media (Sinolink Securities, 2019). Other findings also show that the information on social media has an influence in making purchase decisions by some consumers, the ratio of which is around one-third of the consumers (iProspect, 2007). Safko pointed out that (2012), compared to conventional marketing, social media is more effective. Because consumers do not trust the corporate commercials anymore, but prefer the information from people they know, especially the product reviews. Cao (2011) also stressed that the biggest power of social media is the power of word-of-mouth communication. In addition, various market researches show that individual comments and opinions on social media have a strong influence on purchasing products and consumers' perceptions of quality (Leung et al., 2013).

According to Tuten (2020), due to the access to people and the functionality, social media are a valuable context for marketing. In her opinion, social media provide participation for all parties, which is a new but very useful way and very different from the traditional one-way communication of marketing: pushing the message to the target group. In this traditional way, there are few interactions between the organization and the customers. However, social media provide a place for them to communicate and enhance the interaction between them. Feedback could reach the organization's side much easier as well as the implementation of the after-sale service. Operating a good corporate reputation through social media will bring immeasurable benefits to the company.

2.2.2. Wanghong and consumption

Various social media platforms available in China have provided the stage for wanghong, like Taobao, Tiktok, Kuaishou, Little Red Book and so forth. These platforms allow wanghong to present products in text and image, short videos as well as through live streaming (Zhai, 2020). Moreover, in terms of interaction, some wanghong prefer to host various activities online, like lucky draw and gift-giving activities, which can help enhance the relationship between wanghong and their followers. It has become more and more common that wanghong recommend commodities through live streaming. During the live streaming, not only wanghong can introduce the products in all aspects, but the audience can also interact with wanghong by asking questions about the products while watching. If audiences are satisfied with the products recommended, they can easily click the purchase link presented in the live streaming other than moving to another e-commerce application (Zhai, 2020). Moreover, the background music of short videos and live streaming also play an important role in affecting consumers. Bright rhythm, smooth and light background music can channel consumer psychology, make consumers happy, reduce mental concerns. With the light and smooth background music, it becomes more relaxed and easier for wanghong to introduce products and it also makes wanghong more charming (Zhai, 2020).

Besides the support of the social media platforms, wanghong themselves also have a strong influence on people's consumption. Firstly, most wanghong are good-looking and the clothes they wear as well as their makeup are neat and pretty, which makes the audiences feel good and comfortable at the first sight and creates a need to imitate their style and appearance by buying the products they use (Zhai, 2020). It should be emphasized that appearance has a direct impact on consumers' first impression of wanghong, and this first impression does have a certain impact on later purchase desire (Zhai, 2020). Secondly, personalized ways of speaking and acting are very important and necessary in attracting audiences' attention, which helps leave a deep impression on the audiences and allows them to recognize the wanghong from others. To some extent, repetitive phrases that wanghong talk usually as well as their exaggerated movements, such as waving, shaking, pushing, pulling and touching, can also increase consumers' interest and purchase desire (Zhai, 2020).

Moreover, the professional knowledge of wanghong is as important as the points mentioned above. A high level of professional knowledge means the high quality of the content they present, which not only increases the followers' stickiness but also decides how

long they could be popular. It should be pointed out that if the wanghong do not have enough professional knowledge but recommend the product by praising the products only, there is a big possibility that the audiences would not buy what they recommend due to reverse psychology (Zhai, 2020). The professional image contributes a lot to the credibility that can be perceived by the followers.

The post 90s generation is very active on social media and has become the main force of consumption. Moreover, the post-90s generation also has their own characteristics in their buying behavior. Peng and Wu (2020) found out that the post-90s have less restraint in consumption. Impulse spending and random spending usually happen. They also like to imitate the way others consume (Peng and Wu, 2020). Hou (2019) also pointed out that the post-90s have recognized that they also want to join in the group commonality. This consciousness always reflects on the conformity consumption, which could help them find the group belonging, meet the social needs, or integrate themselves into a new group conveniently.

2.3. Tourism experience in the era of social media

In the past, tourists received tourism information mainly through TV, magazines, books, newspapers or brochures from travel agencies. While convenient, it lacked the possibility for tourists to obtain accurate and personalized information for their own needs (Tang, 2013). However, with the development of the Internet, the way people gather tourism information has changed. More and more tourists obtain travel information through the Internet in the process of travel decision-making. The selection of tourism products and services and the planning of tourism routes are often made according to the information gathered from the Internet (Wu, 2020). Consumers prefer to interact with other people on social media to gather tourism information during different stages of travel planning (Minazzi, 2014). Moreover, each scenic spot can publish beautiful pictures of the scenic spot and share them with netizens, so that tourists can grasp more first-hand information on food, housing, transportation, travel, shopping, entertainment, etc. All the information has greatly improved the tourist experience of tourists (Tang, 2013).

As mentioned before that social media is no longer a place to gather and exchange information, it has already been integrated into economic life. There is also a lot of commerce going on on social media. People can buy stuff there and wanghong are taking advantage of

social media to advertise various commodities. Besides the daily products being brought to social media, people can also see the presence of tourism products there. It has been proven that marketing tourism products on social media are an excellent strategy and social media in tourism is still in the process of growing (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Moreover, besides bringing more attention to and positive impact on tourism by social media, the comments and reviews been written about the tourism industry and business on social media also bring negative effect on tourism, especially those bad and negative ones, which seems losing control (Dwivedi, Shibu, & Venkatesh, 2007). It has been also emphasized that social media should be managed properly, otherwise negative consequences would appear. Thus, it can be seen that there is a lot of room to learn how to use social media properly to promote tourism (Thevenot, 2007).

Furthermore, social media have a growing impact on travel and hospitality, which could not be ignored or simplified (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Additionally, by taking advantage of social media, hotels and tourism-related organizations should pay attention to monitoring, response as well as interaction with the audiences (Grant-Braham, 2007). Moreover, social media are being used to provide audience tourist information and promote tourist destinations and services, which has enriched tourist experiences (Thevenot, 2007).

Tourism information from the traditional media was provided to the public in general, tourists could not find out the information that they wanted exactly from them, but on social media, they can find such information (Tang, 2014).) It is possible for individual tourists to gather customized tourism information from social media, which could meet the tourists' personal needs and preferences (Thevenot, 2007). Moreover, besides promoting tourism by providing more customized information, it was emphasized that the interactions between the users and customers play a very important role in promoting tourism products. This kind of way could not only shorten the value chain but also in reverse generate sales and enhance customers' loyalty (Thevenot, 2007).

2.4. Tourism perceptions and consumption behavior

Compared to other products, tourism products are lack of direct experience due to the reason that the relevant hospitality products and benefits of tourism can only be evaluated after being consumed and experienced (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Meanwhile, the prices of tourism products are relatively high. In order to reduce the risk of choosing the wrong

tourism products, tourists prefer to gather various tourism information including comments and reviews before making the travel decision (Jeng & Fesenmaier, 2002). In terms of tourism information gathering, word-of-mouth seems to be one of the predominant ways of gathering information, due to its high perceived credibility (Murphy et al., 2007).

Compared to the advertisements published by the tourist destinations and travel agencies, tourists have more trust in the relevant tourism information and comments presented by their peers (Leung et al., 2013). In the current era, social media has the biggest power of word-of-mouth communication (Cao, 2011), and allows people not only to read the reviews of friends from their social circle but also from strangers online. Study shows that nearly 84% of tourists admitted that the reviews have a crucial impact on their purchase decisions (Leung et al., 2013). Moreover, according to the World Travel Market 2011 Industry Report, people who choose their hotels on the basis of social media account for more than one-third of all leisure travelers in the United Kingdom (Koumelis, 2011).

The way that tourists gather and perceive tourism information as well as produce tourism information by themselves has changed radically. The tourism information not only about the destinations but also about the suppliers (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Social media have been regarded as an effective method to promote tourism information. Compared to traditional media, tourism information as well as travel experience and stories from other tourists can be presented in various formats on social media. These formats include text, image as well as videos, which allow social media to provide tourists with more detailed and thorough information of tourism products or tourist destinations (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Thus, it becomes possible for the audience to visualize the consumption of a tourism product or service (Tussyadiah, Park, & Fesenmaier, 2010). Moreover, when the audiences perceived the consuming experience of others similar to their previous positive experience, they would have high intention to purchase the relevant product (Tussyadiah et al., 2010).

Furthermore, the self-identification perceived during the process of browsing the travel experience presented by others would stimulate the audience to purchase the relevant tourism products (Leung et al., 2013). Additionally, Hultman, Skarmeas, Oghazi and Beheshti (2015) pointed out that tourists are likely to add distinct characteristics of their personality to tourist places (shaping their identity of a romantic person by choosing France as their tourist destination which is known as a romantic place). Wearing, Stevenson and Young (2010) emphasized, in the past, religion was important in shaping identity, but at present, people's

identity is defined by secular activities. One of the main ones is tourism and leisure (In fact, in current society, people's desired identity is presented in the choice of leisure activities). Tourism could provide the possibility for tourists to establish, develop and reinforce their identity. In other words, the places tourists choose to visit might reflect what kind of person they are, or which social group they belong to. Furthermore, tourists can not only obtain tourism information from social media before making the travel decision, but they can also share their own travel experiences on social media during or after traveling. A study shows that such social media travel experience sharing behavior has an influence on the tourists' post-travel experience (W.Li, Shi & Zhang, 2018). The narratives of the travel shared by the tourists are also working to construct their identity, which can be presented in stories, photos and so forth (Wearing et al., 2010). From the perspective of the nature of tourism, the experience is one of the core attributes of tourism (Wu & Zhuang, 2003).

As mentioned above that social media has been playing a crucial role in the tourism industry, however, while comparing the tourism information from the people they know and from strangers, the friends in real life own more credibility (Leung et al., 2013). The tourism information on social media does help people have a better understanding of tourist destinations as well tourism products. However, a study shows that social media is also taking the risk of affecting people's perception of a place in a negative way, especially associated with crime, disease and physical equipment. The comments from dissatisfied tourists might bring a negative impact on the perception of relevant tourist places as well as products (Thevenot, 2007). Furthermore, it seems that the tourism information on social media is released by individuals according to their own real traveling experience. However, there is still a doubt that some people might be paid to do so other than just sharing experience purely, which makes people feel that the tourism information on social media is not reliable (Leung et al., 2013).

3. Methods

It seems that the academic research usually focuses on western tourists, but there is a need to also analyze the tourism patterns of Chinese tourists, which now make up for a big chunk of tourism globally. Moreover, as mentioned in the introduction, among all the Chinese tourists, the post-90s generation becomes the main force. Their different educational and historical backgrounds have formed their way of perceiving and interpreting the information gathered during the process of growing up. This thesis focuses on Chinese youngsters' perceptions of tourism products recommended by wanghong and subsequent consuming behavior, which are different from one to another and can not be quantified either.

In order to have an in-depth understanding of people's perceptions and behaviors, qualitative methodologies are the most appropriate to this research. Qualitative research focuses on the subjective views of participants, especially on the issues that relate to their daily practice and perceptions. In qualitative research, the researchers aim at understanding and interpreting individual behaviors instead of looking for universal laws. Qualitative research studies people's interpretation, perception and the meanings people bring to phenomena (Flick, 2007). Besides the direct meaning and opinion people provided, qualitative research is also to search for "hidden meanings, non-obvious features, multiple interpretations, implied connotations and unheard voices" (Have, 2004, p.5).

For the purpose of this research, I used interviews as the method to gather the data. All interviews have been recorded with the consent of the respondents. It should be pointed out that, due to the fact that the subject as well as the researcher of this research are Chinese, all the interviews were conducted in the Chinese language, which makes better understanding for both interviewer and interviewees. After the interviews, I transcribed the records into the Chinese language. In order to provide a better understanding to those readers from other language backgrounds, I wrote a summary of each transcript in the English language. In the following, all the data gathered were analyzed through ATLAS.ti.

3.1. Data collection

As mentioned above, qualitative research focuses on people's views. The conversation is regarded as a proper way to interact with people and gather opinions and meanings. In academic research, the interview plays such a conversational role, which is one of the

important methods of qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). Moreover, according to Schostal, interviews provide researchers with the possibility to have a deep understanding of people's experiences, concerns, values and how they look at the world, think and behave (2005). I chose semi-structured interviews to gather data. My interviews were designed with open-ended questions, which can be followed up with how or why questions and examples that can help understand individuals' thoughts better (Adams, 2015). Thus, I left space for interviewees to express their own opinions and encouraged them to talk more instead of simply answering yes or no which is definitely not enough to find out the answers to my research question. For conducting the interviews, I prepared an interview guide with 18 questions covering the topics of interviewees' self-identity, opinions and experiences about wanghong and social media, as well as preferences related to travel. The complete interview guide can be found in appendix 1 and 2, which are presented in both English and Chinese. Appendix 3 presents the basic information about the interviewees.

In terms of the interview, interviewees are the most important part. Sampling should be considered carefully to find the right respondents. Flick (2007) suggested that qualitative sampling should be around a concept of purpose. Purposeful sampling was first chosen to gather the data for this research. As mentioned above the post-90s are growing up in a certain historical and political context, and seem to be the most internet-savvy and internet-oriented generation. For this reason, I chose post-90s as my research subject. Moreover, another important part of this research is Wanghong who are based on social media, due to this reason, I chose those Chinese who use social media frequently.

First of all, I published an advertisement on my Chinese social media to ask whether there were people interested in joining an interview related to wanghong, social media as well as tourism. All the crucial information like characteristics of the interviewee, the purpose of the interview and the time consumption had been described in the advertisement. At first, 8 people contacted me and showed their interest in this interview. As soon as they agreed, I made the appointments with each of them. However, I still missed some interviewees to complete my research. Thus I used snowball sampling to reach more people who might be interested in being interviewed. Snowball sampling is regarded as asking previous respondents to recommend anyone else who is eligible for this research (Yingling & McClain, 2015). During the interview with Lin, I asked her whether she could introduce any friend of hers to join my interview. She contacted Jia and she also agreed to accept my interview.

Moreover, in the halfway through the interview process, I decided to also interview wanghong and ask their opinions as well, which might help enrich the data. Hence, I contacted a wanghong in my hometown in China. Luckily she agreed to join the interview and provided me with some professional information about the wanghong and wanghong industry. However, due to the ongoing pandemic of Covid-19 and the relevant regulations, I could not fly back to China to interview them. So 9 interviews were conducted online instead of face-to-face interviews. Since WeChat is the main communication application and used by the majority in China, those 9 interviewees prefer to talk through the WeChat video call. I only met interviewee Lin in person since we do not live far from each other in the Netherlands. Furthermore, before the interviews started, I asked the interviewees for permission to record the interviews and to sign the consent forms.

3.2. Data analysis

After gathering the data, all the records were transcribed into text for data analysis. In order to find out the meaning, thematic analysis was adopted to analyze the data gathered. By defining data items within textual data, thematic analysis is most useful in capturing the meaning (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). Through thematic analysis, the similarities and differences of the answers from different interviewees can be identified (Bryman, 2012). During the analyzing process, the software ATLAS.ti was used to code the transcripts and help to locate the themes that appeared from the transcripts. In the end, 51 codes were generated and categorized into three main groups: characteristics of wanghong and the information provided by wanghong, characteristics of the post-90s generation and characteristics of social media and platforms. During the process of analyzing, I noticed that the post-90s are likely to stand their ground. Their characteristics do influence them in perceiving the information provided by wanghong. Moreover, the various functions of social media platforms also play an important role in stimulating their perception as well as consumption of tourism products recommended by wanghong.

4. Results

In this section, the information gathered from the interviews will be presented in the first part: findings. Then it will be followed by the discussion which is the analysis of the data based on the concepts provided in the literature section.

4.1. Findings

4.1.1. Opinions in perceiving the (tourism) products information released by wanghong

Due to the rapid development of technology and the Internet during the formative years of the post-90s generation, they have been accustomed to social media since youth. Thus, the way they receive information has changed a lot comparing to the previous generations. As mentioned before, in fact, the people in the post-90s generation mainly gather information through social media (Li, 2020). During the interviews, all the respondents have confirmed this. Yang, an entrepreneur who owns 6 e-shops on the platform of Alibaba, stated:

> Yes, I use social media a lot. I mainly gather information from Tiktok. There is a lot of real-time information pushed to me, including the news from every place...I used to gather information from WeChat, but now it's probably more from Tik Tok.
>
> (Taobao vendor, 31, Zhejiang, March 21, 2021)

Lin, owning her travel agency in the Netherlands, also shared her experience:

> I think getting information from social media is quite normal for all young people nowadays. Social media is a very important factor in their life, not only for young people but also for everyone. Because when I was in China, everyone uses Tiktok everywhere, even taxi drivers use it when they stop at traffic lights, they use it whenever they are free. So I think it has become something that changes the way we live. Social media gives us faster access to all kinds of information.
>
> (Entrepreneur, 31, Amsterdam, March 17, 2021)

During the interviews, almost 90% of the interviewees hold negative opinions towards wanghong who are relatively active on social media. The interviewee Shiyue stressed:

> In my point of view, wanghong is a derogatory term. I would never trust the information released by wanghong.
>
> (Yoga coach, 28, Yichang, March 25, 2021).

In addition, the products advertised by wanghong are of bad quality but with high a price. Interviewee Wang introduced her shopping experience:

I used to like a wanghong called Panghu Ershe very much, she usually introduces luxury bags on Tiktok, her introduction is very attractive and makes me get a lot of detailed knowledge of luxury products. One day I bought one luxury bag from her, it was expensive but of low quality. I will not trust her anymore.

(Government officer, 31, Jingdezhen, March 27, 2021)

Guan, a master student, mentioned a similar experience:

I bought some clothes from wanghong's shops, like Xiao Lajiao and Xueli. When I received them, I found that they were not as good as wanghong introduced. The quality was bad...Wanghong are not trustworthy

(Master student, 26, Urumqi, March 23, 2021).

Mei, a college teacher, had never bought any products recommended by wanghong, but she had heard a lot of bad news of wanghong like Wang and Guan experienced, which makes her feel that the price of the products recommended by wanghong is high while the quality is low and she would never trust the product information provided by wanghong (College teacher, 31, Nanchang, March 23, 2021).

When discussed wanghong Ding Zhen who has been mentioned in the introduction, Kangkang explained the reason why he did not like him:

Dingzhen became famous so fast and his popularity is because of his good looking other than works or achievements...With his growing popularity, a lot of negative news comes along, which reduces my favorability towards him.

(Master student, 26, Utrecht, March 19, 2021)

Guan also introduced her experience to prove that wanghong are not reliable. She complained:

I used to follow a wanghong in the tourism field. I liked her very much, later I found out that all her traveling videos had been sponsored by companies or travel agencies and made to promote the relevant organizations instead of sharing tourism information from then on, I stopped subscribing to her account on Tiktok, however, Tiktok still kept pushing her videos to me. I felt so annoyed. It obvious that they are not only paid by the relevant companies to make travel videos but also they paid Tiktok to promote their videos. I really don't like this…I don't trust it anymore.

(Master student, 26, Urumqi, March 23, 2021)

Besides the bad shopping experiences related to wanghong, Yang also mentioned that the reason why he did not trust the product information provided by wanghong because they do not have any professional knowledge. Thus, wanghong can not provide the detailed information that he needed (Taobao vendor, 31, Zhejiang, March 21, 2021).

Kangkang, a master student studying in the Netherlands, has a very negative impression of wanghong. He stated that, compared to scientists, what wanghong are doing is just a kind of marketing, which contributes nothing to the development of human society. He also introduced his previous traveling experience:

> I went to a place called Zengcuoan in Xiamen city. This place had been recommended by a lot of wanghong. But when I arrived there I felt so disappointed, I still remember that kind of feeling until now...It doesn't look as it is described by wanghong...From that time on, I became wary of the tourism information and tourism products recommended by wanghong.
>
> (Master student, 26, Utrecht,March 19, 2021)

The interviewee Shiyue had a similar experience:

> When I traveled to Shanghai, I went to a restaurant recommended by wanghong. The reason for me to visit that place because of the video I watched. In the video, that wanghong introduced that the food there is very delicious and the restaurant's decoration looks very beautiful and attractive in that video. However, it turned out to be not true. I even threw the food I bought because it tasted so bad, and it was super expensive.
>
> (Yoga coach, 28, Yichang, March 25, 2021)

Jia also mentioned if the way that wanghong recommend tourism products becomes too commercial, they will be less reliable (Company employee, 28, Rotterdam, May 12, 2021).

In constrast to the distrust in wanghong, the interviewees seem to have more trust in the strangers on social media. Dai, working as a translator in Shanghai, expressed her opinion:

> When I traveled to some places, I would like to browse the comment published by strangers under the tourism information provided by wanghong or by the organizations. From my point of view, the opinions provided by others can help me to judge the information released by wanghong…I am taking advantage of the opinions provided by others, so I have commented on various tourism information published by wanghong on social media as well. I hope that my views could help others too.

The interviewee Wang emphasized that, if her friends have been to the places recommended by wanghong, she trust the relevant tourism information provided by her friends more. As she said:

To be honest, for me, wanghong is not trustworthy. If my friends have been to those places, I would like to ask them for travel suggestions. In my eyes, my friends own more credibility than wanghong.

Another respondent also agreed on this:

In my opinion, the information provided by my friends carries more credibility than the information released by wanghong, because I trust my friends more and I am more willing to trust them.

However, it is also very interesting to hear that one respondent mentioned:

I like the tourism information not recommended by wanghong very much, especially the tourist places, restaurants, hotels or scenic spots that wanghong do not suggest visiting...I trust such information that they do not suggest and I could feel the sincerity of them.

Furthermore, in terms of the tourism information, the interviewees have never heard before, like the places they have never been to or the specialty they have never tasted, coincidentally, all interviewees speak highly of this kind of recommendation. When talking about this, Yang was excited to introduce one traveling video made by a wanghong:

That video is about his self-driving tours from Sichuan Province to Tibet. I have never been to Tibet and I'm not familiar with terrain, traffic conditions as well as local customs. However, this wanghong gives a very detailed introduction about this route, including accommodation information, where the petrol station is, how to prepare oxygen canister, local taboos and so forth, which give me a clear understanding of this tour and makes me feel safe…This wanghong is very professional!

Interviewee Guan also mentioned that:

If wanghong publish tourism videos about other people's lifestyles that I'm not familiar with, I will watch them definitely. I think this kind of tourism information is very interesting and attractive to me. For example, one wanghong introduced the lifestyle in Inner Mongolia, it very real and alive. I like it very much!

(Master student, 26, Urumqi, March 23, 2021)

In addition, Wang introduced one tourism video provided by a wanghong that she liked a lot:

That video is about a hotel designed with entertainment equipment related to water elements. It seems very interesting. It attracts me to make a plan to visit that hotel because I have never visited such themed hotels.

(Government officer, 31, Jingdezhen, March 27, 2021)

Interviewee Jia also stressed that：

When wanghong introduce the unfamiliar places and the local customs there, I like it very much. This kind of information and recommendation is very trustworthy.

(Company employee, 28, Rotterdam, May 12, 2021)

Among all the interviewees, there is a wanghong called Heng, a florist and photographer in Yichang City in China. She has been invited to promote tourism products because of her popularity. During the interview, Heng showed a different perspective of the wanghong phenomenon since she is a wanghong herself. She mentioned that:

I do understand that many people perceive wanghong and the products recommended by them in a very negative way due to their unpleasant shopping experience in the past. Some wanghong are too commercial, they even sign a contract with agencies that arrange affairs and manage accounts for them, people might feel disgusted with this. However, I would like to say, nowadays, the quality of the products recommended by wanghong has been improved. People should change the stereotype of wanghong...Even though I'm a wanghong, I like to gather information from other wanghong who have more followers than me, I found they are quite trustworthy.

(Freelancer, 30, Yichang, May 12, 2021)

In terms of tourism information and products, Heng stressed:

Compared to the information provided by official organizations and companies that are only about the basic and general description, the introduction from wanghong includes more details and is more practical. In my opinion, their description helps more to make the purchase decision.

4.1.2. Opinions in consuming the (tourism) products recommended by wanghong

During the process of making a travel plan, all interviews mentioned that they prefer to gather tourism information from two main social media: Tiktok and Little Red Book. Interviewee Lin mentioned:

The short videos on Tiktok provide general tourism information. Those videos might arouse people's interests, and the Little Red Book can be regarded as a handbook. It is easier for the audience to consult again than the videos on Tiktok.

(Entrepreneur, 31, Amsterdam, March 17, 2021)

However, in terms of tourism product consumption, I found out that all respondents have a high level of rationality in consuming tourism products. They mentioned that they would not buy the tourism products recommended by wanghong immediately. The lack of money mentioned a lot by the respondents:

Some tourism routes recommended by wanghong are indeed very interesting, but they are very expensive and I can not afford them...I'm poor...Those tourism products are not like other daily commodities that only charge little, you need a large amount of money to buy them...I'm very rational and I will not buy it.

(Mei, college teacher, 31, Nanchang, March 23, 2021)

Interviewee Shiyue has not booked any hotels recommended by wanghong due to their high price, as she said:

There are a lot of hotels recommended by wanghong that I liked very much. However, I gave up my plan to visit them because they are too expensive... Once a wanghong recommended a hotel in Sanya, which is very pretty and surrounded by sea...I do really want to go but it costs around 700 euros for one night. It is so expensive.

(Yoga coach, 28, Yichang, March 25, 2021)

Another respondent Kangkang introduced:

I have been to many places within as well as outside China...I like traveling very much. If it has been a long time that I haven't been to any new places, that means my financial circumstances have constrained me.

(Master student, 26, Utrecht, March 19, 2021)

Guan also stressed that the hotels recommended by wanghong are very expensive in general and she would definitely not book them (Master student, 26, Urumqi, March 23, 2021).

Moreover, compared to other daily commodities, tourists need free time to experience the tourism products. As Yang said:

> I will not book the hotel recommended by wanghong immediately even they present a purchase link with a good discount in their channel...My tourism consumption is based on my own need, if I need it, I will buy it...firstly, I have free time and make a travel plan to travel to some places and then I will purchase relevant tourism products, it is not the recommendation from wanghong guiding my travel plan. In conclusion, when I have free time, I will make my travel plan first. If the tourism products recommended by wanghong are good and I can also afford them I will buy them. If you even don't have time to experience it, why do you buy it?
>
> (Taobao vendor, 31, Zhejiang, March 21, 2021)

Dai also added:

> Once I saw a travel video published by wanghong, it was about the tour to Tibet. After watching the video, I really wanted to join this tour immediately. But sadly, I didn't have time to go. I also kept some other travel videos made by wanghong in my file, but I haven't visited any of them yet, because I don't have time.
>
> (Translator, 26, Shanghai, March 25, 2021)

Besides the financial power and whether they have free time or not, it seems that respondents prefer to doubt the tourism products advertised by wanghong in general, as Yang said:

> When wanghong recommend some tourist products and speak highly of them, I will doubt why wanghong say they are good and I will look at them in a negative way. For example, nowadays, every wanghong is talking about Ding Zhen and his hometown, they introduced how beautiful the place is. But I think there are a lot of places that are much better than that place. Why do I have to go? I will not go definitely.
>
> (Taobao vendor, 31, Zhejiang, March 21, 2021)

Kangkang also introduced similar feeling:

> The more wanghong recommends a hotel, the less I would feel like booking it.
>
> (Master student, 26, Utrecht, March 19, 2021)

In addition, during the interviewees, 90% of respondents mentioned the phrase "independent thinking" except wanghong Heng. They stressed that they have the ability of independent thinking and wanghong's opinions can not influence their purchasing decision. As the interviewee Kangkang said:

> I have never bought anything recommended by wanghong...I'm so maverick. I have my own independent thinking. I can judge the information well by myself. I know wanghong do not like me...I don't want to visit the places or restaurants recommended by wanghong. In my opinion, the group of people who would like to visit those places are with low qualities...they have the group psychology...they are so noisy...I don't want to go.
>
> (Master student, 26, Utrecht, March 19, 2021)

Interviewee Wang stressed as well:

> I do not think that my decision will be affected by wanghong. I know for sure that I will not buy any tourism products recommended by wanghong...I have independent thinking.
>
> (Government officer, 31, Jingdezhen, March 27, 2021)

Mei also deemed herself as a nonconformist from the post-90s group and she would never buy the tourism products recommended by wanghong (College teacher, 31, Nanchang, March 23, 2021).

Interviewee Shiyue stressed:

> I am the kind of person who would not follow the group commonality for sure. In all the aspects of my life even including the clothes, I will not buy the products that other people buy...I have my own taste...I don't want to be the same as the majority.
>
> (Yoga coach, 28, Yichang, March 25, 2021)

As a yoga coach, interviewee Shiyue mentioned that her lifestyle photos posted on social media have attracted a lot of people to join her yoga class. In her opinion, the reason why people like the photos she uploaded because the photos show that she is different from others and she has good taste. In order to keep this attraction, she prefers to choose tourism products from the niche category. As she introduced:

> I'm a yoga coach, every post I put on my social media should be great and meaningful, so people would identify with my lifestyle and personality. Thus, they

will be stimulated to join my yoga class...I spent my honeymoon holiday on a small island recommended by a wanghong, it was very pretty and had not been developed yet, not too many people visited that place. I would like to go back to visit that place with my husband again, however, it becomes more and more famous due to the promotion by wanghong. I think I will not go there anymore.

(Yoga coach, 28, Yichang, March 25, 2021)

Interviewee Dai also showed her preference in niche tourism products, as she mentioned:

I like niche travel. For example, I come to Tianjin, I will not visit the most famous places carefully, but I would like to visit the places that are not known by the majority, which can show that I'm different from others, I have seen the scenery that other people haven't seen...I will take beautiful photos and put them on my social media with comments...I want to show my good side to my friends...I will be happy when I receive a lot of "likes".

(Dai, translator, 26, Shanghai, March 25, 2021)

Besides the fondness for niche tourism products, Heng, as a wanghong, also expressed the need for the niche tourism products advertised by other wanghong:

I will book the beautiful hotels recommended by other wanghong...I do care whether the hotels are special and attractive or not...because I can take pretty photos there. I will put these photos on my social media and those beautiful photos will help me attract more followers.

(Freelancer, 30, Yichang, May 12, 2021)

Moreover, once the post-90s generations are at the touristic places, they are more likely to purchase the tourism products recommended by wanghong, especially the local food. As mentioned above that interviewee Kangkang was fed up with wanghong and it is impossible for him to take the wanghong's opinion into consideration. However, when he is at the touristic place, the situation seems different:

I think most people visit the places recommended by wanghong because of the group psychology...if I still have some spare time after I complete my travel plan, I will visit the places recommended by wanghong... The reason why I visit that place is out of curiosity. I am just so curious why people are crazy about the recommendation from wanghong.

(Master student, 26, Utrecht, March 19, 2021)

Guan also mentioned:

> If I travel to a new place, I know nothing about the city, I have no idea what the specialty of the city..and I can not find the right restaurant on the map. If a wanghong recommends a local restaurant, I will definitely go there.
>
> <div align="right">(Master student, 26, Urumqi, March 23, 2021)</div>

Lin remembered that her clients used to have a similar experience while traveling in Europe：

> There were some times that my clients checked the Little Red Book at the touristic place to look for the local restaurants recommended by wanghong, and made a temporary change in their itinerary according to wanghong's recommendation...This happened a lot. It's normal to see that.
>
> <div align="right">(Entrepreneur, 31, Amsterdam, March 17, 2021)</div>

Furthermore, tourism products are different from other products because they are lack direct experience and those hospitality products and relevant services only can be evaluated after being consumed and experienced (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Moreover, in general, the price of tourism products is relatively high. Thus, in the process of making a consuming decision, the post-90s generation prefers to avoid risk. Another respondent added that wanghong's recommendations also help him avoid risk when he travels to a new place:

> In my opinion, people are afraid of the unknown...they prefer to purchase the product that they already have some information about it...for example, the restaurants, people would like to visit the restaurants they are familiar with or they have heard before. However, wanghong's recommendations and opinions provide an opportunity to try new things. Because in their videos, they will give detailed comments on the restaurant...for example, in my stereotype, the seafood dishes are relatively expensive. When wanghong recommend a seafood restaurant, they will introduce the price as well. If the price is reasonable I will definitely go. If I go to a seafood restaurant without consulting the information provided by wanghong, as soon as I arrived at the restaurant and I found out that it is expensive. I'm afraid of losing face so I would stay there and order the food, but I have to spend a lot of money that I didn't expect...Thus, the recommendation from wanghong, especially about the restaurants, helps reduce unnecessary embarrassment.
>
> <div align="right">(Yang, taobao vendor, 31, Zhejiang, March 21, 2021)</div>

Interviewee Kangkang added:

> I will check the comments and reviews of the hotel recommended by wanghong for sure, as well as the real photos put in the comments…the photos uploaded by wanghong have definitely been edited, which is very pretty and only shows the good sides. I also like to check the negative comments, because I know wanghong like to pay others to write positive comments under their posts… I have a strong psychological defense.

<div align="right">

(Master student, 26, Utrecht, March 19, 2021)

</div>

Interviewee Dai also mentioned:

> Comparing to the information released by wanghong, I would like to make the consumption decision of tourism products based on the comments from others. Especially when booking a restaurant, I will choose those with the high score given by strangers...When I have a meal in the restaurant, after eating, I will also add my own comments according to my real experience to help others to make the consuming decision.

<div align="right">

(Dai, translator, 26, Shanghai, March 25, 2021)

</div>

Even though the interviewees mentioned that they would follow the recommendations when they are at the tourist place already or wanghong recommend niche products, all the respondents except wanghong Heng stressed they do not have any admiration for wanghong. But Heng did not believe that:

> I receive the reports of my social media accounts every month. The platforms send them to me. The reports show that all my followers are from the post-90s generation and most of them are female. In my opinion, it seems that people are not honest when they say that they have no interest in wanghong or wanghong's recommendation...I think they are so arrogant to express this kind of opinion...At least, wanghong do have their influence in promoting hotels among the post-90s...I have been invited to experience some newly-designed hotels here in my city and asked to promote the hotels for them...According to the feedback from the hotels, the outcome of my promotion was good.

<div align="right">

(Freelancer, 30, Yichang, May 12, 2021)

</div>

However, in terms of consumption of tour package, Lin, as the leader of a travel agency in the Netherlands, regards wanghong as having little influence in this kind of consumption:

> I will not cooperate with wanghong to promote my tourism products. Because I sell tour package and services, not only the hotels. The tour package is a large product...I think wanghong have their influence in the consumption of daily commodities, for promoting this kind of tourism product, it's difficult for them to promote. However, you can not say that wanghong has no influence at all, I admit they are good at advertising and might help attract the attention of the tourists. But I doubt their recommendation will influence their consumption decision...moreover, I would like to say that the influence of wanghong in tourism products is temporary due to the corona crisis...Their recommendation might help promote single tourism products, but for the tour package, I don't think so.
>
> <div align="right">(Entrepreneur, 31, Amsterdam, March 17, 2021)</div>

4.1.3. Social media and social media platforms play an important role in affecting the post-90s generation on perceiving and consuming the (tourism) products recommended by wanghong

During the interviews, all respondents mentioned Tiktok and spoke highly of the format of the short video, as one respondent said:

> For example, when wanghong want to recommend hotels, it is better to make videos, because videos are vivid and have a good visual effect. Moreover, videos present the true fact of the hotel. It is difficult to add fake information.
>
> <div align="right">(Entrepreneur, 31, Amsterdam, March 17, 2021)</div>

Interviewee Mei has a similar opinion:

> The photos of the products provided by wanghong have been edited, but the videos are difficult to be edited. They are real. I prefer to watch shorts videos.
>
> <div align="right">(College teacher, 31, Nanchang, March 23, 2021)</div>

Interviewee Dai agreed that videos are indeed much more vivid. She mentioned that most of her friends like videos, especially short videos. Dai noticed that her friends also make short videos by themselves after traveling (Translator, 26, Shanghai, March 25, 2021).

In addition, interviewee Wang made a comparison of different information formats, as she concluded:

> Compared to text and photos, in my opinion, short videos include much more information, which might cover all the aspects of the tourism product...short videos also provide more details.
>
> (Government officer, 31, Jingdezhen, March 27, 2021)

Moreover, Yang pointed out the reason why people like videos more. As he explained:

> Nowadays, most people become more and more impatient, it is difficult to have the patience to settle down to read a long article. Short videos take advantage of the fragmented time, which means that we don't need to spend a lot of time watching something...The short video can express a thing completely in 10 or 20 seconds, which is very convenient.
>
> (Taobao vendor, 31, Zhejiang, March 21, 2021)

Dai also agreed that people prefer to watch short videos because they do not have the patience to read texts (Dai, translator, 26, Shanghai, March 25, 2021).

> While watching short videos on Tiktok, there is always background music. Some respondents stressed the importance of the background music of the short videos that it might affect their perception of the products recommended by wanghong. As Shiyue mentioned:

> The background music of a tourism video is very important to me. Don't use the music with fast a fast beats, I think the exotic and romantic music makes the video better.
>
> (Yoga coach, 28, Yichang, March 25, 2021)

Interviewee Lin added:

> There are so many videos made by wanghong I like very much... Even this video is taken by normal people, when it is about the breathtaking scenery and added some background music, it will hit your heart in a few seconds and makes yearn for this place and longing for this place.
>
> (Entrepreneur, 31, Amsterdam, March 17, 2021)

Besides the format of the video, some interviewees pointed out that the photos provided by wanghong are also important for them to make the purchase decision. As Shiyue introduced:

A wanghong I know usually posts a lot of beautiful photos about Europe on her social media, these photos are amazing, I do really like them. They make me want to visit those places. I think I will visit those places for sure.

(Yoga coach, 28, Yichang, March 25, 2021)

Heng, as a wanghong and photographer, stressed the importance of the photo:

Whether the photos look good or not is the main factor in my decision whether I should book that hotel. Because I am a wanghong and I do have my own followers. Before making the purchase decision, I should consider what kind of good photos I can take at that place then I can post them on my social media. I want to take good photos as other wanghong do. If it is not a nice place to take photos, I will not book that hotel.

(Freelancer, 30, Yichang, May 12, 2021)

In addition, the functions of social media platforms also play an important role in affecting the perception of information. Some respondents mentioned the function of automatic information push on the social media platform. Yang, as an owner of 6 e-shops who knows well about the functions of various social media platforms, pointed out:

The function of automatic information push is super strong. In other words, you will see what the platform wants you to see. Because the platform is at the top of the entire chain...moreover, once you arrive at a new city, the platform will notice your new login area and push local restaurants recommended by wanghong to you automatically. There is a big chance that you will visit these restaurants after you watching the relevant videos.

(Taobao vendor, 31, Zhejiang, March 21, 2021)

Interviewee Dai also noticed that Tiktok will keep pushing similar videos to her according to my browsing records, especially those I marked as like (Translator, 26, Shanghai, March 25, 2021). Moreover, Heng mentioned that the platforms also push similar information to the audiences according to their searching records (Freelancer, 30, Yichang, May 12, 2021).

Besides the convenience brought by social media, during the interviews, two interviewees also stressed the negative aspects of using social media. As Yang said:

Take myself for example, I become more and more impatient after using the Tiktok. This is horrible...I know this is not a good thing.

(Taobao vendor, 31, Zhejiang, March 21, 2021)

Jia even deleted Tiktok app because she noticed that she had been keeping using it for a long time every day and she could not control herself from keeping using it. In her opinion, the only way to solve the problem is to delete the app and stop using it (Company employee, 28, Rotterdam, May 12, 2021).

4.2. Discussion

In my thesis, the question I was interested in researching is what are the perceptions and consumptions of tourism products advertised by wanghong. First of all, as presented in the previous section, all the respondents have confirmed that, at present, they mainly gather information from social media. Social media makes it possible for everyone to express views and comments freely (Fu et al., 2021). Meanwhile, wanghong are taking advantage of the biggest power of word-of-mouth communication through social media. Among all these opinions on social media, the ones from wanghong seem to have significant influence because of their popularity and pervasiveness.

However, almost all the interviewees have a negative impression of wanghong and believed that the information released by wanghong is not trustworthy due to their unhappy experience or bad news related to wanghong. The word wanghong is even regarded as a derogatory term. In their opinion, wanghong are not trustworthy due to their previous bad shopping experience related to wanghong. Almost 80% of the respondents had such experience before. Moreover, various news about such similar experiences from others has been spread fast on the Internet, which reduces the credibility of wanghong as well. Moreover, As Zhai (2020) stated before that whether wanghong have professional knowledge means a lot to themselves as well as to the audiences. Their professional image enhances the quality of the products perceived and might help them attract more followers. If they are not professional enough, they seem to be not trustworthy. This has been confirmed during the interviews. The people in the post-90s generation have noticed wanghong's lack of professionalism, which leads to their distrust of wanghong.

In addition, Safko (2012) remarked that marketing conducted on social media is more effective than conventional media because consumers do not trust corporate commercials anymore. Thus, more and more tourism-related organizations and companies cooperate with wanghong to promote various tourism products on social media by taking advantage of the popularity of wanghong. It seems that the tourism information on social media provided by

individuals is based on their own real traveling experience. However, some audiences doubt that some of them might be paid to write down their traveling stories on social media other than just sharing experience purely. This makes people regard that kind of tourism information as not trustworthy (Leung et al., 2013). Some consumers have recognized this way of marketing. It has been found out by the respondents that some wanghong are paid to promote tourism products as well tourist destinations. Those wanghong are too commercial and not sharing the information purely as the audience expected, which makes them feel that the products recommended by wanghong are not reliable. In the post-90s' opinion, wanghong recommendation is just a kind of marketing method. There is manipulation behind the scene. One interviewee even looked down upon on wanghong, because, in his point of view, what wanghong are doing contributes nothing to the development of our human society.

There is no doubt that the information on social media provides the audience with a better understanding of tourism products. The comments and opinions from others on social media do affect consumers in perceiving the quality of the products. It has been found out that browsing the comments about how others perceive the products can make the audience understand the products better (Leung et al., 2013). However, social media have also been confirmed as affecting people's perception of tourist places and tourism products in a negative way, especially the negative comments from others (Thevenot, 2007). During the interviews, it has been shown that the post-90s generation prefers to browse the comments of the tourism products recommended by wanghong. In their opinions, how others perceive the products could provide a better understanding of the relevant product's quality. Strangers own more credibility than wanghong because they supposedly express their real views, including both positive and negative ones.

However, while comparing the tourism information from the people they know and from strangers, the friends in real life own more credibility (Leung et al., 2013). Word-of-mouth has been regarded as one of the important information sources because of its high-perceived credibility (Murphy et al., 2007). 90% of the interviewees emphasized that, if their friends have been to the places recommended by wanghong, they prefer to trust the relevant tourism information provided by her friends more and take their traveling advice.

Among all the interviewees, there is a wanghong. She understands that the post-90s generation has no trust in the tourism products recommended by wanghong due to their past bad shopping experience and the various negative news about wanghong on the Internet.

However, she suggested that, due to her own experience and her knowledge about the wanghong group, they set aside this kind of prejudice. In her opinion, nowadays, the quality of the products recommended by wanghong has been improved a lot. Especially the tourism information provided by wanghong is more detailed and practical, which is relatively trustworthy and helps in making a purchase decision.

As can be concluded above that the post-90s generation perceives the tourism products recommended by wanghong in a negative way, but it is very interesting to see that wanghong own much more credibility in the recommendation that they do not suggest. For example, if wanghong point out the bad aspects of the tourism products and suggest the audience not to purchase them, the post-90s generation deems this kind of information is reliable and would take their opinions into consideration. They also regard wanghong as having more sincerity.

Besides the tourism products that are not recommended by wanghong, the niche tourism information provided by wanghong is perceived positively by the post-90s generation. During the interviews, coincidentally, all interviewees speak highly of this kind of recommendation. They mentioned that they like the tourism information that they have not known before. For instance, the travel routes in the rural area that they have never been to, the local specialty they have never tasted, the well-designed hotels that they have never experienced, and the local customs and taboos they are not familiar with, the post-90s speak highly of these kinds of recommendation from wanghong, they regard it as interesting, attractive, real, alive as well as practical.

Secondly, in terms of the consumption of tourism products, nowadays, tourists prefer to consult online information to choose tourism products and arrange the tourism routes (Wu, 2020). This has been confirmed during this research. All the interviewees admitted that they all gather tourism information from two main applications: Tiktok and Little Red Book. All the information on Tiktok is presented in the format of short video while the information on the Little Red Book is provided with photo and text description.

Since a large amount of information can be found on various social media, what wanghong recommended might help the audience find the right information out of the complexity. It also has been confirmed that wanghong has the potential influence on people's consumption decision-making (Gao, 2015). Meanwhile, the post-90s do have a certain consuming behavior. They are proved to have less restraint in purchasing products. Impulse spending and random spending usually appear (Peng and Wu, 2020). However, this research

found out that impulse spending and random spending only seem to happen in relation to daily products, but not necessarily in relation to tourism products. Thus, all the respondents regarded them as having a high level of rationality in consuming tourism products.

In their opinion, the consumption of tourism products has been affected by various factors. It can not be concluded simply that the post-90s generation prefers to purchase the tourism products recommended by wanghong or not. Due to lacking time and money, the post-90s generation becomes very rational in consuming the tourism products recommended by wanghong. Impulse spending and random spending are usually seen in purchasing daily commodities but hardly happen in buying tourism products. Compared to normal products, tourism products are relatively expensive and need time to experience them. Thus, even though they are very interested in the products recommended by wanghong, they will not purchase them immediately. Financial factors and time issue influence make the post-90s generation become rational in purchasing tourism products recommended by wanghong.

Besides the financial and time issues, according to the replies from the interviewees, due to the reverse psychology, there is a big possibility that the audiences would not buy the products recommended (Zhai, 2020). The post-90s generation doubts the purpose of wanghong's recommendations and looks at them in a negative way. They deem that other places might be much better than those recommended by wanghong. In their stances, the more wanghong recommend, the less they would feel like purchasing. Moreover, the study also shows that the post-90s generation reflects their consciousness of group commonality on the conformity consumption (Hou, 2019). Nevertheless, in terms of tourism product consumption, all interviewees stressed that they had developed what they define as "independent thinking", therefore claiming that their purchasing decision would not be affected by wanghong's opinions. But, considering their reaction to wanghong, I found out that they can not be regarded as having independent thinking. Because independent thinkers regard that nothing should be trusted (Renatovna, 2019). However, the respondents are still following wanghong's channels and they know what wanghong recommend. They just decide not to purchase the products recommended by wanghong and shift to the opposition. In their opinion, this shift might make other people perceive them as independent thinkers.

Besides showing their identity as independent thinkers by not choosing the products recommended by wanghong, the post-90s prefer to attach other symbolic meaning to the tourism products recommended by wanghong that they would like to consume. All

interviewees mentioned that, among the tourism products recommended by wanghong, they would purchase those they have never experienced or those from niche category, which can show their different tastes from the majority. This can be explained by what has been discussed before that tourists would like to add distinct characteristics of their personality to tourist places (Hultman et al., 2015).

Additionally, their desired identity could be presented in the tourism products they choose and enhanced by the relevant narratives they shared, like stories and photos (Wearing et al., 2010). Hence, the products they choose should be perceived as special, which in turn they define as something that is not well-known by the majority. This kind of travel experience sharing behavior on social media has been confirmed as influencing the tourists' post-travel experience (W.Li, Shi & Zhang, 2018), which is regarded as one of the main attributes of tourism (Wu & Zhuang, 2003). Therefore, the post-90s would not purchase the tourism products recommended by wanghong that are already popular, but they would like to purchase those exclusive tourism products that they have never experienced before or the public are not familiar with. Because the tourists from the post-90s generation can build and shape their desired identity by consuming and experiencing those niche tourism products.

It seems that the post-90s generation will not purchase the tourism products recommended by wanghong easily before they start their journey. However, they become more likely to make the consuming decision according to wanghong's recommendation once they, for some reason, visit a tourist location advertised by wanghong, especially in the choice of local restaurants. First of all, due to the reason that they little about a new place, wanghong's opinion might help them find out the right choice easily. Secondly, tourism products are different from other products because they are lack direct experience and those hospitality products and relevant services only can be evaluated after being consumed and experienced (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Moreover, in general, the price of tourism products is relatively high. Thus, in the process of making a consuming decision, the post-90s generation prefers to avoid risk. Meanwhile, wanghong's recommendations usually contain a lot of detailed information including the information they would like to know most, which can help them avoid risk. Lastly, in order to satisfy their curiosity about the products recommended by wanghong, the post-90s generation might purchase relevant products. Because they are at the place already, it is much more accessible for them to reach the products.

In terms of avoiding risk, besides taking the wanghong's recommendation into consideration, tourists also would like to browse the comments and reviews from others (Jeng & Fesenmaier, 2002), which works in stimulating the audience to purchase the relevant tourism products. It has been confirmed that nearly 84% of tourists have been affected to make the purchase decisions based on other's reviews (Leung et al., 2013). Those comments and reviews have been confirmed as working as word-of-mouth communication and having high-perceived credibility (Murphy et al., 2007). In the post-90s' point of view, those opinions own higher credibility because people who release this information are with a pure purpose other than being manipulated by an invisible hand. It should be pointed out the post-90s generation prefer to add comments to the products they have experienced to help others make consuming decision as well.

As mentioned before, the popularity of wanghong might stimulate their followers to consume (Wei, 2016). Additionally, the audience might express their fondness for wanghong by purchasing the products they recommended (W. Li & Lv, 2014). Moreover, this kind of personality belief will help the consumers to find the right product they want from the complexity of commodities (Zhai, 2020). However, it is very interesting to see that all the other 9 interviewees denied that they do not have any admiration for wanghong while Heng, as a wanghong herself, pointed out that the post-90s generation is very interested in wanghong. In fact, her social media account's monthly report shows that almost all of her followers are from the post-90s generation. Furthermore, the World Travel Market 2011 Industry Report shows that nearly one-third of leisure travelers choose their hotels on the basis of social media accounts (Koumelis, 2011). The successful cooperation of wanghong Heng and the local hotels does prove that wanghong do have an influence on the consumption of hotels. Wanghong's recommendations might be useful to promote single tourism products like hotels and restaurants, but have little influence in consuming tour package.

Thirdly, besides the influence brought out by wanghong themselves, the social media platforms also play crucial roles in affecting the audiences' perception and consumption of tourism products recommended by wanghong. With the development of technology and social media, various information can be presented in different formats, like text, images, videos and so forth, which makes it possible for the audience to gather more detailed and thorough information on tourism products (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). The big advantage of the tourism information presented on social media is that the consumption of a product or service

can be visualized (Tussyadiah et al., 2010). All these platforms allow the users to present information in various formats, which help visualize the tourism products that are difficult to provide a direct experience. Among all the formats, video is the most liked one. In their opinions, videos are more vivid and can provide detailed and thorough information, most importantly, compared to the photos provided by wanghong have been edited a lot, it is difficult to add fake information in videos. Moreover, due to the habit of fragmented reading, more and more people have no patience in reading long articles, but short videos can express a thing completely in a short time, which is very convenient for them to receive information.

In addition, a study shows that the background music of short videos plays a crucial role in affecting consumers. Their consumer psychology might be manipulated by the bright rhythm, smooth and light background music, which can make consumers happy and reduce mental concerns. The light and smooth background music also might make wanghong feel more relaxed and easier while introducing products and make them more charming (Zhai, 2020). In the respondents' opinions, the function of the background music of short videos can not be ignored. Good music might lead them to perceive the products recommended in a positive way. Furthermore, one function of the social media platform that can not be ignored in enhancing the influence of wanghong in promoting tourism products is the automatic information push. According to the users' preferences like browsing records and searching records, the platform will push similar information to them automatically, which might enhance the impression of the recommended tourism products and generate audiences' interest to purchase. Moreover, as soon as the audiences travel to a new place, the platform will push local recommendations to them automatically based on their new login location, which will stimulate the tourists to purchase the local products recommended since they know little about the new place.

There is no doubt that social media make it much easier for us to gather information and for wanghong to promote products. However, social media also brought out negative impacts. Using social media, especially watching short videos, makes people become more and more impatient and lead to a superficial understanding of information, in turn, it will diminish our capacity of reading. Additionally, due to the complexity of the backgrounds of all users on social media, it is more likely to receive fake information, which might influence people's perceptions of various affairs (Liang, 2021).

5. Conclusion

As can be found from this research, generally, the post-90s perceive the tourism products recommended by wanghong in a negative way. From their point of view, wanghong as well as the products they recommended are not trustworthy. However, in terms of the unfamiliar tourism products recommended by wanghong, the post-90s show their fondness for this information from wanghong and they are prone to purchase such tourism products. According to their opinions, such niche tourism products could help build and shape their desired identity. Moreover, in terms of tourism product consumption, it can be affected by the post-90s' financial power and whether they have free time. In addition, people's reverse psychology usually prevents them from purchasing the tourism products recommended by wanghong, the more wanghong recommend, the less they feel like buying. Furthermore, when the post-90s are at the tourist location already, they are more likely to purchase the tourism products recommended by wanghong because wanghong's recommendations help them avoid risk at a new place. This research also found out that wanghong do have an influence on the post-90s' consumption of single tourism products like hotel rooms and meals at restaurants, but have little influence on the consumption of package tours. Lastly, the various information formats as well as the function of automatic information push on social media do also affect the post-90s' perception and consumption of tourism products recommended by wanghong.

5.1. Implications

Firstly, a previous study proves that wanghong does have the potential impact on audiences' consumption decision-making (Gao, 2015). This concept can also be confirmed by this research. However, in terms of tourism products, the influence of wanghong in consumption can not be concluded simply. The degree of impact varies in whether tourists are already at the touristic location or not. Wanghong turn out to have more influence when the tourists are at the tourist destination. Moreover, wanghong's influences are also found different in different tourism products. The influence is much stronger in consuming a single tourism product than purchasing the tour package.

Secondly, a study shows impulse spending and random spending usually happen among the post-90s (Peng and Wu, 2020). However, they are rarely seen in the consumption of tourism products. Because the tourism products need time to experience and the prices are

much higher than the daily commodities in general. Financial issue and whether the consumers having the time or not are the important factor should be taken into consideration before making the purchasing decision.

Thirdly, in general, the post-90s generation prefers to present their consciousness of group commonality in the conformity consumption (Hou, 2019). However, the findings of this research show that the post-90s generation would like to be different from the majority. They prefer to build and shape their unique identity by purchasing exclusive tourism products that the public is not familiar with.

5.2. Limitations

First of all, due to the time limitation, I only conducted 10 interviews, from which the information gathered might not be abundant enough. Some nuances regarding the tourist experience of my interviewees might be still missing to answer my research question. Secondly, it should be pointed out that all the interviewees are highly educated and live in the city. Moreover, most of them have good jobs except two master candidates and four of them even own their own business. There is a big possibility that they have a wider horizon than their peers. I assume that their social context might lead them to have different views and opinions from the majority of the post-90s generation. Furthermore, all of them have a lot of travel experience within China as well as abroad while many people from the post-90s generation might not have such rich travel experience. Obviously, there are some groups I have not reached. Hence, I doubt that the sample diversity has not been guaranteed.

Thirdly, due to the regulations on the corona crisis, 90% of the interviews were completed through WeChat video calls. However, during the interviews, I found out that all of us were relatively awkward discussing a thesis topic that they have not thought of before in their daily life. Moreover, online interviews were easy to be interrupted by various things that happened accidentally at the place of the interviewee, and then it was difficult for them to keep up with what they were saying after the interruption. Furthermore, since I could not observe their body language through the video call, I wonder some answers whether are real thinking or not. Therefore, I doubt that some of them might have not expressed their opinions fully or frankly during the online interviews.

5.3. Recommendations

In the aspect of future academic research, it might be interesting and meaningful to study the post-90s generation's identity presentation on the tourism affairs related to wanghong. Because, during the research, I noticed that 90% of the interviewees stressed their negative opinions and psychological resistance towards wanghong. However, Heng, as a wanghong herself, showed data from her social media account that all her followers are from the post-90s group. In her opinion, in the current society of China, most people are affected by wanghong one way or the other, whether they embrace it, or oppose it. Moreover, as mentioned above in the limitations that the sample chosen was limited, thus, the influencing factors of social context should also be taken into consideration before conducting the research. Furthermore, it might be helpful to add an anonymous questionnaire to gather information about their behaviors related to wanghong, which the interviewees might refuse to discuss face to face. In addition, it might be much better to conduct the interviews in person instead of online, the eye contact in real life, facial expressions as well as body language might make both interviewees and interviewers more comfortable and relax, especially when we have not known each other before. It will be much more convenient and useful for the research to catch the hidden meaning through their body language.

From the practitioners' perspective, if there is a need to attract Chinese tourists, it is better for the relevant organizations and companies to use Chinese social media to promote tourism products. During the research, I noticed that, nowadays, Chinese tourists have a strong reliance on Tiktok and Red Little Book to gather tourism information. Especially for those hotels and restaurants at the tourist places, Tiktok and Little Red Book might be helpful to attract Chinese tourists. Moreover, those restaurants and hotels also can cooperate with wanghong who are living at the tourist destination. For example, as I am a Chinese currently living in the Netherlands, I found out that other Chinese people who are also living here are sharing their daily stories on Little Red Book, some of them have gained a large number of followers already and have their popularity among the Chinese community in the Netherlands as well as other users in China. In addition, some Chinese restaurants in the Netherlands are cooperating with them to promote their products and the results seem very good. Hence, if other Dutch restaurants and hotels have the needs, they can also cooperate with them or other wanghong with more popularity to promote their products as soon as we can travel again.

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Appendix 1

Interview Guide (English Version)

Below is the interview guide for this research. All interview transcripts and records are available upon request to 523448tl@student.eur.nl

Introduction of interviewer and the use of this interview.

Self-identity

1) Could you please tell me something about yourself?

2) Could you please tell me something about your online surfing habits related to social media?

3) Could you please introduce your travel habits? (Like tourism information gathering, decision making, tourism experience sharing and so on)

Influence by social media

4) What kind of accounts on social do you follow?

5) In waht occasions when you want to know something you collect information on social media, how do you do that?

6) What is your opinion about Wanghong?

7) How does the information published by Wanghong affect your understanding of something? Could you elaborate it? (ask for examples)

8) What is your opinion about the commodities recommended by Wanghong?

9) How does the Wanghong affect your choice for something? Could you elaborate it?

Traveling preference

10) How do you gather tourism information?

11) What is your opinion about tourism information on traditional media?

12）What is your opinion about the tourism information published by corporate organizations and official department, like travel agencies, local tourism office? (positive and negative aspect)

13) What is your opinion about tourism information on social media? (positive and negative aspect)

14) What is your opinion about the tourism-related information published by individuals on social media? (positive and negative aspect)

15) When planning a tour, what kind of information would you like to know?

16) If you are considering making a travel plan, will you refer to Wanghong's opinion on social media? If yes, could you elaborate it? Have you ever travelled the palce wanghong introduced ? when? why ? where?

17) In your opinion, what are the positive and negative aspects of tourism information published by Wanghong?

18) What is your opinion on traveling by considering the Covid-19 issues?

Thank you very much! Do you have something to add?

Appendix 2

Interview Guide (Chinese Version)

首先介绍我自己。

一、被采访者的相关背景信息

1、能简单地介绍一下你自己吗?

2、能介绍一下你的上网习惯吗?特别是和社交媒体有关的。

3、能介绍一下你的旅游习惯吗?比如如何搜集旅游信息、怎样做决策、如何分享旅游经历等。

二、社交媒体的影响

4、在社交媒体上你都关注了哪些账号?

5、在什么情况下你会在社交媒体上搜集信息?怎样搜集呢?可以简单地举几个例子吗?

6、你对网红的态度是什么样的?

7、你觉得网红发布的信息会影响到你吗?能举例子说明吗?

8、你对网红推荐的商品态度是什么样的?

9、网红会影响你选择某些产品吗?能举例子说明吗?

三、旅游偏好

10、你是如何搜集旅游信息的呢?

11、你怎么看待传统媒体上展示的旅游信息?

12、你觉得官方发布的旅游信息有什么特点?请举例说明优缺点。

13、你觉得社交媒体上发布的旅游信息有什么特点?请举例说明优缺点。

14、你觉得个人在社交媒体上发布的旅游信息有什么特点?请举例说明优缺点。

15、当你准备去旅行的时候,你喜欢搜集到什么样的旅游信息呢?

16、当你在做旅行计划的时候,你怎么看待网红的意见呢?能举例说明吗? (你曾经去过网红推荐的旅游地吗?)

17、你觉得网红推荐的旅游信息有什么优缺点?

18、新冠疫情结束之后你怎么看待旅游呢?

谢谢您回答我的问题,请问还有需要补充的吗?

Appendix 3

Overview of the Respondents

Below is a list of all the interviewees who have participated in this research. Due to the reason that the subject of this research is the Chinese post-90s generation, all the interviewees chose are with the nationality of Chinese and were born in the 90s.

NO.	Name	Age	Gender	Level of Education	Place of Residence	Occupation
1	Chenyu Yang	31	M	Bacherlor Degree	Zhejiang	Taobao Vendor
2	Shiyi Dai	26	F	Bacherlor Degree	Shanghai	Translator
3	Kangkang	26	M	Bacherlor Degree	Utrecht	Master Candidate
4	Lihong Wang	31	F	Bacherlor Degree	Jingdezhen	Government officer
5	Lin Mei	31	F	Master Degree	Nanchang	College Teacher
6	Shiyue Liu	28	F	Bacherlor Degree	Yichang	Yoga Coach
7	Yining Guan	26	F	Master Degree	Urumqi	Master Candidate
8	Lin Zhang	31	F	Bacherlor Degree	Amsterdam	Entrepreneur
9	Heng Xu	30	F	Bacherlor Degree	Yichang	Freelancer
10	Jia Li	28	F	Master Degree	Rotterdam	Company Employee