CHINESE MILLENNIALS PERCEPTIONS OF CREDIBILITY TOWARD TRADITIONAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract

This study examined Chinese Millennials’ reported use of social media, blogs, and traditional state-run media in print and online as well as their perceived credibility of these mediums as sources of current events information. A convenience sample of 127 Chinese Millennials, aged 18 to 33, was surveyed using an online questionnaire. Media use, perceived credibility, and demographic information were measured. Results demonstrated that Chinese Millennials prefer online sources, especially social media, to print sources for information; Chinese Millennials find traditional state-run sources, both in print and online, to be more credible than online sources. Despite the increased use of independent online sources, traditional state-run sources have maintained a reputation for trustworthiness among Chinese youth.

Readers: Jill Cornelius Underhill, PhD.
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Introduction

As has been the case since the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, traditional state-run newspapers only present current events stories approved by the government (Hong, 2011). Now, independent online media such as social media websites and blogs allow anyone to publish stories on everything from on-the-spot news coverage and research to opinion and rumor. The effects of this increasing diversity of news sources are not fully known; however, it is likely that not all segments of the population have been influenced equally due to the digital nature of the newer sources. Nevertheless, while people everywhere must adapt to the new digital information environment, Millennials—those born after 1980 who have grown up using the Internet—have been shown to use digital tools more than previous generations (Pew Research Center, 2011). Consequently, members of this generation are often referred to as “digital natives” (Selwyn, 2009; Hargittai & Litt, 2011; Ransdell, Kent, Gaillard-Kenney, & Long, 2011). This is also true in China, where young people are increasingly turning to the Internet and independent online media for information (Mou, Atkin, & Fu, 2011). At the same time, this group purportedly still uses traditional forms of media like newspapers, both online and off, to gain information about current events news. This kind of news, defined as a form of knowledge that is recognized as being socially constructed and distributed leading to a specific way of seeing and thinking about the social world, is important since it reflects the individual and collective conscious of a society (Chang, Wang, & Chen, 1998).

Millennials in China have access to traditional news sources, but have grown up using the Internet, which has expanded rapidly in recent years. According to the 29th
China Internet Development Statistical Report released in early 2012 by the China Internet Network Information Center, China now has approximately 513 million people using the Internet; notably, the majority (58 percent) of them are between the ages of 10 and 29. Moreover, the popular micro-blogging service known as weibo (微博), which was released in 2009, increased by 296 percent in 2011. About 49 percent of netizens, a general term used to describe people who use the Internet, use weibo accounts to gather information, including current events news (CNNIC, 2012). These statistics show that Chinese Millennials are in a particularly important position as they will be the primary Chinese media audience of the future and shape the way people in their country receive news. That said, little research has been done so far to determine this population’s proclivity for current events news from independent online media relative to traditional state-run media sources.

The purpose of this study is to survey current members of the Chinese Millennial generation on their media use and perceptions of credibility toward current events news that they receive from independent online media, such as social media or citizen bloggers, compared to traditional media, such as state-run newspapers and news websites. Because Millennials are quickly becoming an important media audience and beginning to shape the way people receive information, especially current events news, learning more about their media use as well as their perceptions of credibility towards these different media provides a window on the future of communication both in China and the world.

Credibility is an important part of communication research and for decades studies have been looking into how different channels, such as newspapers, television, radio, or online blogs, affect perceptions of credibility among the public (Gaziano &
McGrath, 1986; Kiousis, 2001; Flanagin & Metzger, 2000; Johnson & Kaye, 1998; 2004; 2011). Here credibility is defined as the believability, trustworthiness, and perceived expertise of a source or message, wherein credibility determinations lie with the individual receiving the information (Lankes, 2008). With traditional forms of media such as newspapers, magazines, television shows, or radio, verification of information is usually ensured through editorial processes. However, as Flanagin and Metzger (2000) pointed out, with the Internet and independent online media this kind of verification is often missing. Consequently, the user often must determine the credibility of the information on her own. Little is known about this perceptual process for Chinese digital natives. Specifically, no research examines their perceptions about media credibility in a newly diverse information environment.

Learning more about the opinions of Chinese Millennials toward information they receive and how they are influenced by current events news both online and off will be an asset to many professions. Communication companies and media organizations will learn more about how to connect and communicate with this valuable audience. Educators can better understand the communication and information gathering habits of younger students. Policymakers can include the results into their plans or suggestions on Internet-related communication issues. Communication researchers can gain valuable insight on a globally important and influential group. These benefits hold true for professionals in the United States, China, and the world.
Literature review

Independent online media is likely to continue growing in importance and pervasiveness as a source of information in China and elsewhere; some research has addressed this new topic. The use of traditional state-run media and independent online media in China, as well as research findings on public perceptions of credibility towards both of these media, are discussed. Finally, information on Millennials in China and what makes them unique from previous generations both in their media consumption habits as well as their values will be provided.

Traditional State-run Media Use in China

Studies show that Chinese citizens are avid consumers of news disseminated through the country’s traditional state-run outlets and use it to make sense of the world around them despite knowledge of the state’s active involvement in the media industry (Chang, Wang, & Chen, 1994; La Ferle, Edwards, & Lee, 2008; Moro & Aikat, 2010; He & Zhu, 2002). According to the regulations of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which governs the state, media should serve the politics of the party (Xu, 2005). Consequently, the media is organized and run according to a prescribed structure that serves the interests of the CCP. Much of the information found in traditional Chinese media has been at turns selected, emphasized, verified, edited, and censored according to the CCP’s discretion, a situation that has lead Reporters Without Borders to rank China 174 out of 179 countries worldwide in 2012 in terms of press freedom (Reporters Without Borders, 2012). This reality has not affected the domestic popularity of Chinese media outlets, however, which are among some of the most successful in world. These include major outlets such as Xinhua News Agency, the People’s Daily newspaper, and
China Central Television (CCTV), local newspapers and television channels, as well as a burgeoning commercial media that has thrived as the government relaxed ownership of the media market (De Burgh, 2000). In recent years, due to high public demand, most news outlets have begun offering their services online as well as in traditional formats.

Chang, Wang, and Chen (1994) looked at the role traditional news media has played in the lives of the Chinese public, specifically as a provider of social knowledge. To accomplish this, the researchers performed qualitative and quantitative analyses of CCTV’s news programs and the People’s Daily domestic editions for one month in 1992 and compared their findings with the results from earlier content analyses dating back 15 years. They determined that since the political reforms of the 1970s, the news media has provided Chinese citizens with the basic knowledge needed to understand the environment around them. Since the stories presented by these outlets were the predominant source of information for most Chinese people, and since they were largely determined by the Chinese government, they created a forced consensus among the populous that furthered the government’s legitimacy.

In a cross-cultural study, La Ferle, Edwards, and Lee (2008) surveyed Chinese, Taiwanese, and Americans to determine whether there was any difference in media-use patterns among the groups. A convenience sample of 2,046 adults was surveyed through face-to-face interviews in Beijing and Taipei and online in the United States. The researchers found that Chinese reported much greater newspaper usage, with 100 percent of respondents saying they read a newspaper everyday compared to only 69.6 percent of Americans. Additionally, 90.3 percent of Chinese respondents said they read the
newspaper between one and two hours every day compared to only 64.1 percent of Americans.

Meanwhile, Moro and Aikat (2010) examined newspaper business models in China to better understand why China’s newspaper market, which is the second largest in the world with 109 million copies sold daily, is not only successful, but thriving compared to its Western counterparts. Results showed that three criteria characterized the success of this market: financial sustainability, consistency with civil-libertarian values, and adaptability to emerging media such as the Internet. The researchers determined that traditional Chinese newspapers have maintained popularity over time by providing customers with a consistent product while adapting to new outlets, such as the Internet, in line with customer demands.

He and Zhu (2002) were also interested in whether Chinese newspapers would continue to thrive or whether they would begin to suffer the same fate as many Western newspapers in the Internet age. Through field observations, in-depth interviews, content analyses, and surveys, the researchers provided background information on the transition many Chinese newspapers are making to offer content online. The researchers determined that despite many difficulties—including financial, regulatory, and structural challenges—the majority of China’s newspapers were moving online while still offering their traditional product. According to the interviews, growing social demand was forcing the newspapers to offer their product online and they expected to profit from the move in the future.

As these studies show, China’s traditional state-run media industry remains very popular among the public as a source of information. In addition, compared to media
industries in other areas of the world, China’s media has been able to maintain its success despite the threat of online variants and the increasing availability of information on the Internet. While the Chinese public knows that the stories presented through these media outlets are chosen by the state, they continue to look to them for information on current events both online and off.

**Perceptions of Credibility Toward Traditional Media**

Studies on the media use trends in a country provide valuable information on the relationship between traditional media and the public, as the previous section has shown. However, knowledge on public perceptions of credibility toward these media outlets adds an important perspective for communication scholars. Research on this topic can be traced back to the mid-20th century and dealt with issues such as how to define and measure public perceptions of media credibility (Westley & Severin, 1964; Mulder, 1981; Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). In studies, credibility was often studied in terms of three overlapping domains: channel, medium, and source. Recent research generally considers credibility toward traditional media as being influenced by certain demographic variables and including multiple dimensions. Additionally, media credibility is defined as a perception of the news channels’ believability, separate from its individual sources or content (Bucy, 2003).

In some of the earliest and most comprehensive studies on the topic, Westley and Severin (1964) and then Mulder (1981) looked at whether different demographic variables are related to media credibility perceptions. The researchers examined the inter-relationship of variables such as sex, race, political preference, income, and age on media credibility. The results showed that certain demographic variables, such as age,
education, and gender, mediate people’s perceptions of channel. They also pointed to the importance of considering both channel and medium in credibility research. Consequently, many future studies, including this one, take into account demographic variables, as well as familiarity with the channels and mediums being examined.

Later, Gaziano and McGrath (1986) focused on determining what factors should be included in studies of medium credibility, specifically toward newspapers and broadcast news. Through a factor analysis, the researchers found 12 factors that most accurately reflected the concept of credibility. This group included items like fair, unbiased, trustworthy, complete, factual, and accurate. Recent research has furthered our understanding of media credibility. In a comparative study, Bucy (2003) researched how audiences perceived the credibility of traditional news presented online and broadcast news. Bucy’s study took into account demographic factors such as age as well as channel and medium credibility measured through five factors: fairness, accuracy, believability, informativeness, and depth of information. Results showed that there were statistically significant differences in the perceptions of credibility toward each medium based on the surveyed measures. Meanwhile, Kiousis (2001) explored perceptions of credibility for three mediums—television, newspapers, and online news. Like Bucy, Kiousis took into account demographic variables, including age, education and gender, as well as how credibility factors might differ according to channel, medium, or source. Results showed how credibility ranged across different mediums and showed statistically significant results related to demographic variables.

These studies emphasize the importance of researching perceptions of credibility in order to completely understand media use patterns among the public. By looking at the
media channel, specific factors that impact credibility, and demographic variables, researchers have been able to get a better understanding of how audiences perceive credibility. The studies also suggest the importance of certain factors in the measurement of credibility, namely, accuracy, bias, believability, depth of information, trustworthiness, fairness and timeliness, which have consequently been integrated in this study.

Moreover, this research seems to allow communication scholars to predict credibility trends and intention to use different media. While the majority of these studies were performed in the United States, the results offer important insights for studies that focus specifically on perceptions of credibility toward traditional media in other countries as well, including China.

**Perceptions of Credibility Toward Traditional State-run Media in China**

People in China generally have positive perceptions of credibility toward news received from domestic traditional media; however, this reality may be changing (Liu & Bates, 2009; Li, Xuan & Kluver, 2003; Zhou & Moy, 2007; Chan, Lee, & Pan, 2006). In recent years, the explosion in access to and usage of the Internet in China has led to increased access to information for the public. According to the China Internet Network Information Center, there are now 513 million people using the Internet in China, up from only 210 million in 2007; and, Internet penetration is now at 38.3 percent of the population (CNNIC, 2012). But while many more people are getting their traditional media online, they are also accessing other sources of information as well. This new media environment, combined with an existing lack of perceived credibility for the government, may be undermining positive perceptions of credibility toward traditional media going forward.
Considering this changing environment, Liu and Bates (2009) performed a cross-cultural comparative study in China and the United States to learn more about public trust in the media. The researchers collected data on media credibility from institutions such as the Pew Research Center and the General Social Survey in the United States as well as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and several universities in China, to compare trends. They found that public perceptions of credibility for news media were much higher in China than in the United States; only 53 percent of Americans expressed “a great deal” of credibility in U.S. media, but respondents in China reported credibility of 85.3 percent in one survey and 91.2 percent in a second. However, in China specifically, certain incidents led to a slight lessening in credibility toward the media. For example, after the SARS outbreak of 2003, the media bowed to government pressure and avoided reporting on the seriousness of the outbreak in China for several months supposedly in an effort to maintain public order. When this was discovered, however, it led to widespread public outrage among the Chinese public as well as the rest of the world. Nevertheless, despite a slight dip in credibility after the media eventually began reporting on the epidemic, positive perceptions of the media have remained consistently high over the past 25 years.

Meanwhile, Li, Xuan, and Kluver (2003) chose to research Chinese perceptions of credibility toward the news media through the comments given by readers of China’s leading state-run newspaper, People’s Daily. To do this, the researchers performed a content analysis of netizen posts from the bulletin board of People’s Daily, known as the Qiangguo (强国), or “strong nation,” Forum. The posts covered six specific topics chosen by the researchers from six different periods of coverage in April 2001. Results
showed that a majority of posters maintained trust for the domestic news media, even if they distrusted the information released by the government, or felt the need to seek out additional information on events from foreign media outlets. Thus, positive perceptions of the traditional state-run media remained high even when the public distrusted the information coming from the state.

Instead of looking at posts related to several topics over time, Zhou and Moy (2007) focused on a specific incident in order to determine how active netizens were in determining media frames, the ways the media construct stories in order to provide a certain interpretation of the information provided. To accomplish this, the researchers looked at 206 posts from the People’s Daily Qiangguo Forum as well as news reports from various media outlets including newspapers, television, magazines, and news agencies on an incident that received broad attention from the public and the media in late 2003 known as the “BMW case.” In this incident, the wife of a successful businessman in Harbin, northeast China, ran over an onion seller after the latter accidentally scratched her car. After going to trial, the woman was not given any jail time, prompting cries of injustice online. The researchers found that netizens’ frame salience and creation dictated those provided by the media early on, but then became weaker as the news media established reporting on the issue. Further, Zhou and Moy reported that low perceptions of credibility toward news outlets run by the Chinese government might have lead netizens to question the media’s framing of the incident later on.

Finally, Chan, Lee, and Pan (2006) turned attention to those involved in the news business to determine their perceptions of credibility toward the information provided in
traditional media outlets. By first taking a purposive sample of news media outlets in two major Chinese cities and then taking a random sample of journalists from this group, the researchers collected 482 surveys that measured perceptions of credibility towards traditional news media. They found that traditional media outlets received ratings that were significantly higher than the scale’s midpoint, showing that the majority of journalists believed traditional media to have high levels of credibility. The ratings for state-run news media were also higher than those for domestic commercial media outlets.

These studies lay out the complex relationships between the public, the media, and the government in China concerning perceptions of credibility toward information provided in the traditional state-run media outlets. While these relationships may not be simple, all the studies agree that the Chinese public has long maintained a high level of credibility toward their domestic media outlets. Nevertheless, distrust of the government and growing access to information, opinions, and foreign media via the Internet has been complicating public opinion on current events news, as several of the studies showed. Consequently, while traditional state-run news outlets have so far managed to retain audiences and credibility by adapting to new technologies, their efforts may be undermined in the future by these very technologies.

Social Media Use in China

Social media is a relatively new tool in the online world, but it has already gained significant attention from researchers (Shen, Wang, Guo, & Gui, 2009; Arsene, 2008; Wang, 2010). Social media is a term used to describe a variety of channels that are used to create and disseminate content on the Internet (Westerman, Spence, & Van Der Heide, 2011). Through social media, people have access to a wide variety of information such as
news, opinion, analysis, insights, and on-the-spot reporting often very quickly and easily. For example, according to the Pew Research Center (2011), two-thirds of online adults in the United States use social media platforms such as Facebook (http://www.facebook.com), Twitter (http://www.twitter.com), MySpace (http://www.myspace.com), or LinkedIn (http://www.linkedin.com) to get news about friends and family, hobbies, areas of interest, or current events. Users can obtain this information through a wide variety of sources, including articles, short online postings such as Tweets, Facebook or blog posts, and shared links to website pages. Additionally, users can comment on most of this content or modify, re-post, or re-send it, adding another layer of source material and information.

Whereas studies on general social media use are growing, those focused on social media use in China are less prevalent. The constantly changing environment for social media use has made relevant research even scarcer. Nevertheless, the majority of studies identify two trends in Chinese social media use: that its popularity is growing, and that it is a common source for current events information through independent online media located on these social media forums.

Shen, Wang, Guo, and Gui (2009) studied Internet use and online expression through social media platforms in China to learn more about the importance of the Internet in the lives of ordinary Chinese. In their study, the researchers analyzed three data sets from 6,547 respondents collected by the World Internet Project in 2003, 2005, and 2007. The studies were conducted either by telephone or face-to-face in five Chinese cities and contained a variety of participants from different educational, economic, and geographic areas. The researchers determined that while people are afraid to speak out in
public, they are doing so more often on the Internet through social media tools. Consequently, there has been an increase in the use of these types of forums as places to receive and share information. This includes an increase in the sharing and dissemination of information on current events news through these social media platforms.

Meanwhile, Arsene (2008) researched the role of the Internet and social media tools in the lives of Chinese people. Arsene conducted a series of in-depth interviews with 50 Chinese men and women, aged 18 to 40, from a variety of backgrounds in terms of class, income, profession, and neighborhood in Beijing. During the interviews, the participants were asked how they use social media tools, their opinions of the services, and the values they find important online. She determined that at this point the use of social media tools for current events news is inextricably embedded among younger members of Chinese society and offers users a place to find and share information that cannot be found elsewhere. Consequently, social media use is not only becoming more popular, especially among young people, but social media platforms are also becoming an important place for these young people to get current events information.

Finally, in a study on the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, Wang (2010) focused on how people across China used social media tools to find current information on a specific event, in this case a national catastrophe. Wang performed a case study of the event through data collection and archival research as well as qualitative interviews, personal experience, and Internet research of social media and online news sources. Wang determined that the Internet has become an integral part of most people’s lives that equals traditional media as a source of information, a reality she says was emphasized during the events of the 2008 earthquake.
Overall, these studies show that not only are more people in China using social media tools, but more of them are also using these tools as a source of information on current events. Additionally, these studies assert that the independent online media available to the public through social media tools have become as popular and conventional as traditional news sources. Yet, while many studies have provided research on the use of social media in China, perceptions of credibility toward current events information received from independent online media sources or social media remains unexplored.

**Perceptions of Credibility Toward Social Media**

As with traditional media, research on how the public perceives the credibility of social media offers an important dimension to the study of its use. While the field of research is relatively new and studies are less common, interest in the area is growing. Most communication professionals have looked to studies on perceptions of credibility toward traditional media as a starting point for their research. Consequently, they also take into account the influence of demographic variables and multiple credibility factors. However, in these studies, more attention is often given to the role of the individual in evaluating the information provided (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000; Johnson & Kaye, 1998; Johnson & Kaye, 2004; Lankes, 2007).

For instance, in an early study, Flanagin and Metzger (2000) looked at how people perceived and evaluated information they found from different categories on the Internet, including social media outlets. According to the researchers, the Internet differs from traditional media in credibility assessments because audiences know the information is decentralized and there are fewer levels of verification, such as editorial review or
content analysis. Consequently, audiences must create their own strategies for evaluation in order to find credible information. The researchers determined that these include experience, information verification, and identifying the medium, channel, or source.

Meanwhile, Johnson and Kaye (1998; 2004) performed two separate comparative studies to determine how audiences perceived the credibility of traditional media compared with Internet sources. One study looked at Internet sources in general, including online news websites and topic-specific sites with social media functions, while the second study focused specifically on weblogs. In both studies, the researchers determined that demographics and media use habits influence perceptions of credibility toward information found online. Additionally, web users found online media sources, specifically those with social media functions, to be more credible than traditional media.

Finally, in a recent study, Lankes (2007) looked at how concepts of credibility are changing due to the emergence of the Internet and social media sites as sources of information. According to the findings, the popularity of the Internet has lead audiences to change the way they evaluate information, especially among younger generations. Before the Internet, the traditional media environment encouraged an “authority” method of evaluation where audiences trusted third parties, such as news organizations, to provide credible information. Now, however, the Internet has allowed audiences to adopt “information self-sufficiency” along with a “reliability” method of evaluation where multiple information sources are considered. According to Lankes, social media outlets are an outgrowth of this trend and provide the framework for audiences to gather credible information.
These studies, along with those on perceptions of credibility toward traditional media, provide a sense of the current field of research on social media. While findings may differ somewhat depending on where the studies are performed, certain trends seem evident. Specifically, the rise of the Internet and social media sites seem to be changing the way that people gather information. These outlets are also having an effect on how people determine credible sources of information.

**Perceptions of Credibility Toward Social Media in China**

Research on perceptions of credibility toward information received from social media is growing but remains minimal, and this reality is even more pronounced for English language studies focused on China (Tai & Sun, 2007; Deng, 2009; Andersen, Tufte, Rasmussen, & Chan, 2007; Jin, Cheung, Lee, & Chen; 2009). Nevertheless, the research that has been done so far reveals an interesting dynamic at play. Specifically, increased usage and participation with online social media and positive perceptions of credibility seem to reinforce each other. The more people use online social media, the more credible they think it is and vice versa. Additionally, in China, more people are turning to social media as a viable source of credible information particularly in instances where traditional media fails to offer information desired by the public.

For example, Tai and Sun (2007) looked at how public media dependencies changed during the 2003 SARS epidemic in China. At the beginning of the outbreak, the Chinese government pressured media outlets to refrain from publishing any information on the outbreak, ostensibly to maintain public order. However, this information vacuum led the Chinese public to seek information elsewhere and social media platforms in the country became a popular place for people to disseminate and share information.
Through in-depth interviews and qualitative analysis, the researchers found that while credibility toward the information shared on these platforms was initially low, the public grew to depend on them as the only source of accurate information. According to the researchers, this event marked the first time that social communication on the Internet became an important tool for current events information for the public.

Meanwhile, in a comparative study, Deng (2009) sought to determine how journalism students in mainland China and Hong Kong evaluate the credibility of independent online news found on social media outlets. Results from a survey of 844 journalism students at nine universities in the two areas found that a significant majority of both groups of students frequently used the Internet. Further, the students’ engagement and participation with online social media had a significant correlation with positive perceptions of credibility toward these independent online news media.

Through a cross-cultural comparison, Andersen, Tufte, Rasmussen, and Chan (2007) looked at how pre-teens in Denmark and Hong Kong differed in the ways they use and trust information found on the Internet. The researchers conducted a survey with a convenience sample of 434 fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students aged 10 to 13 at six schools in Denmark and Hong Kong with an equal number of boys and girls. The study results showed that while both groups equally used word-of-mouth advice to find credible information online, Hong Kong pre-teens were more likely to find credible sources by surfing the web alone than their Danish counterparts, who were more likely to get recommendations from offline sources.

Finally, Jin, Cheung, Lee, and Chen (2009) looked at how social media outlets in China retained members. To do this, the researchers performed a content analysis of posts
and user profiles on a Chinese university bulletin board followed by a survey of 240 users, all of whom were university students. Results showed that a positive perception of source credibility significantly correlated with user satisfaction and intention to continue use.

The use of social media has been increasing exponentially over the past few years and all indicators show that it will continue to grow. Use of the micro-blog service weibo, first introduced in 2009, increased by 296 percent in 2011 (CNNIC, 2011) and, according to a 2011 survey by Netpop Research, 90 percent of Chinese Internet users had accessed a social media site in the past 30 days (Netpop Research, 2011). Consequently, if the trends forecast by these studies persist, positive perceptions of credibility toward social media may continue to increase as well. As a majority (58 percent) of current Chinese Internet users belong to the Millennial generation, it is especially worthwhile to understand more about them and what differentiates them from previous generations.

**Millennials in China**

The Millennial generation, comprised of those born in or after 1980, has been characterized differently from preceding generations both in China and around the world. In the West, Millennials are found to have different values and beliefs from previous generations. For example, they tend to be more politically progressive, less religiously observant, and more trusting of institutions (Pew Research Center, 2011). Importantly, Millennials have grown up using the Internet and digital media, making these tools less astonishing innovations than parts of everyday life. Consequently, members of this group have come to be known as “digital natives.” In China, similar trends have been found
among the Millennial generation, especially in terms of Internet and digital media use. Nevertheless, these Millennials also display uniquely Chinese characteristics.

Moore and College (2005) noted that many of the current changes to Chinese society are being driven by Millennials and decided to learn more about this group, their beliefs and values, as well as how they differ from previous generations. To accomplish this, the researchers performed an ethnography of Millennial youth culture in China comprised of questionnaires, interviews, and observations at universities in four Chinese cities from 1993 to 2005. They found that the characteristics most approved of by Millennials include concealing emotions, appearing stylish, and being independent, competent, and friendly. This lead the researchers to nickname Chinese Millennials “Generation Ku (酷)” after a popular slang word derived from the English term “cool.” This term first became popular among Chinese youth through Internet forums and seems to encapsulate the values and attitudes of which they approve.

Meanwhile, in order to better understand the social structure of Millennials in China, Moore, Bindler, and Pandich (2010) chose to examine the unique language that has been developed and used by the group. Known as liyu (俚語), and commonly translated into English as “slang,” this language was traditionally linked with regionalism but now connotes more generational and digital divides in China. To learn more about liyu, the researchers collected 55 questionnaires and performed 60 interviews with Millennials in seven Chinese cities from 2007 to 2009. They determined that this “slang” language, which has strong ties in both its creation and use to the Internet, reflects the attitudes of a Millennial generation in China that elevates ideals such as solidarity and egalitarianism among youth, individuality, humor, and modernism. They argued that this
language was also regarded by Chinese Millennials as distinctly their own, symbolizing an attitude and value system different from previous generations.

Yi, Ribbens, and Morgan (2010), meanwhile, also studied generational differences in attitudes, values and beliefs in China but focused on their implications for the workplace. For the study, 277 Chinese people between the ages of 20 and 50 were surveyed to learn more about what they perceived to be the most common generational differences. The researchers found that while members of the Millennial generation in China have the same cultural values as previous generations, they have embraced Western-style values and behaviors that are more closely related to those held by members of the Millennial generation in places such as the United States.

Overall, these studies show that the Millennial generation in China is unique from previous generations in many ways. As the researchers argued, the values, beliefs, and attitudes of Chinese youths are markedly different from that of their parents. Chinese Millennials are differentiated by their approval of characteristics such as individuality, independence, and modernism, and their use of the Internet to create and disseminate cultural trends that nurture unity among them. Further, these differences are actively embraced by the Millennial generation and have the potential to spur broader changes in Chinese culture.

Research Questions

Considering the previous research, several points can be made about the use of and perceptions of credibility toward traditional and social media as well as the unique characteristics of the Millennial generation in China. Traditional media has long maintained a loyal audience in the Chinese public, who perceive the information on
current events news they receive from their domestic newspapers and television news shows to be credible despite conflicting feelings toward the government that controls them. Social media, meanwhile, is becoming more popular due to the increased accessibility of the Internet in China. However, positive perceptions of credibility toward information received from this media are not a given and usually depend on increased use and participation. The Millennial youths in China grew up with and are among the most dominant users of social media, which has helped shape and demonstrate the values, beliefs, and attitudes that set them apart from previous generations such as individuality, independence, and modernism. Nevertheless, information on how this group perceives the credibility of current events news they receive from social media compared with traditional media remains unknown. Consequently, the following research questions are put forth:

**RQ1:** What is the self-reported media use of Chinese Millennials?

**RQ2:** How do Chinese Millennials perceive the credibility of current events information from traditional state-run news media in print compared with that of traditional state-run news media online?

**RQ3:** How do Chinese Millennials perceive the credibility of current events information from traditional state-run news media in print compared with that of social media?

**RQ4:** How do Chinese Millennials perceive the credibility of current events information from traditional state-run news media in print compared with that of independent blogs?

**RQ5:** How do Chinese Millennials perceive the credibility of current events information from traditional state-run news media online compared with that of social media?
RQ6: How do Chinese Millennials perceive the credibility of current events information from traditional state-run news media online compared with that of independent blogs?

RQ7: How do Chinese Millennials perceive the credibility of current events information from social media compared with that of independent blogs?
Method

An online survey was conducted of Chinese Millennials, specifically university students and recent graduates in Beijing, to assess their media use and perceptions of credibility toward current events information they receive from traditional state-run media, such as state-run newspapers in print and online, and independent online media, such as social media and blogs, as well as what factors influence these perceptions. Particular emphasis was placed on accuracy, bias, believability, depth of information, trustworthiness, fairness and timeliness, following previous credibility research (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000; Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). Demographic information was also studied for additional insights on what factors may affect perceptions of credibility toward each medium.

The survey method was chosen in order to better understand the perceptions of a large population (Babbie, 2004). For this project, the survey method is the ideal choice because it provided information from the participants that could be used to explain the perceptions of credibility that young people in China have toward state-run media and independent online media as well as explore the factors that may influence these perceptions.

Participants

Chinese members of the Millennial generation, specifically Chinese citizens born in 1980 or afterwards who were also over 18 years of age, represented the desired sampling frame. An a priori power analysis indicated 82 participants were needed (α = .05; Power (1- β) = .80; d= .3; Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007).
The final sample consisted of 127 participants. Women comprised the majority of the sample \((N=80; \text{65 percent})\), men made up the rest of the sample \((N=43; \text{35 percent})\), with four participants not reporting their sex. The ages ranged from 18 to 33, with an average age of approximately 23 years old \((M=23.12, SD=2.49)\). On average, participants reported having five years of higher education instruction \((M=5.44, SD=2.51)\). The majority of participants \((N=104; \text{82 percent})\), were students and most \((N=81; \text{64 percent})\), attended Renmin University in Beijing, China. Most of the participants, \((N=78; \text{61 percent})\), also reported having majored in the Communication field, such as Journalism \((N=62; \text{49 percent})\), Broadcasting \((N=10; \text{8 percent})\), or various other Communication majors \((N=6; \text{5 percent})\), with the second most common major being Foreign Language \((N=20; \text{16 percent})\). A variety of other majors were reported for the remainder of participants \((N=22, \text{17 percent})\) with seven participants not reporting their major. Additionally, while the majority of participants \((N=100, \text{79 percent})\) currently lived in Beijing, only four were originally from there; many came from the Northern part of the country \((N=25; \text{20 percent})\) from provinces such as Shanxi or Heilongjiang and others came from the Eastern part of the country \((N=23; \text{18 percent})\) including provinces such as Shandong or Anhui with the rest \((N=48, \text{38 percent})\) coming from various other provinces across the country. Finally, the majority of participants \((N=63; \text{50 percent})\) reported spending between 1,000 and 2,000 RMB, or between 160 and 320 USD, a month, and the second largest group \((N=44; \text{35 percent})\) reported that they spent over 2,000 RMB per month. According to United Nations data, the average annual urban disposable income for Chinese citizens is 21,810 RMB or about 3,500 USD \((Yao \& Wang, 2013)\).
Procedures

Approval for the study was obtained from The Johns Hopkins University Homewood Institutional Review Board before data collection began. A survey was then conducted from December 1, 2012 through January 18, 2013 to examine what factors influence perceptions of credibility toward current events news received from traditional state-run media and independent online media among Chinese Millennials.

The final Chinese survey was created by translating the original English questionnaire to Chinese. The final Chinese survey was back-translated into English with the help of a bi-lingual graduate student from Renmin University’s School of Communication. Prior to distribution of the final questionnaire, a panel of five Millennial native Chinese speakers examined the translated survey to ensure face validity. The panel read over the survey and made suggestions on ways to rephrase explanations or questions in the Chinese translation to ensure participant understanding. The questionnaire was revised in order to ensure proper wording and understanding of the final survey.

Through non-random sampling, potential participants were recruited primarily through a network of professors and students at Renmin University thanks to affiliations made at this institution. Students from Renmin University’s School of Communication were sent an e-mail about the online survey from their professors (see Appendix A) and told in class that they could earn extra credit that would be counted toward their final homework grade by participating. Students were informed in the email that the survey was for Johns Hopkins University on perceptions of credibility toward traditional state-run media and independent online media. They were also told that participation was voluntary, that they could stop at any time, and that their responses were confidential. To
motivate participation, participants were offered the opportunity to enter a raffle for one of four Starbucks gift cards worth 88 RMB (14.14 USD) with coupons for free and discounted beverages. They were then asked to pass the survey on to anyone who fit the participation requirements. The survey’s website link was also posted on social media sites such as Facebook (http://www.facebook.com), Twitter (http://www.twitter.com), Sina Weibo (http://weibo.com), and independent blogs. Additional Chinese Millennials in Beijing, Tianjin, Nanjing and elsewhere in China, as well as worldwide, were recruited via snowball sampling.

The survey was administered online through the Survey Gizmo website and took participants approximately 15 minutes to complete. Participants were asked to fill out the survey by themselves. The first page of the survey asked participants to verify that they were 18 years of age or older, were Chinese citizens, and that they were born after 1980 in order to ensure they fit the criteria for taking the survey. Informed consent was obtained on the next page (see Appendix B), where participants were given an introduction to the survey and those who agreed to take the survey certified their intent via a click-through function.

The survey consisted of an introduction followed by three question sections including media use, media credibility, and demographic sections. All the questions on the survey were close-ended (see Appendix C for list of questions). Most questions were asked following a 7-point Likert scale. Credibility questions focused on seven factors: accuracy, bias, believability, depth of information, trustworthiness, fairness, and timeliness (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000; Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). Media use and demographic questions were asked to better understand study participants. At the end of
the survey, participants were invited to participate in a raffle for one of four Starbucks gift cards worth 88 RMB (14.14 USD) by leaving their email address. Participants were thanked for their time and contributions and given the option to contact the student researcher if they had any questions about the survey in the future.

**Instrumentation**

**Short-term Media Use.** Information on short-term media use was collected from participants through scales previously used in research by Robinson et al. (2000) on mass media use and social life among Internet users. Participants were asked to indicate how much time they spent on average yesterday with each medium (traditional state-run newspapers in print, traditional state-run newspapers online, social media, and independent blogs) by selecting one of the following options: Did not use medium, 1 to 5 minutes, 6 to 9 minutes, 10 to 14 minutes, 15 to 19 minutes, 20 to 29 minutes, 30 to 59 minutes, or 1 hour or more.

**Long-term Media Use.** Information on long-term media use was collected from participants through scales previously used in research by Robinson et al. (2000) on mass media use and social life among Internet users. Participants were asked to indicate how much time they spent on average last month with each medium (traditional state-run newspapers in print, traditional state-run newspapers online, social media, and independent blogs) by selecting one of the following options: Every day, 3 to 5 days/week, 1 to 2 days/week, once every few weeks, less often, or never or don’t.

**Credibility Toward State-run Print Newspapers.** Credibility toward state-run newspapers in print was measured using a 7-item, 7-point Likert scale previously used in intercultural research on media perceptions (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000). Participants
were asked to indicate their feelings about the accuracy, bias, depth of information, trustworthiness, fairness, and timeliness provided by the medium. The scale for traditional state-run newspapers in print was reliable ($M=4.55$, $SD=1.17$, $\alpha=.87$).

**Credibility Toward State-run Online Newspapers.** Credibility toward state-run newspapers online was measured using a 7-item, 7-point Likert scale previously used in intercultural research on media perceptions (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000). Participants were asked to indicate their feelings about the accuracy, bias, depth of information, trustworthiness, fairness, and timeliness provided by the medium. The scale for traditional state-run newspapers online was reliable ($M=4.60$, $SD=1.08$, $\alpha=.85$).

**Credibility Toward Social Media.** Credibility toward social media was measured using a 7-item, 7-point Likert scale previously used in intercultural research on media perceptions (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000). Participants were asked to indicate their feelings about the accuracy, bias, depth of information, trustworthiness, fairness, and timeliness provided by the medium. The scale for social media was reliable ($M=4.17$, $SD=.86$, $\alpha=.78$).

**Credibility Toward Independent Blogs.** Credibility toward independent blogs was measured using a 7-item, 7-point Likert scale previously used in intercultural research on media perceptions (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000). Participants were asked to indicate their feelings about the accuracy, bias, depth of information, trustworthiness, fairness, and timeliness provided by the medium. The scale for independent blogs was reliable ($M=4.13$, $SD=.80$, $\alpha=.76$).

**Demographics.** In this study, demographic information was collected through a short series of eight questions at the end of the survey. First, participants were asked...
whether they were male or female and their age. Next, participants were asked how many
years of higher education above high school they had completed, where they currently go
to university or, if they were not students, what university they had graduated from. They
were then asked to state their field of study in university, and if they were currently
students. Finally, participants were asked where they currently live, and then if they could
estimate the amount of their monthly spending.

Results

Research Question 1 inquired about the self-reported media use of Chinese
Millennials. For traditional state-run newspapers in print, 81.9 percent (N= 104) of
participants reported not using the medium yesterday, 7.1 percent (N= 9) reported using
the medium for 1 to 5 minutes yesterday, 3.9 percent (N= 5) reported using the medium
for 6 to 9 minutes, 3.1 percent (N= 4) reported using the medium for 10 to 14 minutes,
2.4 percent (N= 3) reported using the medium for 15 to 19 minutes, .8 percent (N= 1)
reported using the medium for 20 to 29 minutes, and .8 percent (N= 1) reported using the
medium for an hour or more yesterday.

For traditional state-run newspapers online, 26 percent (N= 33) of participants
reported not using the medium yesterday, 14.2 percent (N= 18) reported using the
medium for 1 to 5 minutes yesterday, 18.9 percent (N= 24) reported using the medium
for 6 to 9 minutes, 16.5 percent (N= 21) reported using the medium for 10 to 14 minutes,
10.2 percent (N= 13) reported using the medium for 15 to 19 minutes, 8.7 percent (N= 11)
reported using the medium for 20 to 29 minutes, 2.4 percent (N= 3) reported using
the medium for 30 to 59 minutes yesterday, and 3.1 percent (N= 4) reported using the
medium for an hour or more yesterday.
For social media, 5.5 percent (N= 7) of participants reported not using the medium yesterday, 1.6 percent (N= 2) reported using the medium for 1 to 5 minutes yesterday, 3.1 percent (N= 4) reported using the medium for 6 to 9 minutes, 5.5 percent (N= 7) reported using the medium for 10 to 14 minutes, 7.1 percent (N= 9) reported using the medium for 15 to 19 minutes, 9.4 percent (N= 12) reported using the medium for 20 to 29 minutes, 19.7 percent (N= 25) reported using the medium for 30 to 59 minutes yesterday, and 48 percent (N= 61) reported using the medium for an hour or more yesterday.

For independent blogs, 37.8 percent (N= 48) of participants reported not using the medium yesterday, 12.6 percent (N= 16) reported using the medium for 1 to 5 minutes yesterday, 4.7 percent (N= 6) reported using the medium for 6 to 9 minutes, 5.5 percent (N= 7) reported using the medium for 10 to 14 minutes, 11 percent (N= 14) reported using the medium for 15 to 19 minutes, 7.1 percent (N= 9) reported using the medium for 20 to 29 minutes, 7.1 percent (N= 9) reported using the medium for 30 to 59 minutes yesterday, and 14.2 percent (N= 18) reported using the medium for an hour or more yesterday.

Next, self-reported long-term use was examined. When reporting long-term use for traditional state-run newspapers in print, 3.1 percent (N= 4) of participants reported using the medium every day, 4.7 percent (N= 6) reported using the medium for 3 to 5 days a week, 8.7 percent (N= 11) reported using the medium for 1 to 2 days a week, 11.8 percent (N= 15) reported using the medium once every few weeks, 52.8 percent (N= 67) reported using the medium less often, and 18.9 percent (N= 24) reported never using the medium.
When reporting long-term use for traditional state-run newspapers online, 24.4 percent (N= 31) of participants reported using the medium every day, 15 percent (N= 19) reported using the medium for 3 to 5 days a week, 16.5 percent (N= 21) reported using the medium for 1 to 2 days a week, 12.6 percent (N= 16) reported using the medium once every few weeks, 25.2 percent (N= 32) reported using the medium less often, and 5.5 percent (N= 7) reported never using the medium.

When reporting long-term use for social media, 80.3 percent (N= 102) of participants reported using the medium every day, 5.5 percent (N= 7) reported using the medium for 3 to 5 days a week, 6.3 percent (N= 8) reported using the medium for 1 to 2 days a week, 1.6 percent (N= 2) reported using the medium once every few weeks, 6.3 percent (N= 8) reported using the medium less often, and no participants reported never using the medium.

When reporting long-term use for independent blogs, 21.3 percent (N= 27) of participants reported using the medium every day, 18.9 percent (N= 24) reported using the medium for 3 to 5 days a week, 13.4 percent (N= 17) reported using the medium for 1 to 2 days a week, 5.5 percent (N= 7) reported using the medium once every few weeks, 29.1 percent (N= 37) reported using the medium less often, and 11 percent (N= 14) reported never using the medium.

Research Question 2 asked what the perceived credibility is of current events news received from traditional state-run newspapers in print versus traditional state-run newspapers online. A paired sample t-test was performed to test for significant differences between the credibility ratings of the mediums. There was no statistically
significant difference in the ratings for traditional state-run newspapers in print ($M= 4.50$, $SD= 1.17$) and online ($M= 4.60$, $SD= 1.17$); $t(121)= -.86, p > .05$.

Research Question 3 asked what the perceived credibility is of current events news received from traditional state-run newspapers in print versus social media. A paired sample t-test was performed to test for significant differences between the credibility ratings of the mediums. There was a significant difference in the ratings for traditional state-run newspapers in print ($M= 4.56$, $SD= 1.17$) and social media ($M= 4.17$, $SD= .86$); $t(122)= 3.13, p < .01$.

Research Question 4 asked what the perceived credibility is of current events news received from traditional state-run newspapers in print versus independent blogs. A paired sample t-test was performed to test for significant differences between the credibility ratings of the mediums. There was a significant difference in the ratings for traditional state-run newspapers in print ($M= 4.56$, $SD= 1.18$) and independent blogs ($M= 4.12$, $SD= .79$); $t(119)= 3.6, p < .01$.

Research Question 5 asked what the perceived credibility is of current events news received from traditional state-run newspapers online versus social media. A paired sample t-test was performed to test for significant differences between the credibility ratings of the mediums. There was a significant difference in the ratings for traditional state-run newspapers online ($M= 4.60$, $SD= 1.08$) and social media ($M= 4.16$, $SD= .08$); $t(121)= 4.03, p < .01$.

Research Question 6 asked what the perceived credibility is of current events news received from traditional state-run newspapers online versus independent blogs. A paired sample t-test was performed to test for significant differences between the
credibility ratings of the mediums. There was a significant difference in the ratings for traditional state-run newspapers online ($M= 4.60$, $SD= .099$) and independent blogs ($M= 4.12$, $SD= .07$); $t(118)= 4.42$, $p < .01$.

Research Question 7 asked what the perceived credibility is of current events news received from social media versus independent blogs. A paired sample t-test was performed to test for significant differences between the credibility ratings of the mediums. There was no significant difference in the ratings for social media ($M= 4.14$, $SD= .85$) and independent blogs ($M= 4.13$, $SD= .80$); $t(120)= .18$, $p > .05$. 
Discussion

The spread of the Internet and social web applications is changing how news is received around the world. Nearly a third of the Earth’s population, over 2.1 billion people, use the Internet; and, according to the China Internet Network Information Center, 513 million of them are in China (CNNIC, 2012). Globally, traditional news companies are now competing with online social media and independent blogs for public attention. In China, however, where the traditional state-run media oversees the release of information, this dynamic is especially complex.

Traditional domestic news agencies in China are strongly supported by the government and have an enormous public audience, yet independent Chinese social media sites and blogs, which allow anyone to post information, are growing in influence. The result for many Chinese is a confluence of traditional media reporting, citizen blogging, rumors, opinions, and facts that must be mediated on a daily basis. While people across China must adapt to this changing environment, those known as “Millennials,” part of the age cohort born after 1980, are in a particularly important position. Millennials have grown up using the Internet, but still pay attention to newspapers and television. Furthermore, Chinese Millennials will be the primary media audience of the future and shape the way people in China receive news.

In order to learn more about this group and their opinions on the changing media environment, this study set out to research Chinese Millennials’ self-reported media use as well as their perceptions of credibility toward current events information from traditional state-run newspapers in print, traditional state-run newspapers online, social media, and independent blogs. To do this, an online survey was distributed to Chinese
Millennials aged 18 to 33. Participants were invited to take part in the survey based on convenience, snowball sampling and most were recruited through a network of students and professors at Renmin University in Beijing.

The survey first inquired about the self-reported media use of Chinese Millennials for traditional state-run newspapers in print, traditional state-run newspapers online, social media, and independent blogs. Results showed clear trends for both short- and long-term media use. Concerning short-term media use, the most noticeable result was that very few participants used traditional state-run newspapers in print; almost 82 percent reported that they had not used the medium at all yesterday. This choice was also seen in the results for long-term media use, where only 3 percent of participants reported using the medium every day while almost 72 percent reported using the medium hardly ever or never. These results suggest that the use of traditional state-run news, at least in the form of print media, is becoming virtually obsolete among Chinese Millennials.

Traditional state-run newspapers online, meanwhile, were slightly more popular than their print counterparts. Approximately 26 percent of participants reported not using traditional state-run newspapers online yesterday. Of the participants who did use the medium yesterday, 63 percent reported using it between 1 and 14 minutes yesterday while less than 6 percent reported using it for 30 minutes or more. Long-term results showed that about 24 percent of participants reported using the medium every day, however, over 30 percent said they used it hardly ever or never. Consequently, the results suggest that while Chinese Millennials prefer to get current events news from traditional state-run sources online rather than in print, the majority of participants still do not spend much time with the online medium.
Independent blogs were not a popular source of current events information either, though use of the medium was more equally spread out among short- and long-term periods. Approximately 21 percent of participants reported using independent blogs for more than 30 minutes yesterday while 3 percent reported not using them at all. The rest of the responses for short-term use varied evenly among the periods between these two extremes. Concerning long-term use, 21 percent of respondents reported using the medium every day and another 19 percent said they used it 3 to 5 times a week. However, about 41 percent said they used independent blogs hardly ever or never. These responses suggest that use of independent blogs varies greatly among Chinese Millennials; however, short-term use is usually greater for blogs than for traditional state-run news online.

Finally, compared with the other three mediums, respondents showed a clear preference for social media. When reporting short-term use, a full 48 percent of participants said they used the medium for an hour or more yesterday with another 20 percent saying they used the medium for at least 30 minutes. Further, less than 6 percent of respondents said they didn’t use the medium at all yesterday. For long-term use, over 80 percent of respondents reported using the medium every day and not a single participant reported never using social media.

The results for the first research question revealed a few clear trends in self-reported media use among Chinese Millennials. First, there appears to be a very clear preference among Chinese Millennials for using social media compared with the other sources. This result is supported by recent scholarly research, which found that many more people in China are using social media than in the past (Arsene, 2008; Shen, Wang,
Guo, & Gui, 2009; Wang, 2010). Additionally, the results are backed up by data gathered from a 2011 survey by Netpop Research that found that 90 percent of China’s 513 million Internet users had accessed a social media site in the past 30 days (Netpop Research, 2011).

Another trend presented in these results is that the percentage of Chinese Millennials who choose to use traditional state-run newspapers in print is very small. This finding suggests a generational shift in media use since previous research showed strong popularity for print sources in China (La Ferle, Edwards, & Lee, 2008). This does not mean, however, that this group ignores traditional state-run media since a sizable percentage of respondents reported using the medium online. Rather, there appears to be a preference among this study’s participants for online media, a trend that is in line with recent research (Moro & Aikat, 2010; He & Zhu, 2002).

Finally, when comparing the results for the use of traditional state-run media online and independent blogs, it appears that the mediums have similarly-sized audiences in terms of long-term use. However, those who use blogs do so for longer in terms of short-term use, perhaps signaling a stronger dedication for this medium. According to China’s own Internet Network Information Center, about 49 percent of people using the Internet in China, 58 percent of who are between the ages of 10 and 29, use independent blogs. Furthermore, the use of the popular micro-blogging service known as weibo (微薄), which was first introduced in 2009, increased by 296 percent in 2011 (CCNIC, 2012). Consequently, the results of this study reflect the growing popularity of this medium among Chinese Millennials.
Results for the subsequent research questions provided information on the perceived credibility of traditional state-run news in print, traditional state-run news online, social media, and independent blogs when compared to each other. In general, perceived credibility for the mediums was not high, with mean ratings for all mediums falling slight above the midpoint of the scale. The perceived credibility for traditional state-run newspapers online was highest, followed by traditional state-run newspapers in print. Social media came third, and independent blogs were rated as the least credible.

Research Questions 2 through 4 asked what the perceived credibility is of current events news received from traditional state-run newspapers in print versus other mediums. When compared with traditional state-run media online, the results showed that there was no significant difference in credibility for the mediums. This finding is not surprising since the content of both mediums is controlled by the Chinese government and is often very similar. For example, the stories that are published in the print edition often appear on the news medium’s website and make up the majority of the site’s online content. Moreover, these websites often retain the same visual style and branding as the print editions, which reflects their relationship. So, it is understandable that both mediums would have similar perceived credibility ratings.

Results also showed that there was no significant difference between the perceived credibility of current events news received from social media versus independent blogs. As with traditional state-run newspapers in print and online, these results are not surprising since both mediums contain similar content. For example, the majority of content for both social media and independent blogs is likely to consist of
information presented by individuals rather than from accredited news organizations. Consequently, it is not surprising that these two sources have similar credibility ratings.

When comparing the perceived credibility of current events news received from traditional state-run newspapers in print versus social media and independent blogs, however, there were significant differences. The results for these comparisons showed that participants perceived traditional state-run newspapers in print as more credible than both social media and independent blogs. Furthermore, when comparing the perceived credibility of current events news received from traditional state-run newspapers online versus social media and independent blogs, respectively, results once again showed significant differences. In both cases, traditional state-run news online was perceived as significantly more credible than the independent online sources.

These results conform to previous research, which showed that Chinese citizens generally have a positive perception of credibility toward news received from domestic traditional media (Liu & Bates, 2009; Li, Xuan & Kluver, 2003; Zhou & Moy, 2007; Chan, Lee, & Pan, 2006). According to this study, these perceptions have not changed among the younger Millennial generation. Moreover, participants were found to prefer using traditional state-run news online and trusted it slightly more than the same offering in print. This finding also fits with previous research that showed Chinese Millennials preference for online tools and their integration of these tools into daily life (Moore & College, 2005; Moore, Bindler, & Pandich, 2010; Yi, Ribbens, & Morgan, 2010).

Nevertheless, as previous research on Chinese perceptions of credibility toward social media has shown, the more people use online social media, the more credible they think it is and vice versa (Deng, 2009; Jin, Cheung, Lee, & Chen; 2009). So, when
considering the self-reported media use of the participants, which showed a strong preference for social media and to a lesser extent independent blogs compared to the traditional state-run news sources, these results differed somewhat from previous research. The reasons for this discrepancy are difficult to accurately explain without further study; however, it is possible that the longstanding positive reputation for traditional state-run news sources combined with the state’s ongoing dominance in control over what information is released in the media continues to influence perceptions of credibility among the younger generations of Chinese citizens. Moreover, it is possible that Chinese Millennials use independent online sources for more purposes than just gathering news information; for example, they may use these sources for entertainment or relationship building. Consequently, their use of these mediums solely as sources of current events information may be much lower.

**Implications**

Further analysis of the results yields important implications for the study of media use and credibility among Chinese Millennials. First of all, when looking at the self-reported media use of Chinese Millennials in this study, it is clear that print media is virtually unused as a source for current events information. So, while print media in China has so far evaded any threats to its market dominance (Moro & Aikat, 2010), this may change as Internet penetration increases throughout China. Additionally, as several researchers have suggested (Moro & Aikat, 2010; He & Zhu, 2002), growing social demand among the younger generation may force print media to offer more of their material online if they hope to retain a large audience. The results of this study seem to fit
with these suggestions as this study found disinterest in print media compared with online media.

Secondly, perceived credibility for traditional state-run sources was reported to be significantly higher than that of independent online sources. This finding fits with previous research that found that Chinese citizens generally have a positive perception of credibility toward news received from domestic traditional media (Liu & Bates, 2009; Li, Xuan & Kluver, 2003; Zhou & Moy, 2007; Chan, Lee, & Pan, 2006). The results suggest that the reputation traditional state-run newspapers have created over the years will not easily change despite the increasing variety of media outlets.

Third, the results of this study showed that traditional print news is more credible than social media; however, there were two surprising outcomes that relate to this finding especially when comparing the results to past research. First of all, the results in this sample showed that print media is used far less than social media. Secondly, the credibility ratings, while significantly different, were still close. Previous research has found that while traditional state-run news in China may have a legacy of high credibility among Chinese citizens, this reality may be changing (Liu & Bates, 2009; Li, Xuan & Kluver, 2003; Zhou & Moy, 2007; Chan, Lee, & Pan, 2006). Furthermore, research conducted outside China on perceptions of credibility toward social media versus traditional media has shown that web users found online media sources, specifically those with social media functions, to be more credible than traditional media (Johnson & Kaye, 1998; 2004). So, in line with these studies, as more young people begin using social media as a source for current events news, they may come to prefer social media over traditional print media and see it as more credible. However, as mentioned previously, it
is possible that Chinese Millennials use independent online sources for more purposes than just gathering news information which may affect how the perceived credibility rating for this specific use changes in the future.

Finally, research on Millennials in China and around the world has shown that this group is characterized differently from previous generations—a characterization that includes different values and beliefs from previous generations as well as the acceptance of the Internet and digital media as parts of everyday life (Pew Research Center, 2011; Moore & College, 2005; Moore, Bindler, & Pandich, 2010; Yi, Ribbens, & Morgan, 2010). Chinese Millennials have been shown to approve of characteristics such as individuality, independence, and modernism. They have also been shown to use the Internet to create and disseminate cultural trends that nurture unity among them. The results of this study conformed with these previous findings as the sample reported using online sources such as social media and independent blogs as well as traditional news. Consequently, as previous research on Millennials inside as well as outside of China has suggested, Millennials have the potential to create dramatic changes in media culture and use.

Limitations

There were several limitations on this study that should be discussed in order to fully understand the results that are presented. First, the sample was small, purposive, and consequently cannot be generalized to the entire population of Chinese Millennials, a group that is extremely large and diverse. Second, the survey only covered one specific period of time and therefore cannot show how perceptions of credibility toward the mediums might have changed over time. Third, while much of the previous research on
this topic in English has been cited in the literature review, a much larger amount published in Chinese was not taken into account due to language barriers. Finally, because the Chinese government tightly controls the media environment in the country and has been known to punish those who challenge the enforced status quo, media use and credibility is a sensitive subject. Chinese citizens fearing repercussions or simply falling into encouraged habits of self-censorship may not honestly report on subjects concerning the media in China. Further, this survey was distributed soon after a once-in-a-decade leadership transition in China when control over the media and citizenry was at an all-time high, especially in Beijing where most of the survey participants were located, leading to an environment that may have had an effect on the final results.

**Future Research**

Further studies in this area could help increase understanding of Chinese Millennials and provide information on the quickly changing media environment in China. Future research could include a broader sample of Chinese Millennials, including people from a greater variety of locations and backgrounds, in order to provide results that could be generalized to the population. Additionally, a longitudinal study that collected information over several distinct periods could provide information on trends in perceived credibility toward the different mediums over time. Finally, a study that included information on specific media outlets rather than general sources would yield important information on the specific sources that Chinese Millennials regularly use.

**Conclusion**

This study set out to provide insight on a population that will have a tremendous impact not only on media and culture in China, but around the world. Chinese Millennials
are a unique group, both from previous generations in China as well as from their counterparts in other countries. They are already beginning to exert influence, direct trends, and change existing dynamics. Currently, the media environment across the globe is undergoing a dramatic shift from traditional, authoritarian, top-down sources in print to innovative, social, and horizontal sources online, and China is not immune from these changes. The younger generation is certain to play a major role in the future of media, making their choices some of the most important for future communications professionals, educators, policymakers, and researchers.
Appendix A: RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Participant,
亲爱的参与者：

Recently you were invited to participate in a research project on Chinese young people’s perceptions of credibility toward current events information they receive from traditional state-run media and independent online media. The study closes next month, and I would really appreciate having your completed survey for my research. Remember, any information you submit will be kept completely confidential. After the study closes, I will distribute 88RMB Starbucks Gift Cards to four randomly chosen survey participants.
您最近受邀参与有关中国年轻人对从传统国营媒体和独立网络媒体获得的时事资讯的可靠性的看法的研究项目。此研究于下月结束，如能收到您完成的调查问卷，我将深表感谢。请记住，您提交的所有信息都将完全保密。研究结束后，我将为随机抽选的四位参与者派送价值 88 元的星巴克礼品卡。

And please feel free to pass on the survey link to your friends! Access the survey here:

Please feel free to pass on the survey link to your friends! Access the survey here:

Any questions/concerns? Email me at vcook3@jhu.edu
如有任何问题/疑惑，请给我发邮件，邮箱地址为 vcook3@jhu.edu。

Thanks,
谢谢

Victoria Cook
维多利亚·库克

Johns Hopkins University Graduate Student
Appendix B: ONLINE INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant,

亲爱的参与者：

I am a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University. As part of the coursework for my program in Digital Communication, I am conducting research on young Chinese people’s perceptions of credibility toward current events information they receive from traditional state-run media and independent online media. Because you meet this criteria, I am inviting you to participate in this research study by completing the following survey.

我是约翰霍普金斯大学的一名研究生。作为数字通信专业课程的作业的一部分，我正在进行有关中国年轻人对从传统国营媒体和独立网络媒体获得的时事资讯的可靠性的看法的研究。由于您符合本标准，我邀请您通过完成下述调查问卷来参与本研究学习。

The survey is available online. It has three sections and will take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. There will be no compensation of any kind available for your participation. However, if you choose to provide your e-mail address, you can participate in a raffle to win one of four 88RMB Starbucks gift cards I plan to distribute by lottery.

本调查问卷分为三部分，完成本调查问卷所需的时间大约为十五分钟。对于您的参与，没有任何补偿。不过，如果您提供您的电子邮箱地址，您可以参加抽奖来赢得我计划以奖券的形式派发的四张价值星巴克星享卡之一。

The risks to you of participating in this project are minimal. Your participation in this project is completely voluntary and you can opt out of the survey at any time. Surveys should be anonymous and your name or any identifying information is not needed. If you choose to participate in the survey, please answer all questions as honestly as possible. By completing and submitting this survey as a participant, you are providing your informed consent.
Thank you for taking the time to assist me in this research project. The data collected will provide useful information regarding young people’s use of media in China and elsewhere. If you have any questions on this study or know any other young people who you think would like to participate, feel free to send them the survey or contact me at vcook3@jhu.edu or 1-821-026-3695.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in this research project. The data collected will provide useful information regarding young people’s use of media in China and elsewhere. If you have any questions on this study or know any other young people who you think would like to participate, feel free to send them the survey or contact me at vcook3@jhu.edu or 1-821-026-3695.

Sincerely,

Victoria Cook

MA in Communication Candidate

Johns Hopkins University
Appendix C: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Chinese Millennials and Perceptions of Credibility Toward Traditional and Social Media Survey

中国的80后（“千禧一代”——Millennials）及其对传统和社会媒体的可信度的看法的调查问卷

(Introduction Questions)

(简介问题)

1. Are you a Chinese citizen?

1. 您是中国公民吗？

2. Were you born and raised in China?

2. 您是在中国出生和长大的吗？

3. Were you born in 1980 or after?

3. 您是在1980年或此后出生的吗？
Survey Questionnaire

Please read this information before starting the survey.

This survey seeks to better understand perceptions of credibility toward different types of media. When choosing your answers, please be aware that the definitions of the media included in this survey are as such:

本调查问卷旨在更好地了解对不同媒体的可信度的看法。选择答案时，请了解本调查问卷中采用的媒体的定义，如下：

*Traditional State-run Newspapers (print):* News publications that periodically release news in print on a variety of topics. These publications strictly follow journalistic guidelines and regulations set by the government. Examples include Xinhua News Agency, People’s Daily, and the Global Times.

传统中央媒体（Traditional State-run Newspapers）（印刷版）：以印刷版定期发布有关各种话题的新闻的新闻出版物，这些出版物严格遵守政府制定的新闻准则和法规，如新华社消息,《人民日报》和《环球时报》。

*Traditional State-run Newspapers (online):* News publications that periodically release news online on a variety of topics. These publications strictly follow journalistic guidelines and regulations set by the government. Examples include Xinhua News Agency

Social Media: Internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content on current events news such as commentary, photographs, and videos. Examples include social networks such as RenRen, Kaixin, QQ Friends, etc. as well as online forums and bulletin boards such as Douban, Tianya, Baidu Tianya, etc.

社会媒体：基于互联网，且允许创建和交流用户生成的有关评论，图片和视频等时事新闻的内容的应用程序，包括人人网，开心网，QQ 好友，新浪微博，腾讯微博等社会网络以及在线论坛和豆瓣，天涯，百度等公告栏。

Blogs: A personal, independent journal published on the Internet consisting of informative “posts” that include user-generated content on current events news such as commentary, photographs, and videos. Examples include Sina Weibo, QQ Weibo, etc. as well as personal blogs available on independent websites.
博客：在互联网上发布的个人、独立期刊，由“信息丰富”的帖子组成，包括用户就评论、图片和视频等时事新闻生成的内容，例如新浪博客、和讯博客等以及独立网站上提供的个人博客。
PART ONE: Time Spent Using Media 第一部分：使用媒体所花的时间

Daily Use 日常使用
Instructions: On the scales below, indicate how much time you spent on average with each medium yesterday.
说明：在下述比例上指出您前一天在各个媒体上平均所花的时间。

1) Traditional State-run Newspapers (print) / 传统中央媒体（印刷版）
Did not use medium. 没有使用
1 to 5 minutes / 1-5 分钟
6 to 9 minutes / 6-9 分钟
10 to 14 minutes / 10-14 分钟
15 to 19 minutes / 15-19 分钟
20 to 29 minutes / 20-29 分钟
30 to 59 minutes / 30-59 分钟
1 hour or more / 1 个小时或以上

2) Traditional State-run Newspapers (online) / 传统中央媒体（网络版）
Did not use medium. 没有使用
1 to 5 minutes / 1-5 分钟
6 to 9 minutes / 6-9 分钟
10 to 14 minutes / 10-14 分钟
15 to 19 minutes / 15-19 分钟
20 to 29 minutes / 20-29 分钟
30 to 59 minutes / 30-59 分钟
1 hour or more / 1 个小时或以上

3) Social Media / 社会媒体
Did not use medium. 没有使用
1 to 5 minutes / 1-5 分钟
6 to 9 minutes / 6-9 分钟
10 to 14 minutes / 10-14 分钟
15 to 19 minutes / 15-19 分钟
20 to 29 minutes / 20-29 分钟
30 to 59 minutes / 30-59 分钟
1 hour or more / 1 个小时或以上

4) Independent Blogs / 博客
Did not use medium. 没有使用
1 to 5 minutes / 1-5 分钟
6 to 9 minutes / 6-9 分钟
10 to 14 minutes / 10-14 分钟
15 to 19 minutes / 15-19 分钟
20 to 29 minutes / 20-29 分钟
30 to 59 minutes / 30-59 分钟
1 hour or more / 1 个小时或以上
Long-term Use / 长期使用

Instructions: On the scales below, indicate how much time you spent on average with each medium.
说明：在下述比例上指出您在各个媒体上平均所花的时间。

Traditional State-run Newspapers (print) / 传统中央媒体（印刷版）

Every day. / 每天
3 to 5 days/week. / 每周 3-5 天
1 to 2 days/week. / 每周 1-2 天
Once every few weeks. / 几周一次
Less often. / 较少
Never or don’t have. / 从未或没有

Traditional State-run Newspapers (online) / 传统中央媒体（网络版）

Every day. / 每天
3 to 5 days/week. / 每周 3-5 天
1 to 2 days/week. / 每周 1-2 天
Once every few weeks. / 几周一次
Less often. / 较少
Never or don’t have. / 从未或没有

Social Media / 社会媒体

Every day.
Every day. / 每天
3 to 5 days/week. / 每周 3-5 天
1 to 2 days/week. / 每周 1-2 天
Once every few weeks. / 几周一次
Less often. / 较少
Never or don’t have. / 从未或没有

3) Blogs / 博客
Every day. / 每天
3 to 5 days/week. / 每周 3-5 天
1 to 2 days/week. / 每周 1-2 天
Once every few weeks. / 几周一次
Less often. / 较少
Never or don’t have. / 从未或没有
## PART TWO: Credibility

### Traditional State-run Newspapers (print)

*Traditional State-run Newspapers (print)*

*Instructions: On the scales below, indicate your feelings about the information received from state-run newspapers. Numbers 1 and 7 indicate a very strong feeling. Numbers 2 and 6 indicate a strong feeling. Numbers 3 and 5 indicate a fairly weak feeling. Number 4 indicates you are undecided.*

1) **Accurate/准确** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Inaccurate/不准确**

2) **Unbiased/公正** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Biased/不公正**

3) **Believable/可信** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Unbelievable/不可信**

4) **High Depth of Information/信息深度高** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Low Depth of Information/信息深度低**

5) **Trustworthy/可靠** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Untrustworthy/不可靠**

6) **Unfair/不公平** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Fair/公平**

7) **Timely/及时** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Untimely/不及时**

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### Traditional State-run Newspapers (online)

*Traditional State-run Newspapers (online)*

*Instructions: On the scales below, indicate your feelings about the information received from state-run newspapers online. Numbers 1 and 7 indicate a very strong feeling.*
Numbers 2 and 6 indicate a strong feeling. Numbers 3 and 5 indicate a fairly weak feeling. Number 4 indicates you are undecided.

说明：在下述比例上指出您对从中央级报纸网络版上获得的资讯的感觉。数字 1 和 7 表示非常强烈的感觉，数字 2 和 6 表示强烈的感觉，数字 3 和 5 表示相当弱的感觉，数字 4 则表示您尚未决定。

1) Accurate/准确 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inaccurate/不准确

2) Unbiased/公正 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Biased/不公正

3) Believable/可信 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Unbelievable/不可信

4) High Depth of Information/信息深度高 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Low Depth of Information/信息深度低

5) Trustworthy/可靠 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Untrustworthy/不可靠

8) Unfair/不公平 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fair/公平

9) Timely/及时 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Untimely/不及时

Social Media
社会媒体

Instructions: On the scales below, indicate your feelings about the information received from social media. Numbers 1 and 7 indicate a very strong feeling. Numbers 2 and 6 indicate a strong feeling. Numbers 3 and 5 indicate a fairly weak feeling. Number 4 indicates you are undecided.

说明：在下述比例上指出您对从社会媒体上获得的资讯的感觉。数字 1 和 7 表示非常强烈的感觉，数字 2 和 6 表示强烈的感觉，数字 3 和 5 表示相当弱的感觉，数字 4 则表示您尚未决定。

1) Accurate/准确 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inaccurate/不准确
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Accurate/准确</th>
<th>Biased/不公正</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Unbiased/公正</td>
<td>Biased/不公正</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Believable/可信</td>
<td>Unbelievable/不可信</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>High Depth of Information/信息深度高</td>
<td>Low Depth of Information/信息深度低</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Trustworthy/可靠</td>
<td>Untrustworthy/不可靠</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Unfair/不公平</td>
<td>Fair/公平</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Timely/及时</td>
<td>Untimely/不及时</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Blogs**

博客

Instructions: On the scales below, indicate your feelings about the information received from blogs. Numbers 1 and 7 indicate a very strong feeling. Numbers 2 and 6 indicate a strong feeling. Numbers 3 and 5 indicate a fairly weak feeling. Number 4 indicates you are undecided.

说明：在下述比例上指出您对从博客上获得的资讯的感觉。数字 1 和 7 表示非常强烈的感觉，数字 2 和 6 表示强烈的感觉，数字 3 和 5 表示相当弱的感觉，数字 4 则表示您尚未决定。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Accurate/准确</th>
<th>Biased/不公正</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unbiased/公正</td>
<td>Biased/不公正</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Believable/可信</td>
<td>Unbelievable/不可信</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>High Depth of Information/信息深度高</td>
<td>Low Depth of Information/信息深度低</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Trustworthy/可靠</td>
<td>Untrustworthy/不可靠</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12) Unfair/不公平 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fair/公平

13) Timely/及时 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Untimely/不及时
PART FOUR: Demographic Questions / 第四部分：个人信息

Are you male or female?
您是男性还是女性？

How old are you?
您多大了？

How many years of higher education (above high school) do you have?
您接受过几年的高等教育（高中以上）？

Where do (did) you go to university?
您的大学就读于哪个大学？

What is (was) your field of study in university?
您在大学的专业是什么？

Are you still a student? If not, what do you do now?
您仍是学生吗？如果不是，您现在从事什么工作？

Where is your hometown?
您的家乡在哪？

Where do you live now?
您现在住在哪里？

How long have you lived in your current city?
您在目前的城市居住了多久？

How much money do you usually spend every month?
您每月通常要花多少钱？
Table 1

*Percentages for short-term media use*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did not use medium</th>
<th>Traditional State-run News Print</th>
<th>Traditional State-run News Online</th>
<th>Social Media</th>
<th>Independent Blogs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.9% (104)</td>
<td>26% (33)</td>
<td>5.5% (7)</td>
<td>37.8% (48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5 minutes</td>
<td>7.1% (9)</td>
<td>14.2% (18)</td>
<td>1.6% (2)</td>
<td>12.6% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 9 minutes</td>
<td>3.9% (5)</td>
<td>18.9% (24)</td>
<td>3.1% (4)</td>
<td>4.7% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14 minutes</td>
<td>3.1% (4)</td>
<td>16.5% (21)</td>
<td>5.5% (7)</td>
<td>5.5% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19 minutes</td>
<td>2.4% (3)</td>
<td>10.2% (13)</td>
<td>7.1% (9)</td>
<td>11% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 29 minutes</td>
<td>.8% (1)</td>
<td>8.7% (11)</td>
<td>9.4% (12)</td>
<td>7.1% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 59 minutes</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>2.4% (3)</td>
<td>19.7% (25)</td>
<td>7.1% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 hour or more</td>
<td>.8% (1)</td>
<td>3.1% (4)</td>
<td>48% (61)</td>
<td>14.2% (18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

*Percentages for long-term media use*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditional State-run News</th>
<th>Traditional State-run News Online</th>
<th>Social Media</th>
<th>Independent Blogs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every day</td>
<td>3.1% (4)</td>
<td>24.4% (31)</td>
<td>80.3% (102)</td>
<td>21.3% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 5 days/week</td>
<td>4.7% (6)</td>
<td>15% (19)</td>
<td>5.5% (7)</td>
<td>18.9% (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 days/week</td>
<td>8.7% (11)</td>
<td>16.5% (21)</td>
<td>6.3% (8)</td>
<td>13.4% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once every few weeks</td>
<td>11.8% (15)</td>
<td>12.6% (16)</td>
<td>1.6% (2)</td>
<td>5.5% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less often</td>
<td>52.8% (67)</td>
<td>25.2% (32)</td>
<td>6.3% (8)</td>
<td>29.1% (37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never or don’t</td>
<td>18.9% (24)</td>
<td>5.5% (7)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>11% (14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


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Vita

Victoria Cook was born in St. Louis, Missouri but grew up in the Boston area. After completing her work at Wellesley Senior High School in 2000, she entered Boston University’s College of Communication. She earned the degree of Bachelor of Science in Journalism in May, 2004. Soon after, she moved to South Korea where she was employed as a Copyeditor and Staff Reporter at the Korea Herald, the country’s leading English-language newspaper, and then worked as an English Language Instructor at the University of Ulsan. In September 2010, she entered the Graduate School at Johns Hopkins University. Then in August 2012 she accepted a fellowship from the Chinese Government Scholarship Council to study Mandarin Chinese and complete her Master’s thesis research at Renmin University in China. She currently lives in Beijing.