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Momo's Counterattack: A Study on the Resistance Paths of Anonymous Platform Users from the Perspective of Marxist Political Economy

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Abstract:
Based on the perspective of Marxist political economy,this study deeply analyzes the resistance behavior of momo group on the anonymous platform and its new paradigm of satisfying individual needs. The study found that momo groups effectively fought against the commercial exploitation of platform media by re-registering accounts, increasing the cost of commercial push, creating black hole experience and using mutual documents, and at the same time promoted the new demand meeting paradigm of users' active search for content and control of personal data. This study not only enrichis the theoretical interpretation of user behavior in cyberspace, but also provides a practical reference for the governance of cyberspace and the protection of user rights and interests.

Keywords:
momo group, Anonymous platform, Resistance path, Satisfaction of individual needs, Marxist political economy

1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

As internet technology and platformization flourish,users increasingly engage in online activities.Simultaneously, the exploitation of users becomes more pronounced, emerging as a pressing social issue.In the traditional mass media era,the audience commodity theory revealed how conventional media package users as products to sell to advertisers for profit.However,in the digital age,platform capitalism further elucidates how platform media profits from user-generated content and online behaviors,escalating the phenomenon of user exploitation to new heights.Nevertheless,in the age of anonymized social media,particularly on platforms like Xiaohongshu, users experience a significant boost in agency, offering fresh possibilities to resist commercial exploitation.

The emergence of anonymized platforms like Xiaohongshu introduces a new momo anonymity mechanism,allowing internet users to frequently change identities to express opinions and escape old targeted marketing paradigms.This shift not only alters user behavior patterns in cyberspace but also equips them with

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innovative ways to combat commercial exploitation.We observe that,in the momo era,netizens begin to utilize anonymous accounts, engaging in cyberspace in more autonomous and personalized manners,seeking new pathways to resist commercial forces.

1.2 Research Significance

This study aims to delve into the resistance behavior of the momo community on anonymous platforms and how they fulfill their needs, holding significant theoretical and practical implications. First, by revealing how the momo group utilizes new anonymous mechanisms to counter commercial exploitation, we gain a more comprehensive understanding of the users'agency and subjectivity in cyberspace. Second, the new paradigm established by the momo community in addressing their needs aids us in examining the evolution of user behavior and demand fulfillment in online environments. Finally, this research will supplement and develop Marxist political economics by applying it to the study of anonymous platform users,uncovering new changes in the exploitation and being exploited relationships between users and commercial forces in the digital age.

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary goal of this study is to analyze the specific pathways through which the momo group resists marketing and exploitative forces on anonymous platforms, and to explore the new paradigm that emerges in fulfilling personal needs. Specifically, we will use empirical research to reveal how the momo group leverages anonymity to combat commercial pushes,express dissatisfaction,and resist. Additionally, we will examine how they more autonomously and individually obtain information and content on anonymous platforms,and how they evade a barrage of marketing and exploitative messages to meet their needs. Ultimately, we aim to provide new insights into the relationship between users and commercial forces through an in-depth study of the momo group, offering valuable references for future governance of cyberspace and user rights protection.

2 Literature Review

2.1 The current research of author

As internet technology advances rapidly and social media platforms proliferate, the phenomenon of anonymous socialization in cyberspace has gradually become a focal point of academic attention.In particular,in recent years, a user group featuring the unified nickname“momo”and a pink dinosaur avatar has emerged on platforms exemplified by Xiaohongshu. Their anonymous social behavior has sparked extensive research and discussion. The following is a review of the current state of research on the momo group and anonymous social phenomenon.

Current studies generally assert that the rise of the momo group results from users seeking self-protection,alleviating social pressure, and establishing a sense of community identity in cyberspace. Zhang Zhenting and Jiang Li utilized grounded theory methods to explore the formation causes and characteristics of the momo group, noting that its anonymity provides users with greater freedom of expression and privacy protection. Jiao Jing (2024) further analyzed the anonymous behavior patterns of the momo group on social media, revealing how they achieve group identity and social support through a unified nickname and avatar.

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Scholars have examined the psychological motivations and needs behind users' choices for anonymous social networking from various perspectives. Kong Lingchao (2024) argues that, in the era of big data, the risk of personal privacy breaches increases. Users seek self-protection and psychological security through anonymous social interactions.Liu Sa and Liu Ling (2023) analyze the momo phenomenon from a memetic theory perspective,observing that its spread as an internet meme reflects users'psychological needs for group belonging and emotional resonance in online spaces. Moreover, He Yunying(2024)uses Xiaohongshu's momo as a case study to analyze the socio-cultural factors underlying the anonymous social phenomenon. She views it as a significant way for contemporary youth to seek self-expression and identity in the digital realm.Although anonymous social networking offers users more freedom and privacy protection,it also brings numerous challenges and issues. Wang Zhenxin (2024) et al. discuss privacy protection methods in anonymous social networks from a technological perspective,proposing corresponding solutions. However, He Yunying (2024) points out that emotional issues, bullying,and malicious speech on anonymous platforms remain pressing problems that require serious attention. Jiao Jing (2024) also emphasizes the challenge of regulating online behavior in anonymous social spaces,highlighting the urgent need to effectively curb online violence while protecting user privacy.

Current research on the momo community and the phenomenon of anonymous social interactions has yielded some results, yet many issues remain for further exploration.Future studies could delve into several areas:firstly,they should investigate the social psychological mechanisms and cultural factors behind anonymous social interactions;secondly,assess the impact of anonymous social interactions on user behavior and social relationships;thirdly, explore effective governance and regulatory strategies for anonymous social interactions;fourthly,examine how the phenomenon manifests and differs across various social media platforms.

In summary, while research on the momo community and anonymous social interactions has made progress, it still requires more academic attention and in-depth study.Through continuous exploration and innovation, we can better understand user behavior patterns and social relationships in cyberspace, thereby providing robust support for constructing a healthier and more orderly online environment.

2.2 Theoretical Basis

2.2.1 Power Relations and Network Resistance

Marx emphasized that the main driving force behind social change lies in the conflicts and struggles between different social groups.In cyberspace,the momo group engages in anonymous social actions, effectively conducting a struggle for power against platform media.They aim to challenge the monopoly of data and algorithms by platform media, seeking greater voice and autonomy within cyberspace

2.2.2 Visibility and Challenges to Platform Regulations

In addition to power relations,visibility emerges as a crucial topic in the momo group's resistance.Through anonymous actions, they attempt to disrupt the platform media's control over information, making their voices and actions more visible in cyberspace. Simultaneously,they strive to challenge the existing platform regulations, seeking a more equitable,transparent atmosphere that favors user rights.This struggle involves not only individual freedom and rights but also the healthy development and democratization of the entire cyber-

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space.

3 Research Methods

To deeply explore the resistance behaviors and needs fulfillment methods of the momo group in cyberspace,t his study will employ two primary research methods:interviews and literature analysis.

3.1 In-Depth Interview Method

The interview method serves as a research approach to gather firsthand information through extensive communication with study subjects.In this research,we will conduct in-depth interviews with the momo community.We will design a detailed interview guide and utilize open-ended questions to encourage participants to share their authentic experiences and feelings during anonymous social interactions.The interview topics will include their motivations for choosing anonymous interactions, specific actions taken to resist commercial exploitation,and how the anonymity mechanism meets their needs.Through the interview method, we can directly acquire the subjective feelings and genuine thoughts of the momo community, providing rich empirical data to analyze their behavior patterns and ways of need fulfillment.The participant information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Respondent Information

Number	Gender	Age	Education	Occupation	Xiaohongshu Usage Frequency	Duration of ID Change To momo
F1	Female	25	Bachelor	Student	High Frequency	6 months
F2	Male	30	Master	Private Sector	Medium Frequency	1 year
F3	Female	29	Doctorate	Teacher	Low Frequency	2 years
F4	Male	35	High School	Self-employed	High Frequency	1.5 years
F5	Female	22	Associate	Private Sector	Medium Frequency	9 months

3.2 Participatory Observation

Method During the research process,the author employed a participatory observation method. As an active user of Xiaohongshu and a member of the momo community, the author deeply engaged with the platform. This included long-term observations and experiences regarding user behaviors, interaction patterns, and platform regulations. The author discovered that user behaviors on Xiaohongshu are profoundly influenced by algorithmic recommendation mechanisms. Often, the platform leverages users'interests and identities for commercial promotions.In response,the momo community employs various strategies to resist this exploitation.For instance,they create new accounts to separate their identities from interests, making it difficult for the platform to deliver accurate advertisements.They also increase the costs associated with commercial promotions, rendering the platform's exploitative practices unprofitable.These observations provided the author with invaluable firsthand data, allowing the study to further uncover the resistance strategies of the momo community on Xiaohongshu and the underlying social and economic drivers.

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4 The Resistance Pathways of the Momo Community

4.1 Re-registering Accounts: Decoupling Identity from Interests

The unique behaviors of the momo community on social media provide new insights into the reconstruction of user identities.Respondent A embodies this group's spirit,stating, "I chose to re-register and use the 'momo' nickname with a pink dinosaur avatar because I wanted to shed the traces of my past on social media. I discovered that after re-registering, I was no longer bound to previous interests or group labels. This freedom allowed me to express my views more openly,making me feel lighter and more at ease to articulate my thoughts genuinely."

Through such individual choices,collective power emerges.The momo community significantly redefines account"identity." They consistently use the "momo" nickname and pink dinosaur avatar, fundamentally dismantling the traditional tight coupling between account identity,individual interests,and group membership within social media.In conventional social media frameworks,user accounts often represent personal identities, allowing platforms to conduct targeted marketing and advertising. However, the emergence of the momo community disrupts this norm;their accounts transform from mere individual identity symbols into markers of collective identity.

This practice, emblematic of collective identity,challenges traditional commercial models in platform media.The anonymity and collective traits of momo accounts create unprecedented challenges when platforms analyze user behavior and interests.The ambiguity and inscrutability of user data severely diminish the platforms 'capabilities for targeted marketing and exploitation, increasing operational costs and difficulties.This represents not only a safeguard for user privacy but also a powerful countermeasure against social media platforms' excessive reliance on user data for commercial purposes.

4.2 Increasing the Cost of Commercial Promotion:Making Exploitation Unprofitable

The unique behaviors of the momo group on social media not only profoundly redefine account"identity," but also indirectly change the landscape of commercial promotion. Respondent A emphasizes the importance of breaking free from identity constraints and expressing oneself freely through personal experience, while Respondent B reveals the far-reaching impact of this behavior on the platform's precision marketing capabilities.

Respondent B shares, " I now completely ignore online ads.I often register new accounts with false information because there are just too many ads. After frequently changing accounts, I no longer see large numbers of the same ads. "Under traditional social media models, platforms rely on user interest and demand data for precision marketing, achieving efficient ad promotion and monetization. However, the emergence of the momo group and their behavioral strategies fundamentally disrupt this balance.They dismantle the connection between identity and interests, causing platforms to struggle to accurately assess users' genuine interests and needs. From the perspective of Marxist political economy, such user behavior compels platforms to rethink their business models and reduce exploitation of user data.The high costs of promotion render such exploitation unprofitable,resulting in inefficient ad distribution and lower conversion rates while imposing higher marketing costs and operational pressures on the platform.

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Thus, the behaviors of the momo group not only reflect a pursuit of personal identity and privacy protection but also challenge and prompt a deep reflection on the commercial models of social media platforms and their exploitation of user data. They force platforms to reevaluate their business strategies and seek more sustainable and user-friendly developmental pathways.

4.3 Black Hole Experience: The Disruption of Media Content and User Attention

Under the protection of anonymity, the momo group not only reconstructed personal identities but also uniquely resisted commercial push notifications.They created a phenomenon known as the "Black Hole Experience, " where the core principle lies in the complete severance of the interaction chain between advertisements and users.

Respondent C described how the "Black Hole Experience "operates: "I have no interest in advertising content, so I avoid looking at ads.I never like, comment, or share. I find some ads quite interesting,but I rarely look at them—almost never."

This power of silence causes advertisements to seem as if they were sucked into a black hole.Through collective silence and neglect, the momo group effectively disrupted the link between media content and user attention,causing advertising to lose its luster and appeal within their social media world.In traditional social media models, user attention,comments, and interactions serve as crucial metrics for evaluating ad effectiveness and are key pathways for platforms to monetize advertisements. However, the momo group's"Black Hole Experience"completely subverted this model. By not directly engaging with advertisements,they prevented ads from effortlessly capturing user attention and achieving effective conversion as in the past.

This behavior not only weakened the commercial efficacy of advertisements but also compelled media platforms to rethink their advertising strategies and business models. Faced with the"black hole"created by the momo group, platforms must seek more innovative and interactive advertising forms to attract user attention,yet this process is fraught with challenges and uncertainties. The resistance displayed by the momo group reflects their pursuit of personal privacy and freedom,while also revealing the complex and nuanced power dynamics between users and platforms in the era of social media.

4.4 Resistance through Mutual Assistance Documents:Collective Boycotts of Themed Marketing

In addition to the unique form of resistance through the black hole experience,the momo community skillfully utilized mutual assistance documents as a tool to deepen their dissatisfaction and opposition to commercial forces. In Interview Result 4, Respondent D emphasized the significance of mutual assistance documents: "I find some marketing accounts quite offensive.I thought if many people could come together to resist these accounts,they would surely decrease. So,we used mutual assistance documents,which contain many methods for resisting marketing. I think it's very good."

These mutual assistance documents became an essential weapon for the momo community's collective resistance. They not only recorded resistance strategies but also facilitated information sharing and collaborative actions among members. By writing,disseminating,and sharing these documents,the momo community

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could rapidly mobilize to target the commercial practices they deemed exploitative. This collective action not only strengthened the cohesion and sense of identity within the momo group but also amplified their resistance power and influence, leading platform media to reconsider their marketing strategies and user relations more carefully.

In summary, the momo community, through black hole experiences and mutual assistance documents, posed a comprehensive and powerful challenge to the commercial models and marketing strategies of platform media. They not only weakened the ability of platforms to conduct precision marketing and exploitation through user data but also increased the costs of commercial promotions, forcing platforms to reevaluate their business models. Additionally, through the dissemination and sharing of mutual assistance documents, the momo community achieved collective resistance against themed marketing, safeguarding user rights and freedoms while providing new ideas and directions for user resistance on social media platforms.

4.5 A New Paradigm for Meeting Individual Needs

Driven by the momo community, the internet ecosystem undergoes profound change. A user-centered paradigm for fulfilling individual needs gradually emerges. This new paradigm not only disrupts traditional content delivery models but also provides users with a more autonomous and personalized information access experience.

In the results of Interview 5, Respondent E stated, “I tend to be quite stubborn.I dislike the content that is recommended to me online. I also think it’s a waste of time to look at things I’m not interested in.When I have a need,I search for it.I prefer to find things that interest me on my own.” The methods of information acquisition on social media have become more diverse and autonomous.A new paradigm focused on individualized, decentralized, and authentic fulfillment of personal needs is emerging. Users can now filter and select content based on their preferences. This paradigm will profoundly impact the future development of the internet,pushing platforms and advertisers to prioritize user needs and experiences,thereby achieving more sustainable and mutually beneficial growth.Based on this concept, the momo group encourages users to actively navigate the sea of information,exploring and discovering according to their needs and interests.This proactive searching behavior not only enhances the efficiency of information retrieval but also strengthens users' control over their personal data.Users are no longer passive recipients;they become active architects of their information worlds.Simultaneously, this new paradigm prompts platform media and advertisers to rethink their marketing strategies. They now focus more on content quality and users' actual demands rather than solely relying on algorithm recommendations and traffic exposure. By providing more valuable and meaningful content and services, platform media and advertisers can build a trust relationship with users, fostering more stable and long-term collaborations.

In conclusion,the new paradigm of personal demand satisfaction driven by the momo community not only transforms how users access information on social media but also deeply impacts the entire internet ecosystem.It emphasizes user agency and control,pushing platform media and advertisers towards greater personalization, decentralization, and authenticity. This trend undoubtedly injects new vitality and momentum into the future development of the internet.

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5 Conclusion

5.1 Regarding the conclusions of this study

This study offers an in-depth analysis of the momo group's resistance behaviors on anonymous platforms and their new paradigm for personal needs fulfillment. It reveals novel pathways for users to combat commercial exploitation in cyberspace. The momo group effectively diminishes platform media's exploitative power by re-registering accounts,raising the costs of commercial pushes, creating black hole experiences, and utilizing mutual aid documents.They protect user privacy and autonomy. Additionally,their emerging paradigm highlights user initiative and control,providing a new direction for the healthy development of the internet ecosystem.This research not only enriches the application of Marxist political economy in cyberspace but also offers significant insights for future internet governance and user rights protection. As technology advances and user needs evolve, the momo group's resistance behaviors and their paradigm for personal needs fulfillment will continue to evolve, contributing to a fairer, more transparent,and sustainable online environment.

5.2 Limitations and Prospects

Though this study thoroughly examines the resistance behaviors of the momo group on anonymous platforms and their impact on individual needs fulfillment, several limitations persist. First, due to constraints on time and resources, this research primarily relies on existing literature and interview data.It may not comprehensively cover all resistance pathways and needs fulfillment methods of the momo group.Future studies could consider broadening the sample range and implementing long-term tracking surveys to obtain more detailed and comprehensive data. Second,this research places more emphasis on the momo group’s resistance behaviors and their consequences,while the exploration of underlying social psychological mechanisms and cultural factors remains insufficient. Future research could further integrate multidisciplinary perspectives, such as psychology and sociology,to delve into the deeper motivations behind the behaviors of the momo group.Lastly,as technology continues to evolve and user demands change,the resistance behaviors and needs fulfillment of the momo group will also evolve. Therefore, future studies must continually monitor new developments in this area, promptly adjust research directions and methods, and improve the understanding of user behavior patterns and social relationships in cyberspace.This understanding will provide strong support for building a healthier and more orderly online space.

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