



**“DID YOU LIKE MY POST?”**

*The Psychology in WeChat Moments*

TEAM 06

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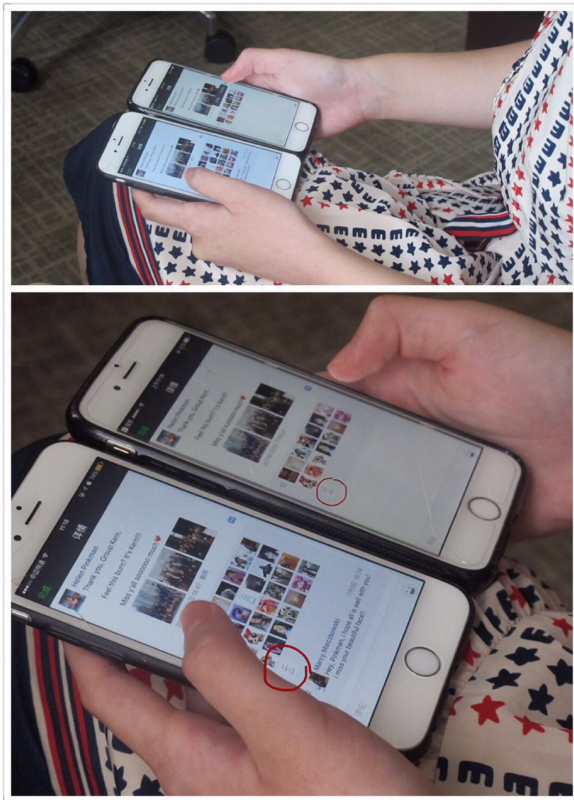
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*“I gain great satisfaction and attention when people like my posts,” said Dingzhen.*

Have you wondered why WeChat sets up “like” function in WeChat Moments? Have you ever met people who care a lot about likes when they post moments? Have you thought about why people care about likes so much? We have been researching on this issue. We interviewed a number of people regarding their attitudes toward likes, during which we discovered two extreme cases. Let us hear Dingzhen’s story first.



Dingzhen is using WeChat Moments on other’s phone to like her own posts. We witnessed this scene in person during the interview in July.  
(Photo by Wei Xu)

Dingzhen Luo, a 44-year-old woman in Jinan, has distinctive habits when posting WeChat Moments. She typically wants people to like her posts eagerly, more specifically, she is obsessed with being “liked” by others on WeChat Moments. As the picture shown above, Dingzhen is using someone else’s cell phone to like a certain moment of hers.

Dingzhen extremely values likes when sharing her life details, including attending important events, uploading beautiful pictures, and celebrating holidays. In her definition, likes are the symbol of attention and appreciation from others. She wants others to approve her accomplishment and share her emotions. When Dingzhen gets

large number of likes from other people, she gains great satisfaction because she feels appreciated. “I also check the identities of people who “liked” my moments,” Dingzhen said. In this case, if some acquaintances of Dingzhen’s do not like her moments after viewing them, she will be upset because she considers this kind of behavior as disliking or humdrum. That is the reason why she sometimes demands her close friends to like her moments.



Bob is checking his WeChat Moments.  
(Photo by Wei Xu)

On the contrary, Bob, 29 years old, who just enters university, has completely different perspectives toward likes in WeChat Moments.

“When I used WeChat at first, I was getting out of my way to add as many friends as possible because that was the only way to get more likes.” Bob started to recall his first experiences with Moments. He would post life details on a daily basis, and he checked his account whenever he had time just to see how many people “liked” his postings. At that time, Bob believed that getting lots of likes meant that his friends were paying attention to their lives. He would feel that he was worthy and valued by his peers.

Receiving only a handful of likes was hurtful for him. It had bothered Bob for a long time until he started to see the whole Moment posting as a liability for him. It became difficult to come up with content that attracts more likes. “Self-worth should not be determined by the worth assigned by others, especially on social media.” Bob

gradually realized that the life he has on social media does not necessarily equal to our real life itself. Thus, he stopped posting things for the mere sake of posting, and he stopped checking likes frequently. “It doesn’t really matter to me whether people liked my posts or not right now.” According to Bob, this action definitely eliminated his troubles and made his life easier.

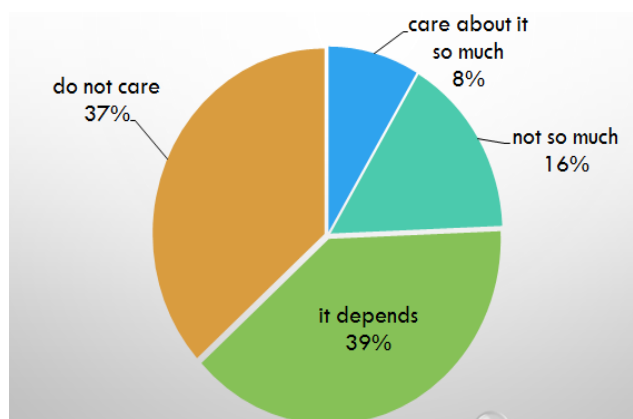
Without significant notice, WeChat Moments has diffused into people’s daily life seamlessly. In 2016, WeChat had 900 million registration accounts, and the number of monthly frequent users reached 800 million. The existence of those two extremely disparity triggered our interest, which led us to explore this phenomenon further. Our group decided to study the psychology in WeChat Moments. We designed an online survey that contains 15 questions about the people’s habits and settings in WeChat Moments including their basic information (age, the number of friends, and privacy settings), the frequency that they use WeChat Moments (times to check, send, and “thumb up” moments), the reasons about sending or liking moments, and the contents they usually send. With 523 responses we got after 24 hours, we analyzed the data. People’s psychology are shown below.

Why do people like Dingzhen want likes so eagerly? In other words, why does Dingzhen always bother her friends to force them to give her likes? Actually, this behavior is led by the sense of identity, which means they want to get the agreement of others so they can be satisfied. They will feel proud of what they have shared with others if more people give like to them because it shows that they are popular and that their ideas are accepted by great deals of people. It seems like people give lots of appreciation to her thoughts. In that case, Dingzhen can enhance her popularity among her family and friends if she can get the more likes from WeChat Moments. Another advantages of it is that it ensures her feelings have been conveyed to her friends and there might be some empathy from others to her experience in one special moment.

We also found that Dingzhen did not upload her selfies as frequent as before. By contrast, she often uploaded her precious experience of travelling, volunteering or

researching. The reason why this shift could happen is that we people now are more prone to value those meaningful moments instead of something meaningless. Our result of survey also proved that. 39.2% (the largest proportion) of people prefer to give likes to others about the major events in life such as birthday, graduation, and marriage. More and more people tend to communicate with each other about in-depth knowledge throughout instead of staying on the superficial surfaces.

Conversely, many people like Bob are caring less and less about how many likes they get from social media. According to our survey, only 8% people really care about the number of likes they get, and 37% do not care at all. People do not post moments for the sake of getting attention and approval. Instead, they use WeChat Moments to record their lives for reminiscence and share things they love to find people with common interest. WeChat Moments serves as a platform for information sharing. The main reason behind the action is that people gradually realize that the virtual lives on social media is not equivalent to our real lives. The satisfaction and worth from receiving likes only lasts temporarily. Our values should not be determined by our “WeChat friends” who we barely have contact with. People who care about you are going to in ways other than liking your posts. Conversely, people who like your post do not necessarily care about you. The value of a person should not be evaluated by a number. Being obsessed with likes will cause a number of emotions such as self-doubt, depression, distrustfulness to friends, which disappears when you stop caring so much.



This graph is collected from the survey results which shows the current situation of people's attitudes toward likes.

In summary, the current trend is fewer and fewer people really care about the number of likes they receive. Because of this, WeChat is also making alterations to satisfy the major group. Starting from the early July, WeChat has raised a brand new function on trial: When you are bothered by the notification of likes and comments related to you, you can turn off every notification for a specific post, so you will not receive any message related to this post. This function is designed for the group of people who do not care about the number of likes and comments they receive or who give those to them. For the people like Bob who wish to filter the information in their Moments or do not care about the information at all, this new function suits them really well. Although lots of people value the like function and treat it as a critical part of using WeChat, more people give up worrying about social connections brought by the like function due to all kinds of reasons like pressures from work or saving spare time. In fact, the like function does not serve as crucial bridge between the WeChat users anymore, fading out of our sight as time goes by.