FACTORS AFFECTING POPULARITY OF NETEASE CLOUD MUSIC APP

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, with the build-out of the internet infrastructure and the consistent growth of the economy, music app as a convenient and easy app attracts more and more people. However, with the development of digital technique, music industry faces challenges. The system of music industry in China is not impeccable, such as the weak originality, profit model of music app cannot adapt to the market, there is no unique character of interfacial design and functional feature. These kinds issues limit the progress of music industry. This study aims at the factors for the popularity of NCM can better inform people about music social networking. The result of the NCM can be borrowed from more merchants and make greater contribution to the development of network technology and music app market.

Keywords: Music app, Music app industry, Market, Ncm

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research This chapter provides the background information of this research including rationale of study, problem statements, objectives of the study, scope of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and definition of terms.

1.1 Rationale of Study

In recent years, the build-out of the internet infrastructure and the consistent growth of the economy have made mainland China an increasingly important global center for internet development; it was born some new social media for people to satisfy entertainment demand (Hao, 2016). Among them, music social is a new platform for audiences to find and share their similar taste of music, and then the application of music social was born, and becomes popular nowadays in the society (Zhen, 2016).

Nowadays, the mobile phone with a function of music play is general for people to use, but few years ago, this was a very high-end with rare mobile devices. The popularization of mobile phone with music play functions is instating of traditional Mp3 music players and other music players. The professional audio processing chip could make mobile phone with music play functions comparable with high-end professional music players. The mobile phone with music play functions became an important way of developing mobile phone since Nokia and Sony developed sub-brand like XpressMusic and Walkman for their phone (Hong, 2017). People who had economic power would like

to buy this kind of mobile phone, and approximately 120 million people and mobile phone with music play functions during that time (Neng, 2015).

As the mobile phone with music play functions was born in 2000, the function and storage capacity have already been developed a lot. The first mobile phone with music play functions sold in China was Siemens 6688. From that time, mobile phone with music play functions had been popular among Chinese users (Hui, 2017).

In 2000, an app named TTplayer broke the old pattern; an independent music play app of mobile phone was born. After that, more and more music apps like KuGou, QQ music, KuWo were surfaced (Lu, 2017).

Users used to listen to music online from 2002 to 2015. Development of music app has an obvious change, and it benefits the characters of internet communication. Many enterprises started marching in the music industry to make it free to listen as the main model in the business model (Chao, 2016).In the course of development, along with the appearance of music copyright dispute, the music app has entered the mature period. In 2015, China introduced policies to squash music pirates, after the competition among the music industry, the stronger enterprises were kept, market pattern tended to stabilization, and they started to search a diversified business model (Chao, 2016).

Table1.1: Mobile phone music market in China: from 2014 Quarter 2 to 2016 Quarter 2 (billions) (2016)

Time	**Market Size (Billions)**
2014Q2	34.8
2014Q3	36.6
2014Q4	38.4
2015Q1	39.3
2015Q2	40.1
2015Q3	40.9
2015Q4	41.5
2016Q1	42.3
2016Q2	43.1

Source: Hao, M. (2016). *China mobile phone music market research report in the first half of 2016*. Retrieved from http://www.bigdata-research.cn/content/201606/285.html

*Note: Q = Quarter

Market Size = The market capacity of mobile phone music app market in Chinese music market

From Table1.1, music app has a big market in China, and it keeps a stable increase. The earlier stage has a rate of increase more than the later period. The scale of music market had been rising in the fourth quarter of 2015, and it grew again after 2016 due to

China introducing the policies to squash music pirates (Da, 2016). It promotes the progress of paid music, and the capital market investing in music domain also offers a chance for the music market to develop their scale to expand the domestic demands (Hong, 2017).

Table1.2: The music app users in China from 2014 Quarter 2 to 2016 Quarter 2 (billions) (2016)

Time	**Number of Users (Billions)**
2014Q2	3.55
2014Q3	3.62
2014Q4	3.74
2015Q1	3.86
2015Q2	3.93
2015Q3	4.08
2015Q4	4.17
2016Q1	4.25
2016Q2	4.34

Source: Hao, M. (2016). *China mobile phone music market research report in the first half of 2016*. Retrieved from http://www.bigdata-research.cn/content/201606/285.html

*Note: Q = Quarter

Number of Users= The quantity of users who use music app in Chinese music market

From the view of Table1.2, the scale of music app users also keeps a stable development, and the rate of increase of users expanded in a fairly narrow tendency. The newest data indicated that the scale of music app users reached to more than 4.67 billion, accounting for 67.3%, when compared with 2015, indicating the drastic competition of music apps (Da, 2016).

From the angle of business model, after the capital market pays attention to music industry, music app explores the way to develop industry by business model, offers digital music turns to paid music, and adds game and advertising elements to help operating music app platform. Now the exploration of business model has moved to music making, music hardware, and so on (Dan, 2015).

Overall, the music app market still has a growth space, and its development is keeping increasing. It will come in a one growth stage after another, and music app wants to have a development in these stages, a part of change and challenge (Yang, 2016).

1.2 Statement of Problem

Since the rapid development of social network and the big number of global users, music app already takes a strong role in attracting more peoples' attentions. The gap between music and audience, as well as idol or singer alike is brought closer because of the social media affordances and the high usage of mobile phones. Music app has widely

used social media to communicate with others online, and the social music is also a communication way that we need to pay attention to. Therefore, the factors affecting the popularity of music app is interesting to studyin order to enhance and update the service quality according to users' demand (Laowicharath, 2017).

In December 1, 2015, the state administration of press, publication, radio, film and television (SAPPRFT) posted a report named "The suggestions about promote the development of music industry in China." This report affirms music as a spiritual culture product, in which people are interested. It also has an important status in culture industry, with a vast potential for future development (Jing, 2015).

However, with the development of digital technique, network technique and playing equipment, the music industry faces severe challenges. Particularly, the system of music industry in China is not impeccable, such as the originality is weak, the profit model of music app meets different troubles, and the innovation of interface design and functional feature is similar. These kinds of issues limit the progress of music industry to some extent (QinRu,2016). However, music industry is in a stage of rapid development, even there are many music app platforms like NetEase Cloud music, QQ Music, XiaMi Music, Baidu Music, KuGou Music, and KuWo Music that offer song library for users to choose. However, most of the functions among these music apps are similar, for example, they offer various song versions and audio for users, send notification or new album to users with their favorite singers, and classify the music type and help users to find their styles. People also have a bigger demand for music app now; hence, it is not a simple music player, but some individual designs give a better user experience. This function and

factors influence the popularity degree of music app, even deciding on the industry dynamics of music app (Meng, 2016). The study of factors affecting the popularity of music app, will therefore generate the awareness of users' supply and demand, contribute to a long-term strategy to more advancement to keep Chinese music market prosperity, and eventually enhance the music app industry.

The competition of music app business has increased referring to a report from CISION (prnewswire.com, 2016). These music apps would focus to compete in five aspects: product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and the functional feature (prnewswire.com, 2016). In other words, these aspects are the factors affecting the popularity of music app, and the chips of music enterprises stand out from the competition.

A suitable product positioning can also determine which product benefits are the most appealing to the audience. Knowing this information helps streamline marketing efforts and creates effective marketing messages that drive to more sales. It also helps differentiate the product or service from the competition in the marketplace. These factors were satisfied with debris music, music social and individual needs (Meng, 2016).

Another product feature is the interface design. Now, most of the music apps have contracted design, like XiaMi Music and QQ music, both of them are designed by using the single color, but the color is different. From the navigation of main interface, even every music app has its own distinction, and their functional structure is clear. Moreover,

every music app has its unique player interface (Hao, 2016). On the whole, the interface design of music apps used its own unique,and is not merely the artistry of appearance and simple information presentation but is the natural human-interactive user experience the becomes the focus of attention (Da, 2016).

Content production is one of the important features of music app. In these music apps, users establish a playlist, or an independent musician upload song. When every music app is positive to acquire the music copyright, it also collaborates with popular music programs, and updates the content production in time. The freedom of music app makes many users share among themselves to achieve diversification and differentiation of content, thus satisfying the emotion and desire of users. In other words, it realizes the interactive demand of users (Qin, 2016).

Besides, a profit model is a significant feature of music app. Under the cultural market economy background, the social function of music communication makes the music industry realize the value of commercials on media. So, music apps are focusing on exploring the profit model,and the user pay model is the most general model of profit model at present. As a result, they gain profit through advertisement when the music apps accumulate the higher number of users. Besides, broadcast live becomes one of the profit models. Hence, the multiple models of profit bring benefit to offer more money to music app to operate in the music industry (Sui, 2014).

After the fierce market competition, music apps come up with functional features for improving the comprehensive strength and competitiveness. For instance, they add sound

hound, and choose tone quality and broadcasting station to attract users. While super adding tendency of music social, music apps pay to promote their product via word of mouth ((prnewswire.com, 2017).

Innovation is also important, so the functional feature also works on music app. Among these music apps, a music app named NetEase Cloud Music has more than 300 million users and become one of the popular music apps in China music app market (Big Data, 2017). NetEase Music is a music and video streaming service developed and operated by NetEase, Inc. The service was officially launched on April 23, 2013 through which users are able to download music and comment on music, create playlists, and follow artists (Wikipedia.com). In this aspect, the accurate product positioning, unique interface design, stable content production, multiple profit model, and functional feature as the innovation feature of NetEase Cloud Music make NetEase Cloud Music stand out from the crowd (prnewswire.com, 2017).

From the age of album to EP, to single song, the way of listening to musickeep on changing; NetEase Cloud Music (NCM) developed the new function playlist as the most popular and fashion way for users, and that accounts for 75% of usage rate. Generally, the NCM user group presents a younger trend in which the young users are more active in sharing and interacting with music community, and they will define the future direction of music products (Da, 2016). In the music app industry, NCM created a new situation for users when they listen to music, by combining the shape of music listening to music independent with social contact, attracting more people to share their opinion under the song, and thus achieving music and social contact integration (Hao, 2016).

The rationale behind this proposed study is to deepen our understanding on how the aforesaid factors affect NCM's a popularity. In this study, more emphasis was placed on the self-interest of people (Schwarz, 2010,) to promote the spreading of a popular culture phenomenon from users' own experience. This study focused on the point of music app, and used the Media Ecology Theory to understand why and how people actively seek out music app to satisfy entertainment needs. In other words, users nowadays have demand not only from the music content, but also from the appearance design, innovative functions and more aspects to choose a music app.

1.3 Objectives of Research

The objective of this research was to study factors affecting the popularity of NetEase Cloud Music app among the NCM users in Zhongguancun, Beijing, China, the headquarters of NCM company.These factors included product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model, and functional feature. Their effects on users' usage intention was also explored.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This research exclusively focuses on NCM as the popular type of music app, and five factors of the NCM to attract users. Understanding how five factors affect the popularity of the NCM app thereby develop the NCM app and music app industry better.

The users of NCM app are the target group of this research. The data were collected from March 5, 2018 to April 5, 2018.

In terms of geographical area, this study will analyze the reactions on NCM among users in Beijing, China.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study offers various benefits. At first, research on the factors affecting the popularity of NCM can better inform people about music social networking. Along with the development of smart phones and network popularization, the music social experiences in recent years in terms of a single music sharing, text comments to the barrage, live, and the establishment of social networks have enabledthe audience to be exposed to more diversified forms of music social expectation. Music no longer appears in people's life in a single form, but rich music model can satisfy people's needs to a great extent.

Secondly, this study analyzes the mentality of NCM users through the “Media Ecology Theory to that NCM understandshow they choose the suitable music app for them.

Additionally, the success of the NCM can be followed by other merchants and make greater contribution to the development of network technology and music app market.

Finally, the findings of this study will also benefit academicians in communication media and media research. It will offer some thoughts for further analysis.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Music Social Network: Music social network aims to enhance the function of music communication. In such applications, people can openly follow their favorite idols, and users share some of their information and communicate with like-minded people.

Music Media: A music video is a short film that integrates a song with imagery and produced for promotional or artistic purposes. There are also cases where songs are used in tie-in marketing campaigns that allow them to become more than just a song. Prior to the 1980s, these kinds of videos were described using various terms including "illustrated song," "filmed insert," "promotional (promo) film," "promotional clip," "promotional video," "song video," "song clip" or "film clip."

Product Positioning: "Product positioning" is a marketing technique intended to present products in the best possible light to different target audiences. The method is related to "market segmentation" in that an early step in major marketing campaigns is to discover the core market most likely to buy a product—or the bulk of the product. Once segmentation has defined this group ("active seniors," "affluent professional working women," "teens"), the positioning of the product consists of creating the message likely to reach this group. Positioning involves symbols and message manipulation, including displays and packaging.

Interface Design: Interface Design is the design of user interfaces for machines and software, such as computers, home appliances, mobile devices, and other electronic devices, with the focus on maximizing usability and the user experience. The goal of

interface design is to make the user's interaction as simple and efficient as possible, in terms of accomplishing user goals (user-centered design).

Content Production: Content Production is the core of a product, especially to digital media for users or audiences in specific contexts. Content is "something that is to be expressed through some medium, as speech, writing or any of various arts," for self-expression, distribution, marketing or publication. As for music app, content production means the songs of the app, used by users to satisfy their demand.

Profit Model: Profit model is a way to convert a firm's offerings and other sources of value into cash. Great ones reflect a deep understanding of what customers and users actually cherish and where new revenue or pricing opportunities might lie. For NCM, profit model is the important way to gain profit. Profit models often challenge a music app industry's tired old assumption about what to offer, what to charge, or how to collect revenues. Payment mode, free value-added, surrounding content and music festival could be the big part of their power: in the music app industry the dominant profit model often goes unquestioned for decades.

Functional Feature: Functional feature is the innovative function of product, it is different from other similar products in the market and serves as the selling point to attract users. Users would choose a music app depending on the functional feature, such as the NCM builds a good atmosphere in function of comment, people who prefers music social would use this app. Sometimes, this functional feature helps the business to find a new way to expand market.

Popularity: Popularity is the degree of popularity of the NCM app, it depends on people's opinion; they decide whether this music app is popular or not, and how popular the music app is. Popularity is not created or won by focusing on the market. It is about the person who buys it, sharing it, using it, and giving it away that determines what is popular.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents related theory, related researches and articles, conceptual model, and research questions.

2.1 Review of Related Theory

The fast-developing of mobile internet promotes the mobile application development, and all kinds of applications get guarantee because of theoretical knowledge, thus research and development of these industries had a tremendous advance (Ling, 2014).People always think science and technology impacts society a lot. The main idea of Media Ecology Theory is how the media technology impacts society (Hai, 2007). Media Ecology Theory emphasizes three concepts: people cannot get rid of the influence of media, and media permeates everywhere; media decides perception and structure of experience of people; and media relates world together (Hai, 2007).

The medium is the message that is the trademark of theMedia Ecology Theory. It represents McLuhan’s main academic values: medium is more important than the message from medium. Medium can change judgment of

people about others and the world (McLuhan, 1964). McLuhan indicated message influences the consciousness ofpeople, but medium influences sub consciousness of people the most.In this study, music app influences consciousness of music listening of people. It guides people tochoose the music app as the convenient way to satisfy their demand of music listening.

McLuhan and Fiore (1967) presented medium is message. They show another medium viewpoint to readers by means of changing a letter. They said people are not only influenced by medium, but also attracted and conquered by it (Hai, 2017, p. 480). As a group, people are interested in new technology. In fact, medium is a way of message to people. This is one of the features of mess-age (McLuhan & Parker, 1969), and it would be easier to understand and put it in the background of mess-age (McLuhan & Nevitt, 1972).

Music app industry can change the judgement of people about others and the world, and the way of musiclistening. In order to explain the impact of media technology on society from a new angle, McLuhan and Erik (1988) came up with four laws: enhancement, obsolescence, retrieval and reversal.Enhancement explains medium can enhance or magnify the capacity of people. Internet enhances the capacity of people from four aspects. At first, it increases the quantity of feeling, it includes vision and audio. The second is the appearance of

internet that enhances conveniences of obtaining information. For the users, searching and downloading music through music app just needs few times, so it promotes the effectiveness of music app. Thirdly, internet can promote class differentiation. Finally, internet can promote dispersion ofauthority (Hai, 2017, p. 483).

Internet also makes some media obsolete. For example, television makes radio be outmoded. Even many people and listening to radio when they drive every day, but the new technology has been realized visualization in the car. The new technology promotes the development of electronic media (Hai, 2017, p. 483). In the same way, the new technology supports music app play everywhere instead of listening to music on computer or another device.

The internet – as a medium pushed to its potential – reverses society into a new and unique place. When people chatting online, internet has the capacity of getting people together. People download music and video online, then internet reverts itself as a medium with audiovisual attraction (Hai, 2017, p. 484). Like the innovative function -- radio, it is the reversal feature of media.

2.2 Related Researches

2.2.1 Product Positioning

According to Prachi (2017), in the industry of music app, the steps in product positioning are very necessary.Knowing the target audience well is the first point for product positioning. It is essential for the music app to first identify the target audience and then understand their needs and preferences. Every individual has varied interests, needs and preferences. No two individuals can think on the same lines.Knowing what customers expect,the products can fulfill the demands of the individuals (Prachi, 2017).

The second is identifying the product features. The marketers of music app must be well aware of the features and benefits of the products. It is rightly said they cannot sell something unless and until they are convinced of it.For example, a marketer selling Nokia phones should also use himself a Nokia handset or that the customers would to believe in him (Prachi, 2017).

Unique selling proposition is another point. Every product should have it; at least some features which are unique. The music app must create its image and effectively communicate it to the target audience (Prachi, 2017).

Ways to promote brands can also help generate product positioning

accurately. Choosing the right theme for the advertisement, using catchy taglines, and creating the advertisement that did not confuse people, the marketer will definitely highlight the benefits of the products to the consumers (Prachi,2017).

The final element is maintaining the position of the music app brand.For an effective positioning, it is essential for the music app to continue living up to the expectations of the end - users. The quality would not be compromised, and the price of product does not drastically reduce (Prachi, 2017).

Kurad, Astrid, Friedrichsen, and Mike (2008) referred to product positioning as brand marketing in the music industry. In the music business, a brand strategy is an option to differentiate competing products or companies, too. Base and binding force of the brand positioning is a clear idea, vision and mission (Silberer, 2001). A brand strategy can apply to individual contents (product brand) as well as to the company as a whole (Siegert, 2000).

Different kinds of brands can be found in the music business and they are not of little importance. The most important brand in the music industry is the artist. Furthermore, the brand policy of record companies can aim at establishing brands in strategic marketing. Both cases offer a high cross-selling potential (Wirtz, 2001; and Canibol, 2003).

According to Gerbner's (1972) theory, the new media changed propagation characteristics of traditional media with the standard of time, like digital media and network media. New media has a strong interaction and high participation, and these changed the unidirectional features of traditional media, like newspaper, television and radio (Bo, 2017).

Knowing the target audience is essential for the music app to identify the target audience and then understand their needs and preferences (Prachi, 2017). The unique selling proposition as one of product features can also be researched. It is effective for music apps to find the suitable way to position their music apps. And for Kurad, Astrid, Friedrichsen and Mike's (2008) point of view, brand needs to establish brand strategy, and artists are an important element in product positioning.

2.2.2 Interface Design

Yue (2017) mentioned interface design in her research. This research talks about the concept of interface design in music app. She indicated most of the music apps use layout based on IOS system layout, and add listing elements for users to search and extend their search. The information architecture is easy to understand when users listen to music with music app. In addition, music apps

have different features in the main interface, but functional structure is clear. In this aspect, many music apps prefer using a poster of singers in their player interface. If the color schemes are not matching with the main interface, the visual effect will be greatly reduced (Yue, 2015).

Besides acquiescent color of music app, many music apps have a function of colorchange. Overall, music apps all choose the representative color of their brand. But on the aspects of design style and function setting, they are similar (Yue, 2015).

In the research about interface design, the domestic music industry has deficiency in music apps' interface design. Till 2004, a competition about Chinese users' experience named UPA China had a tremendous promotion for researching mobile phone interface design. Designers came up with some innovative ideas and plans, and these activities make interface design met with success (Tian, 2017).

Jet Paskin (2000) summarized the research result of human- computer interaction design in his book. He came up with people first as the core content of interface design, and emphasized core status of users in the interface design. He used a mental profile of users and demand it as the design guiding ideology and

superstructure.

Jesse James Garrett (2010) used users' experience as the guide. He wrote a book named The Elements of User Experience (2011) that became the paragon of users' experience. This book took the web design as an example to explain that the design of users' experience need to starts from strategic layer to range layer, and then to structural layer, and end up with information frame layer and visual performance layer. He not only explained the factors affecting users' experience, but also offered a guidance for users' experience. He expanded users' experience to many aspects, and thought emotional experience is the core aspect of users. The products such as webpage and app have to consider user's instinct and behavior and indicated the difference of these layers and implementation method. His research involved webpage, PC interface, and offered a concrete concept for interface design of music app.

Giddens said every action or behavior can produce a new act. Every action or behavior of group and organization would be influenced by their past experience(Hai, 2007, p. 285). As for interface design, the demand of users can produce some new requirements for music app to improve the interface design. Giddens did not regard structure (rule and resource) as obstacle of interaction, but regard it as a necessary part of creative interaction (Hai, 2007, p. 285).

2.2.3 Content Production

With the development of music industry in China, users have great demand with content production. In this situation, how to build an effective pattern to encourage music content production becomes a question in the music industry. Wei (2017) wrote an article about the structure of encouraging music content production and offered his proposal. In the aspect of music, many composers and artists created a lot of excellent works, and the key element is the influence of music platform. A good music platform can offer high technology to make sure of song's quality.As for the music apps, they are active in getting copyright, cooperate with music festival, and expand music library as the ways to make sure of the music content production (Wei, 2017).

The freedom of internet also encourages amateurish singers (users) to share their original songs through music app. For some professional singers, they can make music concentrative when they have a stable income in a music platform. At the same time, investors can also find outstanding singers and gain profit from them through music platform (Wei, 2017).

Qin (2016) mentioned music content production in her article. She indicated good music content production can be separated with PCG and UGC. PCG means

professional content production. Like songs of record company, every music app is positive to get the music copyright, collaborate with popular music program, and update the content production in time. In the music app, users establish a playlist, and independent musician upload songs that belong to UGC, realigning in demand of users, and could generate diversification, and differentiation of content, thus satisfying the emotion and desire of users (Qin, 2016).

2.2.4 Profit Model

A good profit model can offer music apps more funds to maintain and improve their product, thus providing better services for users. Yu (2016) aimed at exploring the profit model in Chinese music app market, analyzed three profit models, and gave suggestion (Yu, 2016).

The success of payment made is relating to profit of music app industry. In the sheer number of users, music apps have a broad market. However, music apps generally lack of payment users. Based on the demand of users, payment still has a development space. The importance of music copyright broke the old concept that music is free (Yu, 2016).

Between business interests and the users' habit, free value-added is a result of a compromise. Now, free valued-added shows in the form of membership. It

includes removing the ads, cloud synchronization, and nondestructive download. For some users, a good use experience is worth to pay money (Yu, 2016).

With the rising surrounding content, music as one of the core content of the entertainment industry must have a broad market demand. It can provide music streaming media platform to make more contribution to the content of the differentiation, forming a production cycle based on music surrounding content (Yu, 2016). Moreover,Feng's research (2014) talked about the current situation of music market and profit model. He came up with the idea that the music festival has become a popular profit model between users and music apps.

Not only in China, the number of people who join music festival everywhere keeps increasing. Music apps collaborate with music festivals to sell tickets and provide the surrounding contents of music festivals. This profit model attracts people's attention, because of the love of music, making users accept it easily (Feng, 2014).On the whole, the profit model of music app is abundant, and the music app also keeps finding a new profit model. However, so far there has not yet been a clear and mature profit model for the music app industry.

As a part of music app, the profit model is as important as other factors. Without a profit model, there is no stable development of music app. The

influence of media will be negative instead positive, thus offering a negative value to the music industry even the culture industry.

2.2.5 Functional feature

Huawei mobile phone company developed its own search technology, then developed a music app for their system (Zhuo, 2016). This music app has three functional features. Users can cut any song as the cellphone ringtone. The music app has the sound hound function. That is, when users listen to a song without name, this function can help them to find it. This music app offers a private station for users, so they can like or remove the song according to their choice. Moreover, the system will recommend the song they may like through the private station (Zhuo, 2016).

Rainfo (2016) mentioned the functional feature in his article named “Product & Marketing Research of Chinese music app”. He compared the infrastructure and the core strategy of two music apps (QQ music and KuGou music), to discuss the development tendency of music app in the future. Based on different product positioning, two music apps are different in terms of structure, but their essential functions are similar, such as my music, find music, search, collect and radio (Rainfo, 2016).

QQ music has a simple product positioning, so its model is of traditional songs and singers. It offers a complete and fluent use experience of essential functions. It adds a function of star live, expands economics of fans, extrudes function of poster and lyric, and satisfies aesthetic taste of users (Rainfo, 2016).

KuGou music positioning is in the entertainment integration. Besides the traditional listening function, it still expands to the functional feature of singing live and karaoke along with live and interesting video to attract people's attention, to sing karaoke and earn a star rating on song together with satisfying their demand of self-expression (Rainfo, 2016).

People download music and video online, then the internet reverts itself as a medium with audiovisual attraction (Hai, 2017, p. 484). Innovation is the important element for influencing the development of music app, and music apps explore and develop the functional feature of their product. The main idea of Media Ecology Theory is the influence of media technology on society (Hai, 2007, p. 472). Under this atmosphere, a music app with functional features can catch users' attention, because many users want unique and personal music app due to the tendency of innovation popularity.

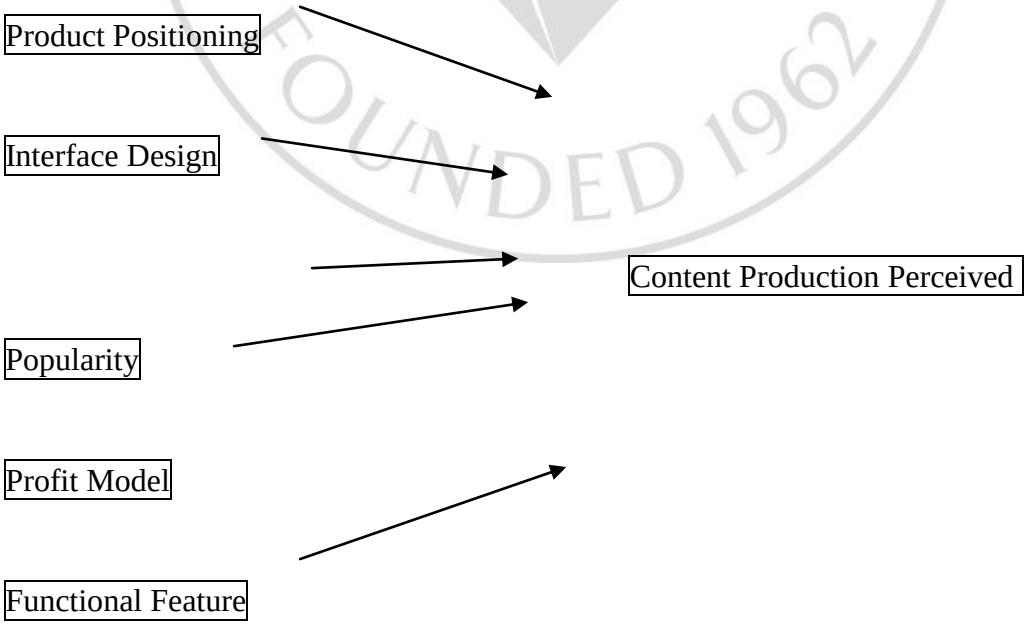
The functional feature allows the users to cut any song as the cellphone

ringtone of Huawei, star live of QQ music, singing live and karaoke of KuGou music, all prove that users are influenced by innovative function. These functional features are different among other music apps. These can promote users unique use experience, thus stimulating their consumption.

People not only are influenced by medium, but also attracted and conquered by it (Hai, 2017, p. 480). As a group, people are interested in new technology. This research uses Media Ecology Theory to explain the importance of functional features of the music apps.

2.3 Conceptual Model

Figure 2.1: Theoretical framework for perceived popularity



2.4 Research Questions

2.4.1 Does product positioning affect the popularity of NetEase Cloud Music app?

2.4.2 Does interface design affect the popularity of NetEase Cloud Music app?

2.4.3 Does content production affect the popularity of NetEase Cloud Music app?

2.4.4 Does profit model affect the popularity of NetEase Cloud Music app?

2.4.5 Does functional feature affect the popularity of NetEase Cloud Music app?

2.5 Hypothesis

The five factors of product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model, and functional feature significantly affect the popularity of the NCM app.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To study factors affecting popularity of NetEase Cloud Music app in Beijing,the researcher conducted the study on the following orders：3.1 Research Population; 3.2 Research Sample; 3.3 Research Instrument; 3.4 Data Collection; 3.5 Data Analysis.

3.1 Research Population

Population in this research were Chinese music application users who used NetEase Cloud Music app during 5 March 2018 to 5April 2018. The population number is unknown, and all-aged male and female of Chinese music application users are considered as their main residence is in Beijing.

3.2 Research Sample

The sample consisted of 400 Chinese users of NCM appwho are living in Zhongguancun, Beijing, China and who were willing to express their opinion with the researcher through completing the questionnaires online from 5 March 2018 to 5 April 2018. The subjects were selected based on convenience sampling.

3.3 Research Instrument

The questionnaire was invented through the following process:

The concepts were researched from books, documents, articles, and journals that relate to the five factors including product positioning, interface design, content product, profit model, and functional feature, and their effects on the popularity of NCM app, together with the guidance and assistance from an advisor.

Creating a questionnaire based on the theory in related researches, which consists of product positioning, interface design, content product, profit model, and functional feature, with the approval of an advisor.

This research used a questionnaire, which was created from a related literature review. The questionnaire is divided into four parts: basic information, use of NCM app, factors affectingthe popularity of NCM app, and comment or suggestion for NCM app.

Part 1: 3 Close-ended response questions about gender, age, living area.

Part 2: A Close-ended response questions about the use motivation of the NCM app. It includes making music list, interface design, function setting,

activities, surrounding good, functional feature, quality of song, massive song library, friend making, outdoor advertising, and recommendation from friends.

Part 3: 10 Close-ended response questions about thepopularity of NCM app. It includes the impression of app among young people, people's feeling about the NCM app if they don't use it, the use condition of friends, the ranking list of the NCM app, the downloads times of the NCM app, the reviews times of the NCM app, the share condition of the NCM app, the recommendation condition of the NCM app to people, and the evaluation of the NCM app.

Part 4: 13 Questions about factors affectingthe popularity of NCM app that consist ofProduct Positioning (3 Questions), Interface Design (5 Questions), Content Production (8Questions), Profit Model (6 Questions)and Functional Feature (2 Question).

This part is measured using a five-level Likert Scale to measure the level of agreement;form strongly agree (= 5), agree (= 4),neutral (= 3), disagree (= 2)to strongly disagree (= 1).

At 4.21-5.00 mean participants' acceptance level on product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature are at the highest level.

At 3.41-4.20 mean participants' acceptance level on product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature are at high level.

At 2.61-3.40 mean participants' acceptance level on product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature are at neutral level.

At 1.81-2.60 mean participants' acceptance level on product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature are at low level.

At 1.00-1.80 mean participants' acceptance level on product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature are at the lowest level.

3.4 Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed through website on March 5, 2018 to April 5, 2018. The online questionnaire was designed for collecting the data from the Chinese users, in order to get insight into the pattern of the popularity of the NCM app with the relevant factors. There are 38 questions in the online survey, and each of them contributes to the different aspects of the popularity and five

factors. The questionnaire was delivered and collected through the internet, where the number of respondents' feedbacks is 403 questionnaires.

3.5 Data Analysis

The questionnaire data were analyzed using statistics. The question of basic information about gender, age, living area, and the questions about use of the NCM appwere analyzed by using frequency and percentage. Likerscale questions about popularity, productpositioning, interface design, content production, profit model, and functional feature were analyzed by using mean and standard deviation. Inferentialstatistical analysis was conducted to explain the effects of all independent variables (product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model, and functional feature) on dependent variable (popularity) using Multiple Linear Regression Analysis.

CHAPTER 4

FINDING

This chapter presents the findings of two parts: the descriptive analysis, and hypothesis testing.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 4.1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	200	49.63
Female	203	50.37
Total	403	100.0

From 403 respondent who used the NCM app, about half of them are males (49.63%), and a bit over half (50.37%) are female.

Table 4.2: Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
< 15 years old	68	16.87
15-25 years old	101	25.06

(Continued)

Table 4.2 (Continued): Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
26-35 years old	137	34.00
>35 years old	97	24.07
Total	403	100.0

From Table 4.2, most of the respondents (43%) are in the age range from 26 – 35 years old. The second range is 15 – 25 years old (25.06%). Next is over 35 years old (24.07%), and the smallest group (16.87%) is under 15 years old.

Table 4.3: Living area of respondents

Living area	Frequency	Percent
Zhongguancun, Beijing	403	100.0
Other area	0	0.0
Total	403	100.0

From the living area, it indicated all of the NCM app users are from Zhongguancun, Beijing (100.0 %), no responders live in other areas.

Table 4.4: The use motivation of respondents

Motivation	Frequency	Percent
Interface design attracts me	50	12.41
I like the function of making music list by myself in the NCM app	46	11.41
Functional feature like writing comments below a song of the NCM is intriguing	45	11.17
I like activities that sponsored by the NCM app sponsors like “my annual music report”	44	10.92
I like the surrounding goods like souvenir that the NCM app sells	40	9.93
The function setting of the NCM app is easy and clear	40	9.93
The quality of song from the NCM app is good	34	8.44
I can find friends who have similar music style to me	31	7.69
The NCM app has massive songs that I can listen to	30	7.44
Their outdoor advertising attracts me	20	4.96
Friends recommends	15	3.72
Other	8	1.99
Total	403	100.0

From this table, the interface design (12.41%), comments (11.17%) and function of making music list (11.41%) attracted most of the users. Other aspects like online actives (10.92%), function setting (9.93) and souvenir selling (9.93%) could also catch user's eyes. Besides, users paid less attention to the quality of the song (8.44%) and quantity of the song (7.44%). Social aspect (7.69%) such as finding similar music style accounted more than outdoor advertising (4.96%), and there are only 3.72% of the respondents who used the NCM app through friends' recommendation.

Table 4.5: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of popularity

Popularity	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I often see people share the music link from the NCM app	113 (28.04)	154 (38.21)	100 (24.81)	14 (3.47)	22 (5.46)	3.80	1.00

(Continued)

Table 4.5(Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of popularity

Popularity	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
There are many users and reviews of the NCM app	102 (25.31)	176 (43.67)	90 (22.33)	13 (3.23)	22 (5.46)	3.80	0.91
I could see the online downloads of the NCM app in the top from app ranking list	99 (24.57)	161 (39.95)	118 (29.28)	12 (2.98)	13 (3.23)	3.80	0.90

(Continued)

Table 4.5(Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of popularity

Popularity	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
The most popular music app among young people	89 (22.08)	182 (45.16)	107 (26.55)	10 (2.48)	15 (3.72)	3.79	1.00
Most of my friends are using the NCM app	84 (20.84)	179 (44.42)	120 (29.78)	10 (2.48)	10 (2.48)	3.79	0.87
There are many users and reviews of the NCM app	102 (25.31)	176 (43.67)	90 (22.33)	13 (3.23)	22 (5.46)	3.80	0.91

(Continued)

Table 4.5(Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of popularity

Popularity	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
The most popular music app among young people	89 (22.08)	182 (45.16)	107 (26.55)	10 (2.48)	15 (3.72)	3.79	1.00
Most of my friends are using the NCM app	84 (20.84)	179 (44.42)	120 (29.78)	10 (2.48)	10 (2.48)	3.79	0.87
People around me would like to recommend the NCM app to others	96 (23.82)	164 (40.69)	112 (27.79)	18 (4.47)	13 (3.23)	3.77	0.92

(Continued)

Table 4.5(Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of popularity

Popularity	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
Compared with other music app, the NCM app is my first choice	99 (24.57)	164 (40.69)	103 (35.56)	20 (4.96)	17 (4.22)	3.76	0.86
If I don't use the NCM app, I'd feel outcast	83 (20.6)	166 (41.19)	127 (31.51)	14 (3.47)	13 (3.23)	3.72	0.89
I heard many people gave the NCM app a great evaluation	75 (18.61)	182 (45.16)	121 (30.02)	9 (2.23)	16 (3.97)	3.72	0.84

(Continued)

Table 4.5(Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of popularity

Popularity	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I could see the NCM app on the top 10 of the app ranking lists	64 (15.88)	199 (49.38)	109 (27.05)	13 (3.23)	18 (4.47)	3.69	1.00

*Note: 1.00-1.80=lowest, 1.81-2.60=low, 2.61-3.40=moderate 3.41-4.20=high, 4.21-5.00=highest.

From Table 4.5, the respondents could see the online downloads of the NCM app in the top from app ranking list ($\bar{X}$ = 3.80), users and reviews of the NCM app is heavy ($\bar{X}$ = 3.80), and people around respondents would like to share the music link from the NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.80). Next NCM app is the most popular music app among young people ($\bar{X}$ = 3.79), most friends of respondents are using the NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.79), people around respondents would like to recommend the NCM app to others ($\bar{X}$ = 3.77), and the NCM app is the first choice of respondents ($\bar{X}$ = 3.76). The respondents would feel outcast if they don't use the NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.72), and people around them gave a great

evaluation about the NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.72), the respondents could see the NCM app on the top 10 of the app ranking lists ($\bar{X}$ = 3.69).

Table 4.6: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of product positioning

Product Positioning	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I think the function of the NCM app is easy and convenient	89 (22.08)	173 (42.93)	113 (28.04)	16 (3.97)	12 (2.98)	3.77	0.94
I can trust the brand of the NCM app because of their great brand image	75 (18.61)	183 (45.41)	118 (39.28)	15 (3.72)	12 (2.98)	3.73	0.91

(Continued)

Table 4.6 (Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of product

Product Positioning	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I would like to recommend this app to friends	64 (15.88)	196 (48.64)	119 (29.53)	15 (3.72)	9 (2.23)	3.72	0.85

*Note: 1.00-1.80=lowest, 1.81-2.60=low, 2.61-3.40=moderate 3.41-4.20=high, 4.21-5.00=highest.

According toTable 4.6, the respondents indicated their high perception towards product positioning of the NCM app. That is, they perceived that the function of the NCM app is easy and convenient ($\bar{X}$ = 3.77), the brand of the NCM app is trustful because of the great brand image ($\bar{X}$ = 3.73), and they would recommend this app to their friends ($\bar{X}$ = 3.72).

Table 4.7: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of interface design

Interface Design	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I think the NCM app has their unique logo	120 (29.78)	155 (38.46)	100 (24.81)	14 (3.47)	14 (3.47)	3.88	0.99
I think the interface design of the NCM app can offer me a good user experience	119 (29.53)	154 (38.21)	102 (25.31)	13 (3.23)	15 (3.72)	3.87	1.00
I like the interface design of the NCM app	101 (25.06)	179 (44.42)	86 (21.34)	18 (4.47)	19 (4.71)	3.81	1.02

(Continued)

Table 4.7 (Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of interface design

InterfaceDesign	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I'm satisfied with the function of changing interface color in the NCM app	97 (24.07)	172 (42.68)	98 (24.32)	21 (5.21)	15 (3.72)	3.78	0.99
I think red is the unique representative color of the NCM app	81 (20.1)	183 (45.41)	111 (27.54)	14 (3.47)	14 (3.47)	3.75	0.93

*Note: 1.00-1.80=lowest, 1.81-2.60=low, 2.61-3.40=moderate 3.41-4.20=high, 4.21-5.00=highest.

The table 4.7 indicated that most of the respondents agree the logo of the NCM app is unique ($\bar{X}$ =3.88), the interface design of the NCM app could offer good users experience to them ($\bar{X}$ = 3.87), and many respondents like the

interface design of NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.81), the function of changing interface color in NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.78), and red is the unique representative color of NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.75).

Table 4.8: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of content production

Content Production	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I'd like to share my favorite music through the NCM app	112 (27.79)	159 (39.45)	99 (24.57)	14 (3.47)	19 (4.71)	3.82	1.03
The quality of songs in the NCM app is great	77 (19.11)	200 (49.63)	109 (27.05)	10 (2.48)	7 (1.74)	3.82	0.83

(Continued)

Table 4.8 (Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of content production

Content Production	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I can listen to more original music here	91 (22.08)	178 (44.17)	106 (26.3)	14 (3.47)	14 (3.47)	3.79	0.95
I'm satisfied with the function of uploading my original music	93 (23.08)	170 (42.18)	112 (27.79)	14 (3.47)	14 (3.47)	3.78	0.96
The NCM app has massive songs	82 (20.35)	182 (45.16)	112 (27.79)	13 (3.23)	14 (3.47)	3.76	0.93

(Continued)

Table 4.8 (Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of content production

Content Production	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
The NCM app has so much different quality of music that and I can choose it by myself	66 (16.38)	207 (51.36)	112 (27.79)	6 (1.49)	12 (2.98)	3.77	0.85
I like the function of make song list by myself in the NCM app	70 (17.37)	186 (46.15)	123 (30.52)	17 (4.22)	7 (1.74)	3.73	0.86

(Continued)

Table 4.8 (Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of content production

Content Production	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
The copyright management of the NCM app is good	56 (13.9)	186 (46.15)	130 (32.26)	18 (4.47)	13 (3.23)	3.63	0.89

*Note: 1.00-1.80=lowest, 1.81-2.60=low, 2.61-3.40=moderate 3.41-4.20=high, 4.21-5.00=highest.

Table 4.8 shows the respondents think quality of songs in NCM app is great ($\bar{X}$ = 3.82), and they'd like to share their favorite music through NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.82). They can listen to more original music in the NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.79), and they are also satisfied with the function of uploading my original music ($\bar{X}$ = 3.78). The respondents can choose different quality of music in NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.77), and they also agree the NCM app has massive songs ($\bar{X}$ = 3.76), and the function of make song list by themselves ($\bar{X}$ = 3.73). However, the copyright management of NCM app has the lowest perception ($\bar{X}$ = 3.63).

Table 4.9: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of profit model

Profit Model	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I'd like to become the member of the NCM app	113 (28.04)	156 (38.71)	101 (25.06)	16 (3.97)	17 (4.22)	3.82	1.02
I'd like to buy the digital album through the NCM app	119 (29.53)	141 (34.99)	106 (26.3)	18 (4.47)	19 (4.71)	3.80	1.06
I think the off-line activities like "users' offline meeting" of the NCM app is attractive	75 (18.61)	196 (48.64)	115 (28.54)	8 (1.99)	9 (2.23)	3.79	0.84

(Continued)

Table 4.9 (Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of profit model

Profit Model	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I'd like to join the music festival held by the NCM app	74 (18.36)	187 (46.4)	116 (28.78)	13 (3.23)	13 (3.23)	3.73	0.91
I'd like to buy the goods that the NCM app sells online, like souvenir	91 (22.58)	173 (42.93)	97 (24.07)	21 (5.21)	21 (5.21)	3.72	1.03

*Note: 1.00-1.80=lowest, 1.81-2.60=low, 2.61-3.40=moderate 3.41-4.20=high, 4.21-5.00=highest.

From Table 4.9, the respondents would like to become the member of the NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.82), and they'd like to buy the digital album through the NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.80). They are attracted by off-line activities like "users' offline meeting" ($\bar{X}$ = 3.79), the online activities such as "90s' music festival creative

competition" ($\bar{X}$ = 3.73), and the music festival held by the NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.73) are attractive. However, they perceived low regarding to purchase of goods that NCM app sells online, like souvenir ($\bar{X}$ = 3.72).

Table 4.10: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of functional feature

Functional Feature	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I am satisfied with the latest version of NCM app	93 (23.08)	163 (40.45)	113 (28.04)	18 (4.47)	16 (3.97)	3.74	0.99

(Continued)

Table 4.10 (Continued): Mean, Standard Deviation, and Respondents perception of functional feature

Functional Feature	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean $\bar{X}$	S.D.
I'm pleased that the NCM app has some innovative function like writing comments below a song and listen to the radio	71 (17.62)	180 (44.67)	125 (31.02)	16 (3.97)	11 (2.73)	3.70	0.90

*Note: 1.00-1.80=lowest, 1.81-2.60=low, 2.61-3.40=moderate 3.41-4.20=high, 4.21-5.00=highest.

According to Table 4.10, the respondents are satisfied with the latest version of NCM app ($\bar{X}$ = 3.74), and the innovative function like comments and radio also attract them ($\bar{X}$ = 3.70).

Table 4.11: The mean and standard deviation of users' opinion on five factors and the NCM app popularity

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Popularity	3.7653	.34918	403
Product Positioning	3.7411	.52413	403
Popularity	3.7653	.34918	403
Interface Design	3.8164	.48008	403
Content Product	3.7618	.35795	403
Profit Model	3.7684	.40790	403
Functional Feature	3.7233	.65771	403

From Table 4.11, the respondents perceived the popularity ($\bar{X}$ = 3.77, SD = .35), and the five factors in the highly descending order follows: product positioning ($\bar{X}$ = 3.74, SD = .52), interface design ($\bar{X}$ = 3.82, SD = .48), content product ($\bar{X}$ = 3.76, SD = .36), profit model ($\bar{X}$ = 3.77, SD = .40790), and functional feature ($\bar{X}$ = 3.72, SD = .66).

4.2 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis: The five factors of product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model, and functional feature significantly affect the popularity of the NCM app.

Table 4.12: Analysis of correlation between independent variables (product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature) and the dependent variable (popularity of the NCM app) using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of Product Positioning, Interface Design, Content Production, Profit Model and Functional Feature affect the popularity of the NCM app

Correlations

		PP	ID	CP	PM	FF	Popularity
Product Positioning	Pearsoncorrelation	1					
Interface Design	Pearsoncorrelation	.120*	1				

(Continued)

Table 4.12 (Continued): Analysis of correlation between independent variables (product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature) and the dependent variable (popularity of the NCM app) using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of Product Positioning, Interface Design, Content Production, Profit Model and Functional Feature affect the popularity of the NCM app

Correlations

		PP	ID	CP	PM	FF	Popularity
Content Production	Pearsoncorrelation	.166**	.232**	1		.	
Profit Model	Pearsoncorrelation	.143**	.183**	.133**	1	.	
Functional Feature	Pearsoncorrelation	.059	.105*	.083	.087	1	
Popularity	Pearson correlation	.04	.285**.	.311**	.177**	.021	1

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level.

Table 4.13: Analysis of model summary between independent variables (product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature) and the dependent variable (popularity of the NCM app) using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of Product Positioning, Interface Design, Content Production, Profit Model and Functional Feature affect the popularity of the NCM app

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimates
1	.677[a]	.458	.447	.3224

a = predictors: Product Positioning, Interface Design, Content Production, Profit Model, Functional Feature

Table 4.14: Analysis of ANOVA between independent variables (product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature) and the dependent variable (popularity of the NCM app) using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of Product Positioning, Interface Design, Content Production, Profit Model and Functional Feature affect the popularity of the NCM app

ANOVA^b

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	7.745	5	1.549	14.902	.000^a
Residual	41.268	397	.104		
Total	49.014	402			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Product Positioning, Interface Design, Content Production, Profit Model, Functional Feature

b. Dependent Variable: Popularity

Table 4.15: Analysis of coefficients between independent variables (product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model and functional feature) and the dependent variable (popularity of the NCM app) using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of Product Positioning, Interface Design, Content Production, Profit Model and Functional Feature affecting the popularity of the NCM app

Coefficients^{a}

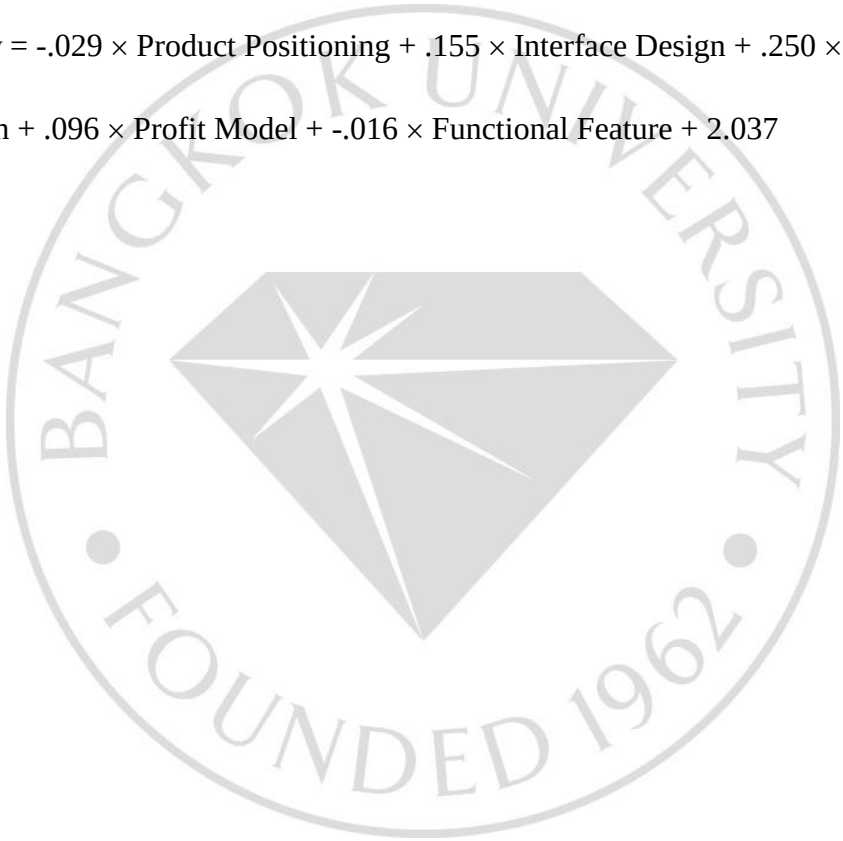
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	β	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.037	.242		8.426	.000
Content Production	.250	.047	.256	5.336	.000
Interface Design	.155	.035	.213	4.424	.000
Profit Model	.096	.041	.112	2.360	.019
Functional Feature	-.016	.025	-.029	-.632	.528
Product Positioning	-.029	.031	-.043	-.910	.363

a. Dependent Variable: Popularity

A standard multiple regression was performed between Popularity as the dependent variable and Product Positioning, Interface Design, Content Production, Profit Model, Functional Feature, and production positioning, and functional feature as independent variables. The multiple correlation coefficient (R = .68) was significantly different from zero, $F_{(5,403)}$= 14.90, p < .05, and 45.0% of the variation in the dependent variable was explained by the set of independent variables (R^2= .458, Adjusted R^2 = .447). All Interface Design (B = .1213; t = 4.424, p < .05), Content Production (B = .256; t = 5.336, p <.05) and Profit

Model (B = .112; t = 2.360, p < .05) were found to significantly and uniquely contribute to prediction of Popularity of the NCM app, while Product Positioning (B = -.043; t = -.910, p >.05) and Functional Feature (B = -.029; t = -.632, p > .05) was not the contribution to prediction. The equation of prediction produced bythis analysis describes the relationship between the variables to be:

Popularity = -.029 × Product Positioning + .155 × Interface Design + .250 × Content Production + .096 × Profit Model + -.016 × Functional Feature + 2.037



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter provides conclusion, discussion, limitation, and recommendation of the study.

5.1 Conclusion

The aforementioned summaries of findings lead to the conclusion section of this study. From the finding of gender, it shows females prefer the NCM app more than males. The table of age indicated that most users are people who just finished the education. They may prefer to spend their free time to listen to music before they actually enter to working life. As for the living area, all users live in Beijing, China, as Beijing is the headquarter of the NCM app and the first-tier city may have more influence on music app users. About the use motivation aspect, the interface design got the highest percent, in other words, the majority of people approve the interface design of the NCM app. Besides, users did not pay much attention to the social aspect such as finding similar music style.

Another conclusive key point is the findings of five factors. Easy and convenient function setting gets the highest approval in the factor of product positioning, since this setting can help users use the NCM app more easily. As for interface design, the unique logo of the NCM app brings more great use

experience to users. Not only that, changing interface color offers high freedom to users, so they could change the interface color to what they like. From the content production, most of the users value the qualityof songs, and they can choose different quality of music by their demand. Moreover, most users would like to become the member of the NCM app, and they'd like to pay money to get the value-added service through the NCM app. Along with the profit model, the users will consider about the functional feature, and innovative function like comments, and it makes them feel satisfied with the latest version of the NCM app.

The finding shows the significance of relationship between each independent variable, since the NCM app wants to keep their popularity to even become more popular, so the five factors cannot be ignored. Regarding the popularity, the variation in Popularity (or 'variance') can be explained by variation in sample ratings of product positioning, interface design, content production, profit model, functionalfeature. All interface design, content production and profit model were found to significantly and uniquely contribute to prediction of popularity of the NCM app, while product positioning and functional feature was not the contribution to prediction. Overall, interface design, content production and profit model affect the popularity of the NCM app,but not product positioning and functional feature.

5.2 Discussion

The findings of this study have brought several outstanding significances that this research strives to discuss. Research into the reasons for the popularity of NCM can better inform people about music app market. Along with the development of smart phones and network popularization, the music social experiences in recent years, e.g. a single music sharing, text comments to the barrage, live, turn to what makes the audience bound to more diversified forms of music social expectation. Music no longer appears in people's life in a single form, and rich music model can satisfy people's needs to a great extent.

McLuhan and Fiore (1967) said people are not only influenced by medium, but also attracted and conquered by it (Hai, 2017, p. 480). As a group, people are interested in new technology. The interface design as a technology of music app meets users' personalized needs. For the demand of people in each level, aesthetic need is one of the primary need. As for music app, when users use the music app, the interface design can be visualized in users' eyes. Users like the feeling that they can control their behavior, and do what they want to do and how to do it. Since the NCM app knows about the mentality of subjectivity and personalized experience of users, the interface design gives massive dominant right to users. This is a necessary factor that affects the popularity of the NCM app (Chun, 2016).

The researchers believe that the content as well as the medium that it has

been interpreted also plays a vital part in dissemination of information (communicationtheory.org). For a music app, the content production should be the core of this app, and content production decides the quality of app. After all, the fundamental function of music app is listening to music, so if there are massive songs or copyrights in this app, it would be popular among users. From the finding, most of respondents think the NCM app did content production great, and that is a big reason why they choose the NCM app, because they can listen to many music on the app. In other words, content production does affect the popularity of the NCM app.For some users, if this app has the copyright of their favorite singers' songs or music, this app must be the first choice for them. For example, with the song copyright of Taylor Swift in China in the NCM app, her followers would like to use the NCM app to listen the music. So if a music app has more songs and copyrights, this app can attract more users.

Profit model also affects people as McLuhan (1967) indicated message influences the consciousness of people, but medium influences the subconsciousness were of people the most (1964). For instance, the NCM app proposes the payment mode such as that becoming the member of NCM app, then users can enjoy the right of membership like choosing the quality of songs and gaining member points to trade in some souvenir. Once this profit model appears, users would like to pay for money to gain the right they want (Yu, 2016). The finding indicated profit model is successful, since most of users are willing to pay for it.As for young users, music festival is a new form for them to enjoy

music;whenthe NCM app collaborates with some music festivals, they'd like to buy music festival ticket through the app.

There are no significant differences of popularity app among product positioning and functional feature of the NCM.The main idea of Medium Theory is the media technology impacts society (Hai, 2007, p. 472). Initially the usage of media was very limited due to lack of knowledge and information, but now, a common man can read and access to any kind of information which he desires from the wide array of media (Chao, 2016). As time passed and communication mediums developed, many enterprises and companies catch the chance to produce a music app like the NCM app would position target audience, identify the product features, promote the unique sell proposition, and promote their brands from the angle of society. The production of music app helps the society to develop faster and today due to internet and other facilities, and the information could be conveyed promptly (Jing, 2016). However, as previously mentioned, the development of market is not only relating to the social aspect, but also relating to the psychological aspect of users (Chao, 2016). The enterprises can only predict their target audience but cannot know about their true demand by survey, and their product cannot be popular relying only on the product positioning. According to the finding, product positioning does not affect the popularity of the NCM app.

If a medium has too many limits, it would be hard to work. Reversal includes features of the system that produces the content. When people chatting online,

internet has the capacity of getting people together. People download music and video online, then internet reverts itself as a medium with audiovisual attraction (Hai, 2017, p. 484). The functional feature such as comments and radio are the typical reversal of the NCM app, and users use function of comment to connect with each other, but when they listen to radio, this connection is interrupted. However, since most people just use music app in traditional way -- listening or downloading the music, they donot want to join the social contact (Hai, 2017, p. 487). Hence, functional feature is not an obvious factor to impact the music app industry. In other words, functional feature doesnot affect the popularity of the NCM app a lot.

5.3 Limitation

Because of the limitation of theoretical level and research capacity, there are some limitations of this study, some aspects are still evolving.

The selection of sample is limited. This study selected data from March 5, 2018 to April 5, 2018 as the initial sample, but didnot consider of other time period. At the same time, selecting the sample depends on the corresponding method, and whether the method is reasonable or nothat come under debate.

This study summarized five factors to study their effective the popularity of the NCM app, however, the factors are complicated. Whether these factors can be effectively analyzed as the original needs to be further investigated, and there are some limitations in the selection of variables and the model setting. This study

just chose some of the popularity variables, thus ignoring a lot of other factors.

Besides, approach of data collection is limited. At first, every respondent of the answers is based on subjective opinion, respondents just according to their personal thought to answer the questionnaire instead of the angle of the NCM app or whole music app industry. It leads the data collection to a limited way as stated above.

With the development of music app industry, the NCM app wants to improve their popularity of product, they have to know about the market demand, think about the strategy from different angle. In this study, it considered questions from a single angle, but less thoughtful. If later research can synthesize each kind of situation including sample and data collection, it would be more effective to study the music app industry.

5.4 Recommendation

5.4.1 Master the copyright, offer music content a transformation

In general, the content is the core of music app industry. To satisfy the basic requirements of users for music, the music app can achieve a better development.With the advent of dual apps in music market, users have to install two music apps in their mobile phones. There is a risk that users' stickiness and loyalty will be reduced (Hai, 2016).Therefore, it is an important target for music app to expand their own music library.Beside getting the copyright, the NCM app

should also be upstream of the extensions to the industry, because in the music on the chain of transmission, the link of music creation in the music of the transmission chain governs all the music culture as a whole. Without music creation, there is no music, no music spread, music creation activity, and the development of music creation.

Treat musical creation as the development object, there are two development modes; the development of individual resources and the development of industrial session. At the present times of depressed records industry, more and more singers start setting a personal studio, but this studio has limited capacity, they usually choose copyright company to release an album, and collaborate with music app. Therefore, the development of individual resources is more convenient for the NCM app. If they want to develop the industrial session, they can collaborate with popular music program, translate music platform to music content supplier, to improve identity and possess their unique copyright.

5.4.2 Optimize social function, reinforce the user stickiness

Among the music app, music is the media of communication for users,as the music share and commentare the way of music communication (Hai, 2016). However, the influence of music communication offers a business opportunity to music commodity.Hencefor keeping competitiveness in the homogeneous environment, music app has to improve the social function to satisfy users' demand, thus reinforce user stickiness.

At present, social function of the NCM app gains a high assessment; therefore, social services aim to optimism should start from the details, to satisfy users' demand of higher level. The NCM app can by means of big data analyze users' favorite songs and music list to form a matching system, with the level of matching system to recommend friends to users. With the increase of users, some inferior quality comments arise. Hence, the management of comments is necessary. The optimism of social service has an important impact for reinforcing user stickiness, and high faithfulness users may increase the competitive edge of music app in the future.

5.4.3 Cultivate users' consciousness of paying, via profit model

The core of music app industry is users, so it is the fountain of commercial profits. China's online music industry is based on music resources free of charge, and there are problems such as copyright infringement and illegal dissemination (Lu, 2014). Under the administration of the government, music copyright market is moving towards standardization and formalization. In order to create a good development environment for music, the only way is to cultivate users' awareness of paying.

At present, the paying of the NCM app is focusing on two aspects. Members can enjoy more music on the aspect of content, and they can choose higher quality music and "advertisement frees". However, habit formation needs time, and there are many users who would not accept this form of payment. Therefore, the NCM

app needs to find other ways to gain profit, and endogenous growth, expand extroversion, explore the whole profit model.

5.4.4 Create feedback platform, know about users' all-around demand

Everyone's acceptance of information is different, so users' needs are different.Communication is a two-way interaction process, in which feedback is indispensable (Prachi, 2017). Music app wants to satisfy the all-around demands of users, and feedback is necessary. Music communication has forward communication and reversed communication. While forward communication is music or reversed communication is the information about music, such as the emotion of people after they receive the music, emotional reaction. So, the NCM app can use interaction and plyability of new media to create a fast and convenient feedback mechanism, to know about users' all-around demands.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire of Factors Affecting Popularity of NetEase Cloud Music App

Instruction: Objective of this survey is to collected data for use in Master of Communication Arts Research, Bangkok University. The result of this research will be benefit to music app industry. In this regard, cooperation from the respondents are needed. I, Wu XinYu, master's degree of communication arts student from Bangkok University thankfully for your cooperation Instruction: Please answer the following question and put √ in ☐ that matches you most.

Part 1: Basic information

1. The gender of the NCM app users

   ☐ 1) Male☐ 2) Female

2. The age of the NCM app users

   ☐ 1) < 15 years old☐ 2)15 - 25 years old

   ☐3) 26 - 35 years old☐4) > 35 years old

3. The living area of the NCM app users

☐ 1) Zhongguancun, Beijing☐ 2) Other area, please specify_____

Part 2: Use motivation of the NCM app

1. Why you use the NCM app?

☐ 1) I like the function of making music list by myself in the NCM app

☐ 2) Interfacial design attracts me

☐ 3) The function setting of the NCM app is easy and clear

☐ 4) I like activities that sponsored by the NCM app sponsors like “my annual music report”

☐ 5) I like the surrounding goods like souvenir that the NCM app sells

☐ 6) Functional feature like writing comments below a song of NCM is intriguing

☐ 7) The quality of song from the NCM app is good

☐ 8) The NCM app has massive songs that I can listen to

☐ 9) I can find friends who have similar music style to me

☐ 10) Their outdoor advertising attracts me

☐ 11) Friends recommends

☐ 12) Other_____

Part 3: About popularity of the NCM app

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The most popular music app among young people					
2. If I don't use the NCM app, I'd feel outcast					
3. Most of my friends are using the NCM app					
4. I can see the NCM app on the top 10 of the app ranking lists					
5. I can see the online downloads of the NCM app in the top from app ranking list					
6. There are many users and reviews of the NCM app					
7. Compared with other music app, the NCM app is my first choice					
8. I often see people share the music link from the NCM app					

9. People around me would like to recommend the NCM app to others					
10. I heard many people gave the NCM app a great evaluation					

Part 4: About factors affecting the popularity of the NCM app

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Product Positioning					
1. I think the function of the NCM app is easy and convenient					
2. I can trust the brand of the NCM app because of their great brand image					
3. I would like to recommend this app to friends					
4. I like the interfacial design of the NCM app					
5. I think red is the unique representative color of the NCM app					
Interface Design					
1. I think NCM app has their unique logo					
2. I think the interfacial design of the NCM app can offer me a good user experience					

3. I'm satisfied with the function of changing interface color in the NCM app					
4. The NCM app has massive songs					
5. The quality of songs in the NCM app is great					
6. NCM app has so much different quality of music that and I can choose it by myself					
7. The copyright management of the NCM app is good					
8. I like the function of make song list by myself in the NCM app					
9. I'm satisfied with the function of uploading my original music					
10. I can listen to more original music here					
Content Production					
1. I'd like to share my favorite music through the NCM app					
Profit Model					
1. I'd like to become the member of the NCM app					
2. I'd like to buy the digital album through the NCM app					
3. I'd like to buy the goods that NCM app sells online, like souvenir					
4. I'd like to join the music festival held by the NCM app					
5. I think online activities such as "90s' music festival creative competition" of the NCM					

app is interesting					
6. I think the off-line activities like “users offline meeting” of the NCM app is attractive					
7. I’m pleased that the NCM app has some innovative function like writing comments below a song and listen to the radio					
Functional Feature					
1. I am satisfied with the latest version of the NCM app					

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