



**Understanding Music Piracy Behaviours in China: A Mixed Method
Approach**

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Abstract

Purpose

Music piracy can be defined as an unethical consumer behaviour in the digital domain that has been facilitated by advancements in information and communication technologies. It can be regarded as a crucial issue in terms of the sustainable development of the global music industry. The issue of music piracy has attracted scholars' attention to examine the antecedents of music piracy behaviours. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) has been widely employed in explaining and predicting various unethical consumer behaviours from a social-psychological perspective. However, extant music piracy studies based on TPB, which take a post positivist stance, are mainly quantitative in nature. Considering the distinctive differences between Chinese and Western music markets, the purpose of this project is to investigate Chinese music consumers and their music piracy intentions by employing an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach.

Design/methodology/approach

To fill the gap in the music piracy literature, this project has examined the music piracy intentions of Chinese music consumers using an exploratory sequential mixed methods design based on a pragmatic worldview which emphasizes the importance of the research question. Specifically, in the first phase of the study, a qualitative project was conducted. Data was collected and analysed using semi-structured interviews with 36 Chinese music consumers based in China. The measurement scale of an emerging variable named normative ambiguity has been developed accordingly, and the development process is embedded in the mixed methods design. In the second phase of the study, a quantitative project based on data from 346 surveys and a Structural Equation Modelling based on Partial Least Squares estimates (PLS-SEM) technique has been adopted to test the proposed theoretical framework and mechanism of how normative ambiguity affects piracy behaviours.

Findings

A new theme, named normative ambiguity, has emerged as one of the potential impactors on music piracy intentions. The quantitative results confirmed that the findings and insights of the qualitative investigation could be generalised to a wider population, which offers a more comprehensive understanding of the music piracy behaviours among Chinese music consumers or music consumers from other less-developed music markets, as these music markets might share similar characteristics in terms of the music piracy issue. It is expected that the research findings could be applied to the study of other unethical consumer behaviours within the digital domain such as movie piracy and cybercrime.

Practical implications

This study provides novel insights to the practitioners and policy makers within the music industry. Designing and implementing consumer educational programmes in the purpose of reducing normative ambiguity may lead to lower piracy intentions among music consumers. This, in turn, would reduce the occurrence of music piracy behaviours and perhaps encourage music consumers to subscribe legal digital music services. Moreover, relevant music market participants should use descriptive norm-based appeals as music consumers' perceived descriptive norms are correlated with their music piracy intentions.

Originality/value

This study is among the first few researches attempts in understanding the music piracy intentions based on mixed methods design. The current research contributes to the existing literature by investigating the relationship between the impact of social norms and intentions to conduct unethical consumer behaviours. Also, by bringing in data from an under-studied context of an emerging economy, this study offers a more comprehensive understanding of the piracy issues from a social-psychological perspective, as the music consumers' viewpoints are taken into considerations when investigating the issue. In addition, the thesis demonstrated the effectiveness of using an exploratory sequential mixed methods design in consumer research.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Rationale for the Current Research

“Protecting music from being illegally distributed – and therefore undermining the recovering legitimate music market – remains a key priority for the industry.”

(International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, 2017)

The illegal acquisition or retrieval of consumer products, as one form of unethical consumer behaviours, has caught the attentions of scholars and practitioners since the 1990s. Early research into consumer ethics mainly built theoretical frameworks from research into specific unethical consumer behaviours including shoplifting and consumptions related to environmental protection (Vitell & Muncy, 1992). In explaining consumers' ethical decision-making, numerous theories including neutralisation theory (Sykes & Matza, 1957) from sociology were frequently employed as theoretical foundations used to shed light on how consumers normalise their unethical behaviour in the market place. Researching into unethical consumer behaviour is of great importance as such behaviours can lead to inefficiencies in the market (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Relevant research on unethical consumer behaviours was then broadened by taking cultural differences into consideration. Chan, Wong, & Leung (1998) for example, suggested that consumers' ethical judgement toward different beliefs varied among different cultural groups. The research conducted in this period laid a solid foundation for investigation into consumer ethics or related unethical consumer behaviours. With the rapid change in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) from the beginning of the 21st century, scholars started to focus on the unethical consumer behaviours within the digital domain. These behaviours include software piracy (i.e. Moores & Chang, 2006; Wang, Zhang, Zang, & Ouyang, 2005), music piracy (i.e. Chiou, Huang, & Lee, 2005; Sinha & Mandel, 2008) and Peer-to-Peer (P2P) file sharing of other information goods (i.e. Culiberg, Koklic, Vida, & Bajde, 2016; Hennig-Thurau, Henning, & Sattler, 2007; Taylor, Ishida, & Wallace, 2009; Yu, 2012).

This research project is focused particularly on the study of music piracy, an unethical consumer behaviour, in the digital domain, analysing it in terms of intellectual copyright protection (IPR) (Chatterjee, Sarker, & Valacich, 2015). It adopts a social-psychological perspective by using the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) as the guiding theoretical framework. The extant studies or investigations into music piracy have already revealed significant insights in terms of the behavioural, attitudinal and other antecedents of this specific unethical consumer behaviour. A number of scholars who study music or digital piracy behaviours have gained insights from the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Arli, Tjiptono, & Porto, 2015; Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008; Kwong & Park, 2008; X. Wang & McClung, 2012; Yoon, 2011). Other researchers have investigated music piracy behaviour using other psychological theories such as egocentric heuristics and social learning (Cho, Chung, & Filippova, 2015), social cognitive theory (Jacobs, Heuvelman, Tan, & Peters, 2012), uses and gratifications approach (Culiberg et al., 2016) and exchange theory (Coyle, Gould, Gupta, & Gupta, 2009). The nature that music piracy is against relevant laws and regulations has also inspired a group of researchers to examine this kind of human behaviour from the perspective of criminology (Donner, Marcum, Jennings, Higgins, & Banfield, 2014; Malin & Fowers, 2009). Music piracy behaviour is an ideal study object in terms of reaching a more comprehensive understanding of unethical consumer behaviour in the digital domain as it has a clear focus on the violation of IPR protection.

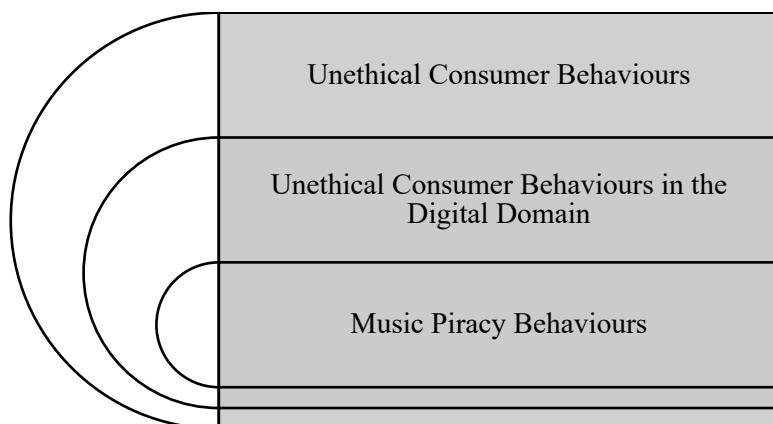


Figure 1 Research Scope

These studies have laid solid foundations for further investigations into music piracy behaviours in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of such behaviours and other unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain. However, limitations exist in the previous research into music piracy behaviours. First, from the perspective of research methodology, extant research mainly uses quantitative methods to quantify the effect of the influencing factors on music piracy behaviours. The use of quantitative methods limits the value of the voices of various music consumers. A more comprehensive understanding of the music piracy behaviour would require the additional use of qualitative methods to take the opinions of various participants into account. However, the insights gained through qualitative inquiry should be further checked in terms of the generalisability of the relevant findings. This would be achieved through the integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods as this exploratory sequential approach might help researchers identify key variables in determining the music piracy behaviours that are somehow neglected by solely using quantitative methods.

The second limitation of the existing studies lies in the study sample as the majority of these investigations are based on Western music consumers. This has led to a biased understanding of the music piracy behaviour as music consumers of different cultural groups may have different influencing factors (i.e. attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control). Among these influencing factors, the impact of subjective norms, or more broadly, the impact of social norms, is most likely to be impacted by cultural-specific variables (Smith, 2015). These may include the pace of technological advancement in terms of the ways music is stored or the development of various distribution channels. *Subjective norm* as a construct within the Theory of Planned Behaviour, captures the social influence perceived by the individual. In terms of music piracy behaviours, subjective norms of music piracy behaviours are the perceptions of individuals on the appropriateness of conducting music piracy behaviours. This kind of normative influence could be achieved either through normative pressure (i.e. injunctive norms) imposed by the selected social referents (i.e. your family members or close friends for example) or the observations on the behaviours (i.e. descriptive norms) of these social referents.

The sample of Chinese music consumers is ideal in providing additional and insightful information in understanding music piracy behaviours. There exist significant differences in terms of the development of the digital music markets in China and in Western countries. This calls for further examination into Chinese music consumer behaviours as existing literature and relevant research findings may not fully explain what is actually happening in the Chinese music market or account for the formation of Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions. Taking Apple's iTunes store as an example of the differences between the markets, when music consumers in Western countries started to enter the phase of legal downloading, there were no comparable online music services in China. Possibly due to the insufficient awareness toward intellectual copyright protection and the lack of available legal online services (Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008; Tong, Yan, & Hao, 2008; Zhang, 2018), the major means of music acquisition of Chinese music consumers is to download music files illegally from unauthorised sources. This period of massive illegal downloading may further cultivate Chinese music consumers' ignorance toward music copyrights, and it may be difficult for them to form a normative thinking against music piracy behaviours.

Many would argue that with the introduction of the free or subscription-based streaming music services, music piracy research would become irrelevant as music consumers would adopt the streaming music business model and give up pirating. This may be only partially the case in the sense that the music streaming technologies have indeed reshaped the music acquisition behaviours of music consumers, and a portion of the music consumers who frequently conduct music piracy behaviours might shift to the use of free or subscription-based streaming music services. Also, it is empirically confirmed that illegal downloading is still pervasive (Weijters & Goedertier, 2016). However, as current thesis reveals, there are still large numbers of music consumers in China and worldwide who are continuously conducting music piracy behaviours either in traditional ways such as retrieving illegal music files through the Internet. There are now also emerging ways of piracy such as stream ripping where users of streaming sites or services create downloadable music files from streaming only music or music videos with the help of ripping sites or software (IFPI, 2017). In addition, existing research has also examined

the effect of streaming music services on music piracy (Borja & Dieringer, 2016). The results indicated that streaming music services actually *complement* music piracy. Thus, further investigations into music piracy behaviours are still relevant and could provide valuable insights to music market participants.

Despite clear significance regarding the practical implications to the market participants in the music and digital entertainment industry (i.e. record labels, online music platform operators and music consumers), relevant research outcomes into music piracy as one kind of unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain might also contribute to how we understand the antecedents of various other unethical human behaviours from a social-psychological perspective. This might also help our understanding of the decision-making process of consumers of digital goods that are protected by intellectual property rights, for example e-books or online movies. Understanding Chinese consumers' reactions to the intellectual property rights (IPR) protection is of great significance considering the ever-increasing importance attached to the knowledge-intensive industries whose survival is largely dependent on IPR protection. Understanding the consumption of IPR protected products in China and other less-developed markets where awareness toward IPR protection is not strong, is crucial for relevant practitioners, as they could design relevant marketing strategies based on the research findings of the current project. Digital goods markets from other less-developed areas may share similar characteristics with the Chinese market, which means that the research findings on Chinese music consumers may be generalised to these similar markets as well.

Therefore, the aim of this research project is to further investigate the antecedents of music piracy behaviours from a social-psychological perspective and by utilising an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach (Creswell & Clark, 2018). By employing a mixed methods approach and by taking a pragmatism stance, a more comprehensive understanding of the music piracy behaviour is expected to be identified. More specifically, the social influence perceived by the music consumers in a different cultural group (i.e. China) would be further examined in detail,

as both qualitative and quantitative data would be collected and analysed in terms of music piracy behaviours in China.

1.2 Research Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to take a deeper look at music piracy behaviours among Chinese music consumers from a pragmatic worldview. This research would implement an *exploratory sequential mixed methods design*. This is a type of research design in which the qualitative study would be conducted first to provide the foundation of the quantitative inquiry. In the current study, the emerging theme identified through the qualitative study is used as a variable in addition to those of the Theory of Planned Behaviour. The quotes or statements regarding this new theme are then used as measurement scales in the quantitative study after a rigorous scale-development process. The qualitative study would not only give directions to the quantitative study, but also gives in-depth information on the emerging variable of interest. The quantitative study, in turn, would examine the generalisability of the qualitative findings to a wider population.

Specifically, the first phase of the study would be a qualitative inquiry into the music piracy behaviours in China where in-depth semi-structured interview data would be collected from Chinese music consumers who had music piracy experiences. This phase of the study would be guided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and the aim is to identify the potential antecedents of music piracy behaviours in China considering the distinctive features of Chinese music market. In analysing qualitative data, a thematic analysis approach was adopted and open-coding is allowed. Based on this abductive qualitative exploration (i.e. themes, quotes and statements of the music consumers), a context-sensitive survey would be designed and administered to a larger and random sample. In the quantitative stage of the research, the survey would be administered online, and the data would be analysed with PLS-SEM technique to see if the qualitative findings could be generalised to a large population.

1.3 Research Questions

As the current thesis follows an exploratory sequential mixed methods design, three main stages are included. The first stage of the research would be a qualitative study which is aimed at answering the exploratory research question of what the potential influencing factors are leading to music piracy behaviours. Based on the findings of the qualitative research, quantitative research would then be carried out to test the validity of the measurement of the emerging variable as well as the theoretical framework proposed in the qualitative stage of research. Based on the aim of further examining the music piracy behaviours in China, the project is then designed to answer the following main research questions:

a) *What are the influencing factors of Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions? How are Chinese music consumers' piracy decisions affected by their social referents?* The exploration into the influencing factors would be guided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour. However, the current project would try to explore the potential influencing factors that are not included in previous studies by examining samples of different cultures with different trajectories of technological advancements. This would be achieved through conducting qualitative research where interview data would be collected and analysed, before various themes would be identified. By using a qualitative approach, the first stage of the study takes the voices from various music consumers into consideration. According to previous studies on music piracy behaviours, subjective norm as a whole was often considered to be one of the influencing factors leading to music piracy intentions. However, when subjective norm is conceptualised into two categories namely injunctive norms and descriptive norms, the different impact of these two types of social norms on piracy intentions are not well explored or understood. Therefore, the first stage of the study aims to further examine the perceived social influence of Chinese music consumers when conducting music piracy behaviours.

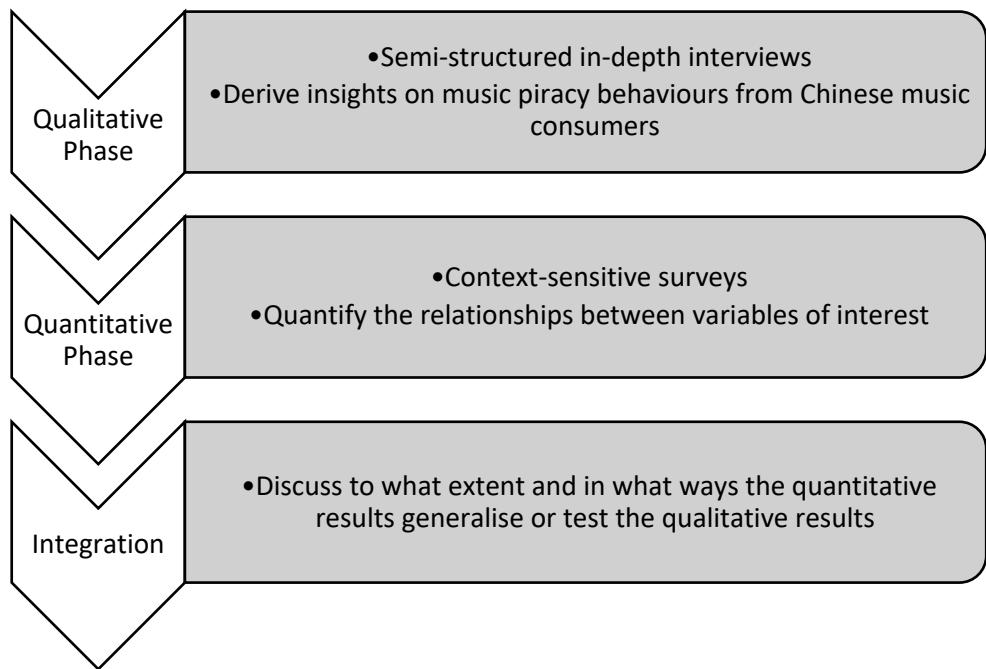


Figure 2 Research Methodology: Exploratory Sequential Design

b) How does insufficient awareness toward intellectual property rights protection induced by a different trajectory of technological advancements affect music consumers' piracy intentions?

The insufficient awareness toward intellectual property rights protection would be the major difference between Chinese music consumers and Western music consumers as a result of a different trajectory of technological advancement. Through the qualitative phase of the project, a theme called *normative ambiguity* is identified. This suggests that Chinese music consumers are unsure whether their music piracy behaviours are approved by their chosen social referents. In addition to the measurement of theoretical construct that would be developed through both the qualitative and quantitative stages of research, a refined or augmented theoretical framework based on the theory of planned behaviour would also be proposed and tested. To answer this research question, quantitative research would be conducted where the survey data would be collected and analysed, and the effect of this normative ambiguity could then be quantified.

c) Could the findings from the qualitative phase of research be generalised to a larger population? This research question could be answered through the integration process of the exploratory sequential mixed methods design employed by the current research. If the relevant

research findings from the qualitative phase of the study could be generalised to a wider population, the normative ambiguity should possess a significant and positive impact on consumers' music piracy intentions. In the current project, when testing the research hypotheses derived from the research findings of the qualitative study, the results indicate that normative ambiguity has a positive impact on music piracy intentions among Chinese music consumers. The robustness of the research findings of the qualitative study is further strengthened by the quantitative study utilising a wider population as the study sample.

1.4 Potential Contributions

The project further examines the potential antecedents and corresponding mechanism of impact in terms of music piracy behaviours and makes its unique contribution to the literature and management practice. In terms of the methodological approach, the thesis successfully demonstrates the suitability of the mixed methods approach in understanding unethical consumer behaviour in the digital domain. Theoretically, the relevant research outcome brought about by the empirical study indicates the necessity to consider the clarity dimension of the perceived social norms of consumers when explaining or predicting human behaviours.

The relevant research findings would bring a more comprehensive understanding toward unethical consumer behaviours, especially those in the digital domain. The results of this research project on music piracy behaviours has identified the fact that in some less-developed music markets where consumer awareness toward intellectual property rights are not strong, the perceived normative influence (i.e. injunctive norms) would have little impact in guiding consumers to choose an ethical way of acquiring information goods. This insufficient awareness of intellectual property rights protection, in the perspective of social influence perceived by individuals, might invalidate the normative influence on consumption behaviours which is found to be significant in developed markets where a strong awareness of intellectual property rights protection is prevailing. Therefore, more significance should be attached to the *clarity* of the social norms perceived by the consumers and more attention paid in addition to the *strength* of these social norms. As reflected by the test toward the Theory of Planned Behaviour in predicting

music piracy intentions in China, injunctive norms, which are conceptualized as the perceptions of others' approval on certain behaviours, fail to hold a statistically significant impact on piracy intention. Hence, in further investigations into unethical consumer behaviours, the clarity of social norms perceived by the consumers should be taken into consideration, for this would lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the relevant underlying behavioural intentions of consumers.

Managerial implications of the research findings could better guide the decision-making of relevant music market participants. Music piracy behaviours have long been regarded to have a negative impact on music market participants such as record labels, online music platforms and various artists (Bhattacharjee, Gopal, Lertwachara, & Marsden, 2006). As the current research reveals, normative ambiguity is one of the impact factors leading to piracy intentions among Chinese music consumers. Normative ambiguity captures the degree to which music consumers are not clear whether their piracy behaviours are approved or not by their chosen social referents. The quantitative phase of the current project indicates that music consumers with higher normative ambiguity would be more likely to engage in piracy behaviours. Hence, relevant market participants such as record labels, online music platforms, and regulatory bodies could design specific consumer educational programmes aimed at reducing this normative ambiguity in terms of music piracy. The project also reveals the impact descriptive norms and injunctive norms have on piracy intentions, and the findings indicate that only descriptive norms has influential power on music piracy intentions. Therefore, when record labels and online music platforms are designing marketing activities, they should emphasise more the use of injunctive messages in addition to descriptive messages.

1.5 Thesis Structure

Chapter 1 of the thesis will introduce the topic of interest, the rationale of the current research, research purpose, research questions and potential theoretical and practical contributions.

Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive literature review. The literature review begins with a review of the relevant literature on music piracy behaviours. Then, this is followed by a review on the theoretical background, in which the major theories employed in music piracy research are discussed. In addition, the industrial background on the music industry in China are also discussed as well as the impact of the emerging music streaming business model on music piracy behaviours. The literature review chapter also reviews relevant works on the social influence perceived by the music consumers as well as examining the corresponding research gaps within extant literature.

Chapter 3 states the research methodology and the justification of the current thesis. This part of the thesis focuses on discussing the choice of the exploratory sequential mixed methods design as the approach of inquiry, in which the epistemological assumptions, worldviews, and details of methods used in each empirical study are discussed. Specifically, the main forms of mixed methods design (i.e. the convergent design, the explanatory sequential design and the exploratory sequential design) are discussed in detail and the justifications of choosing the exploratory sequential mixed methods design is discussed.

Chapter 4 and 5 present the empirical studies of the thesis. Chapter 4 is the qualitative phase (Study 1) of the research project, where a number of Chinese music consumers are interviewed under the guidance of an interview protocol. Interview data are analysed through open coding and thematic analysis, and themes are identified to offer insights and basis for the subsequent quantitative study. Relevant discussion on the findings, limitations as well as future directions are presented. Chapter 5 comprises a quantitative study (Study 2) using data collected from a random sample with the use of a context-specific survey constructed based on the previous qualitative study and tested measures from existing literature. The aim of the quantitative study is to quantify the effect of normative ambiguity on music consumers' piracy intentions and to identify the underlying mechanism in addition to checking the generalisability of the qualitative research findings.

Chapter 6 comprises a general discussion of the findings derived from both qualitative and quantitative studies. The research findings from the qualitative study and the quantitative study would be integrated together in answering the overarching research questions.

Chapter 7 concludes the current thesis by discussing the theoretical and methodological contributions, managerial and practical implications of relevant research outcomes as well as the limitations of the thesis and suggestions on future research directions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review: Understanding Music Piracy Behaviours Through A Social-Psychological Perspective

2.1 Chapter Overview

The previous chapter has given an introduction of the thesis in which the existing studies on music piracy as well as the limitations within the extant studies are discussed briefly. According to these studies, scholars have been utilising various theories from different perspectives to examine music piracy behaviours and the corresponding antecedents. Section 1 of the literature review will give a comprehensive review of the scholarly research. Among these studies, scholars have discussed the antecedents of music piracy behaviours or intentions, various ways to combat music piracy issues including the Digital Rights Management (DRM) systems, and the interplay between the new business model of online music consumption (music streaming services) and music piracy and sales.

Within these various theoretical underpinnings from different disciplines, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) is the most widely used theory for its suitability in predicting human intentions. As the Theory of Planned Behaviour indicates, music consumers' attitude toward piracy behaviours, their perceived subjective norms as well as their perceived behavioural control in terms of music piracy are the three antecedents leading to music piracy intentions. Therefore, Section 2 of the literature review reviews the theoretical development of the Theory of Planned Behaviour as well as the studies using the Theory of Planned Behaviour as the theoretical framework to examine various consumer behaviours (i.e. Branley & Covey, 2018; Cordano & Frieze, 2000; Kim, Lee, Sung, & Choi, 2016; Peace, Galletta, & Thong, 2003; C. chen Wang, Chen, Yang, & Farn, 2009).

As discussed in the introduction, limitations exist in the use of the Theory of Planned Behaviour in explaining and predicting music piracy behaviours. One of the limitations comes from the lack of investigation into the conceptualisation of subjective norms into two separate categories, namely descriptive norms and injunctive norms (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990). Descriptive norms are observations of individuals behaviours, while injunctive norms relate to an individuals' perceived appropriateness of a certain behaviour. The majority of the existing studies guided by

the Theory of Planned Behaviour has examined human behaviours while regarding subjective norms as a whole. In these studies, subjective norms are used as an interchangeable term of injunctive norms. Due to this conceptualisation, more research is needed to examine the impact of these two norms on music piracy behaviours in order to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the perceived social norms of music consumers in terms of their decision-making. One important research question this thesis addresses concerns the impact of different subjective norms (descriptive norms and injunctive norms) on music piracy behaviours. Section 3 of the literature review discusses in detail the relevant research findings on these two types of subjective norms and their implications on the direction of music piracy research.

In addition to the further conceptualisation of subjective norms, as noted by Smith (2015), the impact of subjective norm should be considered together with the cultural differences. Hence, the study of a Chinese sample on music piracy issue is an ideal starting point in answering this question as most of the existing music piracy studies are based on a sample of Western music consumers. The distinctive differences between the Chinese and Western music markets as well as the cultural differences among music consumers in these markets calls for further investigation. A sample of music consumers drawn from a different culture is therefore required. A deeper investigation into the nature of music piracy behaviours of music consumers from other cultures with different technological advancement trajectories and different paths of development for the music industry may reveal new insights.

In the following sections, relevant existing research on music piracy including the industrial background of the Chinese music market and the music markets of Western countries, the existing research endeavours to understand the music piracy antecedents, the impact of music piracy behaviours on the music industry, the measures that have been taken to combat music piracy and the impact of the new music streaming business model on the industry will be discussed. In addition, the theory of planned behaviour, as the main guiding theory, is discussed in detail including its development, application, and its implications in music piracy research.

Based on the theory of planned behaviour, the further theoretical expansion of subjective norms is reviewed as are the gaps in the current literature and objectives of the current thesis.

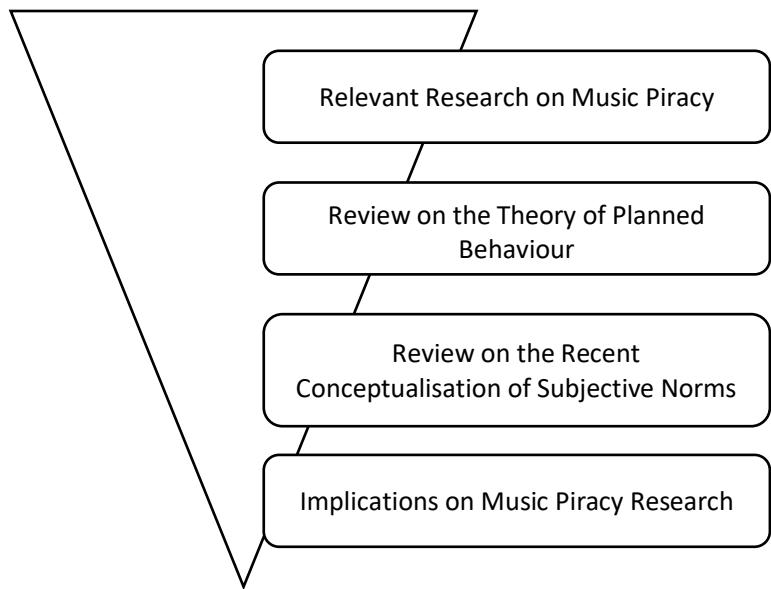


Figure 3 Overview of the Literature Review

2.2 Relevant Research on Music Piracy Behaviours

As the music industry entered the digital era and with the introduction of Peer-to-Peer (P2P) file-sharing networks such as Napster, music piracy began to concern participants in the music market. This is due to the fact that music piracy could impose a negative impact on music sales which leads to a reduced profit for record labels, music artists and music distribution platforms. With the aim of combatting music piracy issues, scholars have conducted a considerable number of studies in understanding the nature of music piracy behaviours and proposed various ways to reduce the frequency of music piracy behaviours and mitigate the loss of profit induced by them. In the ongoing journey of understanding music piracy behaviours, scholars are inspired to have successfully employed various theories in different disciplines such as ethics theory (i.e. Shang, Chen, & Chen, 2008), the Theory of Planned Behaviour (i.e. Yoon, 2011), exchange theory (i.e. Coyle et al., 2009), cognitive dissonance theory (i.e. Redondo & Charron, 2013), social cognitive theory (i.e. Jacobs et al., 2012), the uses and gratifications approach (i.e. Culiberg et al., 2016), and the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (i.e. Udo, Bagchi, & Maity, 2016), etc.

Music piracy has been defined as the illegal retrieval or the use of copyrighted music files from unauthorised channels (Taylor et al., 2009) or the illegal uploading and downloading of copyrighted audio and video without the consent from and proper compensation to the copyright holders. In the current study, music piracy is defined as illegal retrieval of music files from the Internet as the illegal retrieval, rather than the illegal use of copyrighted music files, is the main form of music piracy in China and around the world.

There is an ongoing debate of the impact of music piracy on music sales, as scholars have reached contradictory findings. Most of the studies on this topic confirmed the negative impact on music sales (Bai & Waldfogel, 2012) due to the reduction in music sales and a weakened profitability of the record label. However, some studies identified the sampling effect brought by music piracy which leads to a positive impact on music sales due to the reduced search cost in terms of music consumption powered by the sampling effect (Peitz & Waelbroeck, 2006). The sampling effect refers to the fact that music consumers could “taste” the music first through piracy and then decide if they wish to purchase the legal version of the music from alternative legal channels. Moreover, some scholars also argue that music piracy behaviours have enabled music works to be reached by more music consumers. However, considering the impact of unethical consumer behaviours, including music piracy, on the society as a whole, it then leads to a reduced consumer surplus (i.e. imposing a “tax” on paid music consumers) and producer surplus (i.e. reduced profit), and ultimately, a reduced social welfare. Although the emergence and the widely acceptance of the music streaming services has shifted the music consumption pattern from physical CDs or legal downloading to legal streaming, piracy is still an ongoing issue that hinders the rejuvenation of the music industry, especially those in the developing countries. Without proper awareness towards music copyright protection, the revenue generated by the paid users of streaming services is far from enough to maintain the growth of the industry.

The existing research on the topic of music piracy has laid a solid foundation for further inquiry into this specific behaviour as well as other unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain.

However, due to the further development in terms of the major theory (i.e. TPB) and the limitations existing in the prior studies, a further investigation of the music piracy behaviour is needed. This thesis is focused on understanding the music piracy behaviour from a social-psychological perspective. Social psychology studies how people make their decisions in the context of social lives. Therefore, the social-psychological perspective is needed here as it enables a more comprehensive understanding of the music piracy behaviour or other forms of unethical consumer behaviours requires the examination of consumers of various social settings. In addition, the representative theory in social psychology; the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) is the most widely employed theoretical framework in piracy-related research (Fleming, Watson, Patouris, Bartholomew, & Zizzo, 2017).

2.2.1 Industrial Background

Music can be recorded and stored in various formats including physical and digital. The evolution of the way how a music file is stored and played can vary from country by country due to different levels of technological advancement. Information technologies, which significantly reduce the cost of storing and sharing digital files, is of no doubt one of the most critical technological progresses facilitated by the whole music industry. With the help of new storage technology and faster internet speed, consumers now have various choices of acquiring music products.

In the past, when music consumers wanted to purchase music, they had to go to physical stores and purchase physical music tapes or CDs. Since 2015, due to the fast growth of digital music and music piracy, sales in music products in physical formats have been overtaken by digital sales (IFPI, 2016). Using a consistent metric to provide comparability across studies, scholars concluded that most of the studies conducted before 2005 estimated that the entire sales displacement of records is caused by file-sharing (Liebowitz, 2016). Studies after 2005 indicated that the shift into digital formats may have also contributed to the sales displacement. IFPI also reported that in 2015, physical sales were declining at a slower rate but still contributed 39% of the overall income of the industry. The general development process of music products' delivery channels is shown in Figure 4. In spite of the fact that new technologies and business models

have changed consumers' behaviour in terms of acquiring music, the physical format is still the main delivery channel in some countries such as Japan and Germany (IFPI, 2016). Caldwell Brown & Knox (2016) stated that price, consideration of artists' welfare, and the desire of music collection are the main factors driving consumers to buy physical recorded music.

After the emergence of digital music services (DMS), consumers have more options to acquire music. DMS has been defined as the services that provide legal digital music downloading and streaming services to music consumers (Kwong & Park, 2008). In the 2017 IFPI report, it was indicated that digital sales, which contribute 45% of music industry revenues, have overtaken physical sales with a share of 39% (IFPI, 2016). At the first stage of DMS, consumers could only pay and download music. After streaming services emerged as a new business model, consumers could either pay a flat subscription fee to access a comprehensive music library or do it free of charge (Wlömert & Papies, 2016). However, when using certain streaming services, consumers were not able to download music to computers and use them for other unauthorized purposes. The digitization of music has not only made music more portable considering that consumers can put their favourite tracks onto their MP3 Players or smartphones, but has also contributed to the massive illegal acquisition of copyrighted music works since portable devices could play digital music contents which are more easily pirated (Caldwell Brown and Knox 2016).

In recent years, new business models have emerged, and most consumers have started to adopt the streaming services. Streaming music services, which are based on profiting from subscription fees and advertisement revenues, are the most debatable new business model in the industry. They have been growing in scale and are the fastest-growing source of revenue for the industry (Wlömert & Papies, 2016). Being regarded as the promising business model that would rejuvenate the music industry, the revenue of streaming music services increased by 45.2% in the year 2016 according to IFPI reports (IFPI, 2016) increasing to 60.4% in 2017 (IFPI, 2017). In terms of the coverage of music streaming services, the industry has over 28 million paying subscribers and countless free-service music streamers who have access to over 37 billion songs in 2013 (IFPI, 2016).

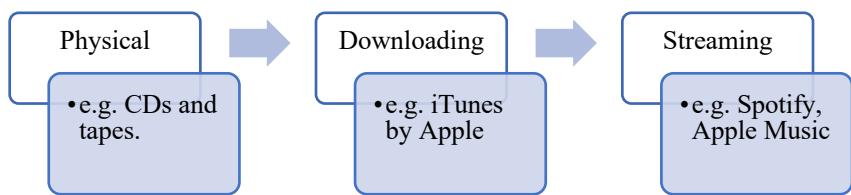


Figure 4 General Development Process of Music Delivery Channel

According to IFPI, there are 68 million people worldwide who are using premium (paid) streaming music services in 2016 (IFPI, 2016). In a typical Western country, the development of music delivery channels has three stages starting from the use of physical storage devices such as CDs and tapes.

As information technologies such as faster Internet connections (Borja, Dieringer, & Daw, 2015) have developed and digital devices that would facilitate digital music consumption (Magaudda, 2011) have advanced, digital music now dominates the industry. This enables consumers to be able to download and enjoy their favourite songs through online music service providers. In the third stage, streaming music services have become the first choice of most music consumers.

Things are different in China. Possibly due to the lack of awareness of intellectual copyright protection (Rahmatian, 2010). When the whole industry embraced the digital era, the digital music market in China was not well-regulated. When western countries were experiencing the download stage of the development process, the majority of Chinese music consumers were following the trend of significant illegal downloading. Recently, however a number of streaming services start to provide services to Chinese consumers including Apple Music, Xiami, QQ Music and Netease (IFPI, 2016), indicating a shift in the business models within the Chinese music industry.

According to the 42nd Statistical Report on China's Internet Development, the country hosts the largest online music market in the world with 0.55 billion users of online music services and

66.4% of mobile network users using online music services (CNNIC, 2018b). In order to regulate the digital music market and for the purpose of its formalization, in July 2015, the National Copyright Administration of the People's Republic of China (NCAC) enacted the most restrictive prohibition to stop all online music service providers from distributing unauthorized music products. With the latest regulatory change, music service providers in China are seeking new business models to generate profit. With this in mind, recent academic research in China investigating Chinese music market has mainly focused on discussing the issue of protecting information property of copyright holders, leading scholars in China to propose solutions including drawing up and improving on laws.

2.2.2 Predicting Music (Digital) Piracy Intentions

In explaining or predicting consumers' music piracy intentions, existing studies have been conducted based on various theoretical frameworks considering the multi-disciplinary nature of the studies into consumer behaviour (MacInnis & Folkes, 2010). Early research on unethical consumer behaviours mainly focuses on a certain specific consumer behaviour such as shoplifting or consumer behaviours related to environmental protection (Vitell & Muncy, 1992). With the advancement in information and communication technologies, especially such advancements in storage devices and the development in Internet bandwidth, practitioners and scholars have started to pay attention to the unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain as these deviant online behaviours have brought tremendous loss to various market participants. These behaviours include the piracy of copyrighted software (i.e. Moores & Chang, 2006), music files, movies (i.e. Hennig-Thurau et al., 2007), e-books and video games.

One stream of music piracy research focuses on the immorality of the behaviour with the aim of explaining the music piracy from an ethical perspective. The Ethical decision-making model (Hunt & Vitell, 1986) is widely employed as the theoretical framework in these studies, and moral obligation is the construct or variable that has frequently been used to capture the impact of music consumers' moral beliefs on their music piracy behaviours. For instance, some scholars

have found that moral obligation is a significant predictor of consumers' piracy decisions (see Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008; Yoon, 2011).

According to the ethical decision-making model (Vitell & Muncy, 1992), music consumers' deontological and teleological evaluations on the issue (i.e. music piracy) lead to his or her ethical judgment on this issue. Moral obligations reflect the deontological evaluations of the music consumers, and it is found to be influential on their music piracy decisions. In a study into illegal downloading behaviours, scholars found that consumers' anticipated guilt was a significant and negative predictor of illegal downloading among college students (Wang & McClung, 2012). However, conflicting evidence exists regarding the predictive power of moral obligations on piracy intentions as some scholars found that deontological evaluations toward music piracy is not a main determinant of piracy behaviours (Shang et al., 2008).

Teleological evaluations of music piracy behaviour refer to the considerations on the *anticipated outcomes* that would be brought on by conducting this behaviour, and the evaluations are mainly based on the perceived benefits in terms of piracy according to the existing literature (Yoon, 2011). According to Yoon (2011), apart from the direct effect anticipated benefits/risks have on consumers' behavioural intentions, they also contribute to the formation of consumer attitudes toward the issue. A general finding from this stream of research is that consumers conduct music piracy behaviours even if they think it is morally wrong to do so, as reflected by the fact that music pirates always demonstrate a relatively low level of moral judgment toward music piracy issues (Bonner & Higgins, 2010; Yu, 2012).

This discrepancy between music consumers' ethical judgment and their subsequent behaviours may be explained by the fact that consumers' moral absolutes (i.e. idealism and formalism) is associated with their recognition of a moral issue but not with their behavioural intentions (Bateman, Valentine, & Rittenburg, 2013). A similar study examined the impact of moral equity, relativism and attitude toward digital piracy (i.e. music and software) in Indonesia, and the outcome indicated that moral equity affects consumers' attitude toward these digital piracy issues

but not their intentions to perform such behaviours (Arli et al., 2015). However, attitude is confirmed to be a significant predictor of digital piracy decisions. These relative findings on the impact of consumers' ethical considerations revealed the fact that ethical consideration, as captured by moral obligations or anticipated guilt, could only affect consumers' attitudes toward these unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain; strong behavioural evidence is lacking to confirm its impact on consumers' intentions to perform such unethical behaviours (i.e. digital piracy).

Another stream of research in terms of predicting consumers' intentions to conduct music piracy behaviour employs various social-psychological theories as the theoretical frameworks.

These frameworks, including the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), are effective in explaining music consumers' music acquisition decisions, possibly due to the fact that music piracy is actually a social behaviour. Social psychology, as Myers argued, is "the scientific studies of how we think about, influence, and relate to one another" (Myers, 2014). This definition indicates the fact that music consumers' music acquisition behaviour (i.e. purchasing legal CDs, subscribing to legal services or piracy) is somehow influenced by others. Within this domain, the most widely employed social-psychological theories are the *social learning theory* (Bandura, 1977), *social cognitive theory* (Bandura, 1986) and the *Theory of Planned Behaviour* (Ajzen, 1991).

According to social learning theory, an individual's behaviour can be learned through observation of others' behaviour. Individuals may imitate this behaviour because of the positive outcomes they observe (Gunter, 2008; R. G. Morris & Higgins, 2010). In the music piracy context, music consumers' piracy behaviours could be learned through observing others' piracy behaviours, and their intention to imitate this behaviour is reinforced by the positive outcome music piracy brings to them. Social cognitive theory is the refined version of social learning theory, and it takes into considerations the impact on behaviour imposed by social and environmental factors (Jacobs et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2009).

Jacobs et al. (2012) adapted the social cognitive theory into the context of piracy behaviours in terms of digital movies, and they found that the modified model could explain around 23% of the total variance in the number of movie downloads. In a review of the efficacy of employing social cognitive theory in digital piracy research, Lowry et al. (2017) conducted a systematic meta-analysis using social cognitive theory as the overarching theoretical framework. According to their analysis, outcome expectancies, social learning, self-efficacy and moral considerations are the four major factors predicting music piracy behaviours. Regarding the reasons they choose social cognitive theory over the established Theory of Planned Behaviour as the overarching theoretical framework for the meta-analysis, they argued that the latter failed to consider the situations in which consumers' decisions are driven by "irrational" factors such as anticipated emotions. However, in a review of the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Ajzen (2011) stated that the Theory of Planned Behaviour was not based on a "rationality" assumption, and that the formation of individuals' normative, behavioural and control beliefs were not "formed in a rational, unbiased fashion or that they accurately represent reality" (Ajzen, 2011, p. 1111). According to Ajzen (2011), it is the stable links between our normative, control and behavioural beliefs and our attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control makes the behaviour reasoned or planned.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is probably the most established social-psychological theory in explaining and predicting a wide range of human behaviours (Fleming et al., 2017). Studies with TPB as their theoretical framework has demonstrated a satisfactory explaining power of the theory in terms of digital piracy behaviours. This is also reflected by the fact that the proper use of TPB framework could explain 59%-66% of the total variance in terms of behavioural intentions across a range of different examined behaviours (Ajzen, 2011). In a study into exploring the antecedents of digital piracy behaviours, the TPB framework could explain around 52% of the variance in piracy intentions (Yoon, 2011), which shows a superior explaining power toward unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain compared to social cognitive theory that could only explain around 23% of piracy intentions (Lowry et al., 2017). Scholars have successfully employ TPB to study the antecedents of music piracy behaviours, and this

stream of research has laid a solid foundation for us to understand this unethical consumer behaviour (see Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008; Kwong & Park, 2008; X. Wang & McClung, 2012; Yoon, 2011). In these extant studies, scholars often combine TPB with another theoretical perspective, for example, the ethics theory and the anticipated emotions of an individual, to predict or explain music consumers' piracy behaviours.

According to this stream of research, which takes a social-psychological perspective, a music consumers' music piracy intention is jointly determined or explained by his or her attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control toward music piracy. However, conflicting research outcomes exist when taking a closer look at the impact of *subjective norms* on music consumers' piracy intentions. Studies have found that subjective norms toward music piracy, or the perceived appropriateness of conducting music piracy behaviours, is a significant predictor of consumers' digital piracy intentions (see Chatterjee, Sarker, & Valacich, 2015; Morton & Koufteros, 2008; Taylor et al., 2009; Yoon, 2011). Other studies have failed to identify this significant relationship between subjective norms and digital piracy intentions (Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008; Fleming et al., 2017). Moreover, in a meta-analysis conducted by Fleming et al. (2017), no significant cultural differences were identified in terms of the predictive power of subjective norms on digital piracy intentions, although it was assumed that the significance of subjective norms would vary by cultures in which consumers were categorised as individualists (i.e. who value their own goals and benefits) or collectivists (i.e. who value the goals and benefits of the group). This apparent inconsistency identified in the relevant literature makes it imperative to take a deeper look at the perceived social influence of music consumers in forming their music piracy decisions.

Demographical characteristics of music consumers are regarded as the influential factors on music piracy intentions. It is widely accepted that music piracy behaviours are most likely to occur within young male groups. In a meta-analysis, age was found to be a significant factor driving piracy decisions. It was found that music consumers' piracy intentions increases if they are young (Borja, Dieringer, & Daw, 2015; Fleming et al., 2017). It is argued that the reason

music piracy is concentrated in the young is that young consumers are more likely to possess the skills (i.e. IT skills, the ability to identify sources and operate various software) and opportunities (i.e. they are more exposed to illegal sites which provide unauthorised music files) required for conducting music piracy behaviours. These enhanced IT capabilities within young music consumers then lead to higher perceived behavioural control of music piracy behaviours. The higher perceived behavioural control contributes to more frequent past music piracy experiences, and ultimately, higher music piracy intentions. Another explanation of why younger consumers are more likely to engage in digital piracy behaviours is that they are economically dependent, and their willingness to pay for the legal alternatives is relatively low (Dilmperi, King, & Dennis, 2011). This was confirmed by another study into the music consumption behaviours in the new technological context. The researchers stated that “Thus, in real-life choices, youngsters may appear to be less ethical and law-abiding, but the driving force behind this is mainly economical.” (Weijters, Goedertier, & Verstreken, 2014, p. 537).

In a study concerning students’ attitudes toward music and movie piracy, the study results confirmed the relationship between the gender of students and their attitude toward piracy behaviours. Male students had more favourable attitudes in terms of piracy (Malin & Fowers, 2009; Tjiptono, Arli, & Viviea, 2016). Considering the predictive power of attitude on behavioural intentions, this relatively favourable attitude toward music piracy represented among male music consumers might contribute to higher music piracy intentions. Unfortunately, although many studies have included gender as a control variable in the statistical analysis, it is still unclear why male music consumers tend to pirate more. One possible explanation for this is that male consumers might be more technically competent, and hence they could pirate music more easily than female music consumers as music piracy requires a certain level of IT literacy.

2.2.3 The Impact of Music Piracy Behaviours on Music Sales

Apart from its apparent negative impact on various music market participants (see Leung, 2015), scholars have also reached a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of music piracy, and they argued that it might not be the main reason for the decline in music sales and even have

positive impact on music sales (Oberholzer-Gee & Strumpf, 2016). Waldfogel (2010) looked at this issue while considering the technological context, and he concluded that “the additional song stolen reduces paid consumption by between a third and a sixth song.” His research also indicated the negative impact music piracy would bring to music sales through legal sales such as CDs and authorized downloading. Moreover, in a study using Chinese music consumers as the study sample, the negative effect brought by music piracy on music sales is found to be quite small (Bai & Waldfogel, 2012).

It would seem that studies have not pointed to a direct correlation between music piracy and a negative impact on music sales. Many scholars argue that the decrease in music sales might be the result of the emergence and spread of new information technologies such as cheaper storage and faster broadband internet connection which are also widely regarded as the facilitating factors leading to digital piracy. However, from the perspective of information goods (i.e. music, e-books, movies), music could be regarded as one of the public goods. Its over-consumption may result in the under-provision of this good. Although it might be the case that the sales displacement effect brought by music piracy are small, music piracy has an implicit negative effect as it reflects the improper protection towards intellectual property within a country or region. This can lead to less likelihood of musicians, film makers and other creative workers to produce creative products and supply them to the market (Hill, 2007).

Hill (2007), concluded that if the size of digital piracy was controlled at a limited scale, it might benefit copyright holders by making the product available to more potential consumers and reducing the competitiveness of a potential competitor. This would be the result of the sampling effect music piracy has on music consumption. Specifically, if music consumers could listen to music through piracy first, their cost and effort of evaluating the quality of the music products would be significantly reduced. If the music consumer likes the music that is acquired through illegal sources, he or she might be more willing to purchase the specific music products through legal channels. This sampling effect of music piracy is particularly beneficial to less-famous artists or musicians as it would increase their exposure to potential customers. Using clickstream

data, Aguiar & Martens (2014) found no sales displacement caused by music piracy or music streaming. They also found a small but positive correlation between music streaming and legal music sales. Indeed, music consumers who have a greater interest in music, are more likely to regard music piracy as a complement to legal music consumptions.

Although the impact of music piracy behaviours might be conflicting, and it is quite hard to measure it and reach a solid conclusion on this issue, understanding music consumers' piracy intentions, or the intentions to conduct unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain is still of great significance. Discouraging Chinese music consumers' music piracy behaviours could have a positive social impact not only on the music industry, but also on other industries, as this would provide useful insights on designing and implementing strategies for music industry participants to enhance the public awareness of the protection of all intellectual copyrights including software, films and books. This is of particular importance for the countries or regions where innovation is becoming the driving force of the economic progress. If the innovative outcomes of the innovation-driven firms or organizations could not be properly protected, this would decrease their motivations to further engage in research and development endeavours.

2.2.4 Combatting Music Piracy Behaviours

Combatting or reducing music piracy behaviours have become the concern of scholars from various disciplines such as Information Systems, Criminology and Marketing, primarily due to the significant loss to different music market participants brought by various piracy actions. Imposing Digital Rights Management (DRM) on digital goods could make it extremely difficult for music consumers to copy and share music files. Although copyright holders could use DRM tools to limit the number of pirated music products and protect their intellectual property rights, it is argued that such measures or anti-piracy laws could somehow impose a negative impact on music sales (Adermon & Liang, 2014; Jeong & Khouja, 2013).

Sinha, Machado, & Sellman (2010), in a study into DRM use in the music industry, suggest that removing DRM systems could actually lead to a positive impact on the music industry. Due to

the effect of DRM systems, it becomes more difficult for music pirates to conduct piracy behaviours as it requires an increasingly high level of IT literacy. However, based on a study using 2000 college students as the study sample, it is found that removing DRM systems could convert some music pirates to paying music consumers (Sinha, Machado, & Sellman, 2010). To propose a new approach to reducing music piracy behaviours, Geng & Lee (2013) have adopted a sequential-search approach to analyse the choice of music consumers, and their results indicated that instead of imposing DRM systems or enforcing anti-piracy laws, reducing the quality of pirated products and increasing the search costs of unauthorised files are two efficient strategies in combatting piracy. De Corte & Van Kenhove (2017) have investigated the relevant effectiveness of two different piracy-combatting strategies namely anti-piracy laws and consumer educational campaigns. Based on their findings, the consumer educational campaigns are more effective than legal measures for conflicted pirates (i.e. those pirates who possess a favourable attitude toward piracy but regard it as morally wrong with a feeling of guilt when conducting piracy) and cavalier pirates (i.e. who possess a favourable attitude toward piracy and regard it as morally wrong but without a moderate feeling of guilt). Moreover, their study has also indicated that both the legal measures and the consumer educational strategy are relatively ineffective in lowering piracy intentions of die-hard pirates.

Though imposing DRM systems or anti-piracy laws could, to a certain extent, control the duplicability of information goods, implementing such measures would be financially burdensome. By employing economic modelling, Tunca & Wu (2013) argued that suing individual digital pirates or suing the network/institution which provides these illegal digital goods might impose negative influence on legal publishers' revenue. First, a legal publishers' profit could be increased by attracting more consumers who sampled their product through conducting digital piracy. In addition, it would induce a great cost if the legal publisher wishes to identify all the individual pirates, as it requires a huge amount of capital, and technological and human resource input to finish this task. Therefore, a legal publishers' profit might be reduced by the detection of piracy activities. By utilising a natural experiment on the major record labels as well as their DRM strategies and record sales, Zhang (2018) found that removing DRM

systems would lead to a 10% increase in music sales, finding that this effect is more significant for lower-ranked or lower-selling albums.

Besides using technological tools such as Digital Rights Management tools to control the size of music piracy, anti-piracy laws are successfully implemented in certain countries. Although the anti-piracy laws could be effective in changing music consumers' behaviour and discouraging their piracy behaviours through legal sanctions and jail time, the effectiveness of this kind of anti-piracy measure would rely hugely on the strong enforcement of relevant laws which requires substantial social and monetary cost to maintain. According to the research of Adermon and Liang (2014) in which a difference-in-difference approach was employed to study the effect of a Swedish copyright protection law on music sales using Norway and Finland as the control groups. The study found that the implementation of this anti-piracy law has stimulated a 36% increase in music sales during the first six months since its effective date. However, the trend did not continue after six months and this anti-piracy effect disappeared after six months. Therefore, based on this research, the anti-piracy law could provide a short-term effect in combatting music piracy. The long-term effect is difficult to predict. In order to reach a long-term effect of intellectual copyright protection, it is therefore imperative to design and implement strategies other than DRM and anti-piracy laws to increase the awareness of intellectual property rights protection of the general public.

As documented by the abovementioned literature, piracy-controlling strategies such as anti-piracy laws as well as imposing DRM systems might not be the most effective ways to combat music piracy behaviours. This calls for a further investigation into unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain as represented by music piracy behaviours. This is another motivation for the current research to take a social-psychological perspective to further examine the issue with the aim of shedding new light on why consumers choose to engage in such unethical behaviours. For example, based on the research findings of the current project, effective marketing appeals, and consumer educational campaign could be designed and implemented to discourage music consumers from conducting music piracy behaviours.

2.2.5 Music Streaming Services and Music Piracy

As the music industry goes into the streaming era, the change in business mode, or how music products are delivered to consumers, has a distinctive impact on the music piracy behaviours of music consumers and on music sales. Music consumers could either use music streaming services, having access to a comprehensive music library for free, or they could pay a flat subscription fee to gain access to the premium streaming music services where high-quality audio files would be provided with some other features such as ad-free or a download quota. In China, typical providers of music streaming services include Netease Cloud Music, Tencent QQ Music and Xiami Music. Unlike Spotify and Apple Music which are popular in Western countries, the users of these online music platforms could also download music onto their mobile devices or computers for personal use. Service providers in China are providing similar services to music consumers, but they have different targeted groups of consumers, and they have adopted different business models and contents of music libraries. At the initial stage of online music market competition in China, the main strategy these platforms use is to collaborate with record labels (i.e. copyright holders) to gain exclusive license of using their music contents. In a later stage of competition of these online music platforms in China, the Chinese government has banned this unfair competition by gaining exclusive licensing from copyright holders.

Intuitively, if music consumers have access to free music streaming services, their music piracy behaviours would be reduced as they could listen to songs through streaming services. This effect has been documented by several studies. Using a panel data of 2,500 music consumers, Wlomert and Papies (2014) found that the net effect of paid streaming services on music revenue is positive while the net effect of free streaming services on total revenue is positive only if the consumer is relatively inactive before adopting to the streaming services. This research indicated that if the music consumer is involved with the music industry before the introduction of streaming business model, this new business model might not be helpful in altering their music consumption behaviours including conducting music piracy. The result also indicated that the total effect of streaming services on music revenue is positive since the positive effect of paid streaming

services overcompensated the negative effect brought by free streaming services. Aguiar and Martens (2014) have reached a similar conclusion that streaming service has a stimulating (positive) effect on music sales.

However, not all scholars believe that the introduction of music streaming business model could have a positive impact on the music industry. Hiller (2016), in an analysis of YouTube data, found that streaming services could have a significant negative effect on music sales, finding that the removal of Warner contents on YouTube has had a significant positive effect on sales of Warner albums. Using a theoretical framework based on several theories including the theory of planned behaviour and the technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989), Hampton-Sosa (2017) stated that, from a utilitarian perspective, the perceived usefulness brought about by the music streaming services could lower music consumers' piracy intentions. However, she also found that perceived enjoyment of using music streaming services does not have this impact on reducing piracy intentions. Based on the research of Hampton-Sosa (2017), a robust link between the use of music streaming services and the decline in intentions to conduct music piracy is not found or supported, and more research is needed to explore further the relationship between the new business model (i.e. music streaming services) and music consumers' piracy intentions.

However, the research outcomes on this issue are conflicting, and a sharp increase in music streaming services has stimulated further debates on the effect of music streaming services on piracy behaviours (see Hampton-Sosa, 2017; Lee, Choi, Cho, & Lee, 2016; Scott Hiller, 2016; Sinclair & Tinson, 2017; Wlömert & Papiés, 2016). Using survey data collected from university students, it is suggested that using music streaming services would actually lead to a higher music piracy intention (Borja et al., 2015). In addition, Borja and Dieringer (2016) found that music streaming actually acts as an enabler for music piracy in the sense that music consumers could use music streaming as a tool to discover or sample songs in the music library provided by the streaming services and then download their illegal versions from unauthorised sources. Based on their research, music streaming services are complementary to music piracy, and these two forms of music consumption patterns would co-exist on the market. This stream of research has revealed

an important issue that the use of music streaming services could actually increase the frequency of music piracy behaviours. Therefore, examining the music piracy intentions in a new technological context with a new business model introduced to the music industry is imperative to understand music piracy behaviours.

Papies, Eggers, & Wlomert (2011) also stated that the ad-funded free music streaming services could increase the number of music consumers, which could help the record labels or online music platforms to increase the number of users and gain more profit for the platforms and copyright holders. However, the main problem that needs to be solved by the online music platforms is to increase the conversion rate of paid streamers. Unlike Spotify, which has a conversion rate of more than 40% and Apple Music with all the users being paid streamers, the Chinese music streaming music platforms has a much lower conversion rate of about 4% (IFPI, 2017). This issue (i.e. low conversion rate of paid users in China) also reveals the fact that a large amount of music consumers is still using music piracy as their means of music acquisition. Reducing the number of pirates and the frequency of music piracy behaviours is therefore crucial to the record labels, artists, and online music platforms in order that they can maintain profitability.

2.3 Theoretical Foundation: The Theory of Planned Behaviour

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) provides a comprehensive theoretical framework to examine human behaviours from a social-psychological perspective. It has become the most influential theory within this field. According to TPB, which was proposed by Ajzen (1985), an individual's behavioural intention is the most significant and direct antecedent of his or her actual behaviour, while the behavioural intention is formed by his or her attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). The theory has been applied in various fields of research into human behaviours. It is confirmed that the theory has satisfactory explaining and predictive power toward these human social behaviours (Ajzen, 2011). The comprehensiveness and the satisfactory explaining power of TPB makes it the most ideal theoretical framework for the current research as the main purpose of the current study is to fully examine the music piracy

behaviours, and the TPB allows us to examine music consumers' piracy intentions not only from a personal perspective, but also from a social influence perspective.

2.3.1 The Development of The Theory of Planned Behaviour

In the 1960s, scholars began to examine the relationship between attitudes and behavioural intentions. According to the theory of multi-attribute attitude proposed by Fishbein (1963), *attitude* is an important antecedent of human behavioural intentions, and it also determines our expected outcomes of conducting a specific behaviour. This theory on attitude-intention relationship was then developed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) into the theory of reasoned action (TRA). They argued that, apart from our attitudes, the perceived social pressure, or the *subjective norms*, are also influential to our behavioural intentions. Later, some scholars have criticised the TRA because it does little to explain or predict human behaviours where the individual does not have complete volitional control over those behaviours. This is to say that the TRA only works "when the person can decide at will to perform or not perform the behaviour" (Ajzen, 1991, p.181-182). To overcome this limitation of the TRA, Ajzen (1991) made a significant development, adding another construct, the *perceived behavioural control*, to the theoretical framework and naming it the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The development process of the Theory of Planned Behaviour is illustrated in Figure 5 below.

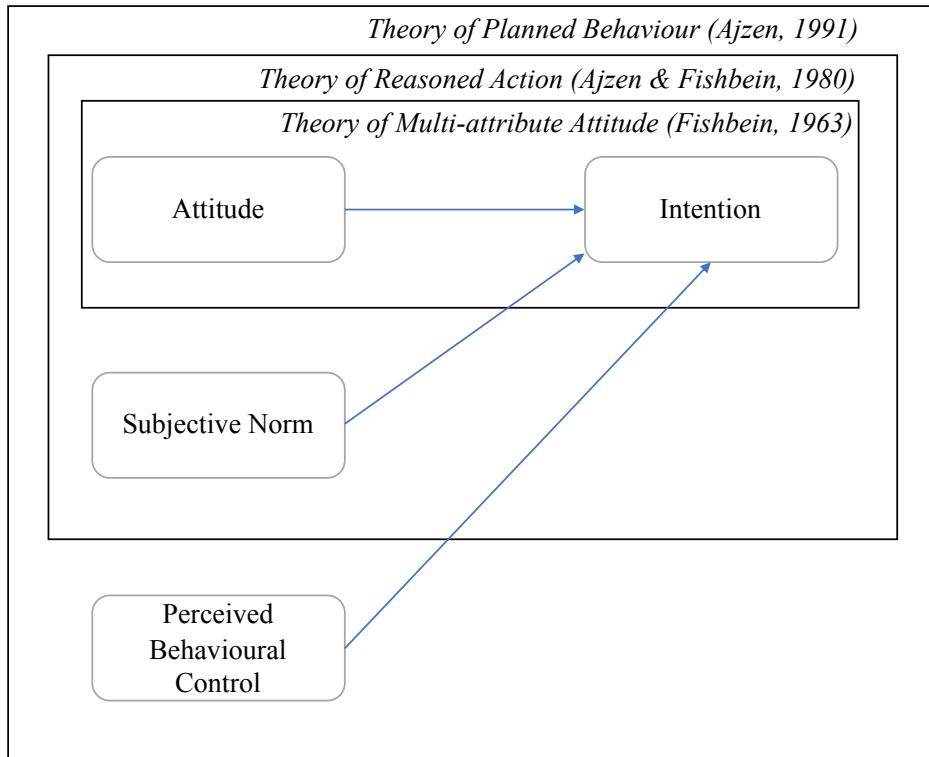


Figure 5 The Development of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour provides an excellent guiding framework for the investigation of music piracy as well as other forms of unlawful file sharing or unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain. It is the most commonly used theoretical framework in studies of digital piracy according to several reviews (Fleming et al., 2017; Watson, Zizzo, & Fleming, 2015). According to TPB, the inclusion of perceived behavioural control overcomes the limitations of TRA, in the sense that an individual's behavioural intention as well as the actual behavioural control, jointly lead to the actual behaviour of this individual. As a result, it is suitable not only in predicting and explaining human behaviours in which we have complete volitional control, but also behaviours over which we have incomplete volitional control. However, actual behavioural control is difficult to measure, and the perceived behavioural control is a measure that proximately reflects the individual's ability, resources available and opportunities to perform the behaviour in question. An individual's behavioural intention is the degree to which he or she is willing to try to perform this behaviour, or how much effort he or she is willing to make in order to execute this behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are the three determinants of one individual's behavioural intention.

Attitude toward the behaviour captures an individual's favourable or unfavourable feelings toward the behaviour, which are formed based on this individual's attitudinal beliefs toward the behaviour itself and the anticipated behavioural outcomes (i.e. perceptions on what would happen if he or she conducted the behaviour). According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), an individual could possess beliefs toward the outcomes of a behaviour, and these beliefs are called behavioural beliefs. There are two dimensions of considering behavioural beliefs, the strength of the beliefs which capture the possibility of one specific behavioural outcome, and the evaluation of a possible behavioural outcome. An individual's attitude toward the behaviour is then jointly determined by the strength of his or her behavioural beliefs and the evaluation toward the potential outcomes. The more favourable attitudes an individual hold for a specific behaviour, the more likely he or she would perform this behaviour.

Subjective norms capture the influence imposed by the social pressure perceived by the individual from his or her social referents (Ajzen, 1991). These social referents include family members, close friends, or inspirational people. This group of people is often referred to as "significant others" or the reference group. Similar to attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm is jointly determined by an individual's normative beliefs and his or her motivations to comply. Normative beliefs are the expectations or the perceptions of an individual on what significant others wishes him or her to do. The motivation to comply is the intention of an individual to do what significant others wishes him or her to do. If an individual perceives support from his or her significant others on performing a specific behaviour, then he or she is more likely to actually perform this behaviour.

Perceived behavioural control is the perception of an individual of how confident he or she is in successfully performing a certain behaviour. It reflects the perception of the facilitating and impeding factors of performing a behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Similar to attitude toward the behaviour and subjective norms, perceived behavioural control also constitutes two dimensions, namely control beliefs and perceived power. Control beliefs are the individual's perceptions on

the facilitating and impeding factors of conducting a specific behaviour while perceived power is the perception on the degree to which these factors could affect the behaviour or the significance of these factors. An individual is more likely to conduct a specific behaviour if he or she perceives a higher level of control toward conducting this behaviour.

To sum up, according to TPB, attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are the three main antecedents of an individual's behavioural intentions. In terms of its mechanism in explaining and predicting human behaviour, behaviour is determined by behavioural intentions, and in turn, behavioural intentions are affected by the abovementioned three factors. Thus, if an individual has positive attitudes toward a specific behaviour, perceives strong and supportive subjective norms, and perceives stronger behavioural control toward this behaviour, he or she is more likely to conduct this behaviour (de Leeuw, Valois, Ajzen, & Schmidt, 2015). However, when studying different human behaviours using TPB as the theoretical framework, the relevant importance or the relevant predictive power of those three antecedents on behavioural intentions are different (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2004; T.-I. Han & Stoel, 2017). In addition to this, cultural factors as well as other personal factors could also have an effect on the predictive power of these three antecedents. For example, it is argued that in collectivist cultures where group goals are more important than personal ones (Wagner, 1995; F. Wang et al., 2005), people's behaviours are more likely to be affected by their perceived subjective norms. In individualist cultures where people value personal goals and achievements more than the group benefit or goals, they are less likely to be affected by their subjective norms, or the importance of subjective norms might become relatively lower (Wated & Sanchez, 2005).

2.3.2 Measuring Theory of Planned Behaviour Constructs

The Principle of Compatibility. When designing the surveys using TPB as the theoretical framework, it is crucial to follow several steps to ensure the validity of the study survey. The most important principles in designing a TPB questionnaire is the principle of compatibility. The principle of compatibility requires that all the measurements of the variables should involve the same behavioural elements, which means that the questions in the survey should be questions

about the attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control in terms of the same behaviour. According to Ajzen (1991), failure to follow the principle of compatibility could lead to incompatibility bias where the relationships between different variables or constructs would then be underestimated.

Considering the importance of this compatibility requirement, Ajzen (1991) suggested that before conducting the survey study and the data collection process, it is important to give clear definitions to the study participants on what the behaviour is. According to TPB, human behaviour is the observable response to a specific behaviour under the specific context in a certain period of time. Therefore, when defining a behaviour for the study, it is necessary to cover all these aspects of a behaviour, which should include the behavioural target, the specific action, context and time (Ajzen, 2018). Defining the behaviour based on these aspects provides the flexibility to the researchers, in the sense that the researchers could specifically define each of these four aspects according to the need of investigation, or they can combine one or more of these four aspects to enhance the generalisability of the study. No matter the behaviour is defined as the specific ones or the relatively general ones, researchers have to ensure that the behavioural intentions, attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are examined in terms of the same behavioural element.

Eliciting Salient Beliefs. One of the important steps in doing research based on TPB is to elicit salient beliefs. According to the TPB, an individual could possess a large number of beliefs in terms of the specific behaviour. However, in a specific context and in a short period of time, only a small number of these beliefs are accessible or retrievable by the individual. These accessible and retrievable beliefs are also called salient beliefs, and they are the foundations in the formation of attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control toward specific behaviours (Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, eliciting salient beliefs could help in explaining individual possession of different attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural controls, and these could further provide insights to academics and practitioners in designing corresponding behavioural intervention strategies.

Much existing TPB research has utilised the measurement scales provided by the previous studies (i.e. Chiou et al., 2005; Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008; Kwong & Park, 2008; X. Wang & McClung, 2012; Yoon, 2011). This could lead to interesting and insightful results, but using scales from previous studies may result in lower validity and reliability of the survey items, which in turn might lead to underestimating relationships between variables and to the lower explaining power of the model (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2004). Therefore, in order to retrieve accurate and reliable research findings, eliciting salient beliefs is an essential part of all TPB related studies. In order to identify salient beliefs, open questions could be asked to a representative sample about the perceived benefits and risks of the behaviour. The sample could also be asked about who the persons or groups that might affect behaviour might be and asked about the perceived facilitating and impeding factors involved in conducting this behaviour. The salient beliefs retrieved from this stage of research would function as the foundation of designing the TPB questionnaire in the next stage for the massive data collection and analysis.

In the current study, the first empirical research is a qualitative study based on TPB aimed at exploring the antecedents of music piracy behaviours in China. This qualitative study, which takes the form of conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews with Chinese music consumers of different age groups, genders, income levels and occupations, could function as the initial stage of retrieving salient beliefs around music piracy behaviours. These salient beliefs will then be employed to construct the survey items in the next quantitative stage. The use of qualitative-quantitative sequential mixed method design is then suitable here as the TPB is employed as the theoretical framework.

2.3.3 The Wide Applications of The Theory of Planned Behaviour

As argued by Ajzen (2014), the Theory of Planned Behaviour is able to explain or predict complex human social behaviours, and this argument is supported by numerous empirical studies using TPB as a theoretical framework (Ajzen, 2014). TPB has been employed to explain or predict various kinds of human behaviours, and is frequently used in pro-environmental

consumer behaviours, health-related behaviours and other behaviours where effective behavioural interventions are sought. Depending on the type of behaviours that are examined, the relevant explaining power of attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are different. In general, attitude toward the behaviour demonstrates the greatest explaining power in terms of behavioural intentions (i.e. DiBello, Miller, Neighbors, Reid, & Carey, 2018), while subjective norms are often confirmed as a relatively weaker predictor for behavioural intentions (Armitage & Conner, 2001).

Explaining pro-environmental consumer behaviours. TPB is frequently used in studies examining consumer green behaviours that have the positive effect on environmental protection. Yadav and Pathak (2016) have extended the Theory of Planned Behaviour to include environmental concern and environmental knowledge in the model as the antecedents of attitude, and they employed this extended model in explaining young consumers' intentions in buying green products. Their findings have supported the applicability of TPB in explaining green purchasing behaviours, and the research outcome indicates that the addition of the new variables could improve the predictive power of the model. Han and Stoel (2017) has examined the effectiveness of TPB in explaining socially responsible consumer behaviours which include the pro-environmental consumer behaviours. According to their meta-analytical review, TPB provides satisfactory predicting power of these behaviours. Ajzen and his colleagues have also reached this conclusion while implementing a study on educational interventions encouraging high school students in conducting pro-environmental behaviours (de Leeuw et al., 2015).

Explaining health-related behaviours. Scholars and practitioners frequently use TPB to study and to design effective behavioural interventions encouraging people to engage in behaviours have health benefits. Armitage (2005) suggested that perceived behavioural control was found to be a significant facilitating factor leading participants to maintain their physical activities. He employed TPB to study the intentions of a sample of 94 people enrolled in a gymnasium to maintain their physical activities.

The study revealed that previous exercise habits and satisfactory performance in the first few weeks of the programme determined the likelihood of maintaining their physical activities. Norman et al. (1999) have investigated cigarette smokers' intentions to quit smoking, using a novel theoretical framework which combines the main constructs of TPB as well as perceived susceptibility and past attempts to quit smoking.

Norman et al.'s (1991) results also indicated that perceived behavioural control and perceived susceptibility are crucial facilitators in enhancing cigarette smokers' intentions to quit. This relationship between past behaviour and perceived behavioural control indicated that past behaviour or habit is not an independent variable that contributes to the explaining power of TPB in terms of human behavioural intention. Ajzen (2014) argued that a number of scholars are adding past behaviour as an additional antecedent of behavioural intention into the TPB model, and that they perhaps did not pay attention to the fact that the additional variable, if it is positioned parallel to attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control, should be independent with these existing antecedents.

In an investigation comparing various models in explaining and designing behavioural interventions in terms of health-related behaviours, Montanaro and Bryan (2014) found that TPB could explain about 33% of the variance in unprotected or other forms of risky sexual behaviours, while other models showed a much lower effectiveness in capturing these behaviours. For example, the Health Belief Model (HBM) could only explain less than 2% of the variance in such behaviours. These studies, together with other studies using TPB to study health-related behaviours (i.e. Starfelt Sutton & White, 2016), showed that TPB is demonstrating satisfactory explaining power of these behaviours, and it provides scholars and relevant practitioners with an effective framework to design behavioural interventions in guiding people or patients to adopt a more healthier lifestyle.

2.3.4 The Theory of Planned Behaviour Approach to Explaining Music Piracy

As an effective social-cognitive decision-making model, TPB was widely employed in piracy-related studies (Fleming et al., 2017). In the early stages of these studies, piracy behaviour was concentrated in the form of buying illegal physical music products such as tapes and CDs. With the introduction of new information and communication technologies, it is indicated that TPB is still effective in the sense that it could demonstrate a satisfactory predicting power toward piracy behaviours in the digital era. Chiou et al. (2005) collected data from several high schools in Taiwan using a self-administrated questionnaire, and the two-stage structural equation model approach with TPB as the theoretical framework is employed to empirically test the hypothesis proposed by the authors. Based on their research findings, the authors proposed that in order to combat the music piracy problem, marketers and musicians should always improve the satisfaction of their music products as higher quality of legal music products would have the potential to reduce music consumers' piracy intentions. At the same time, public campaign should be held to improve consumers' awareness of the seriousness of the issue (i.e. the negative impact of music piracy on the music market, record labels, or musicians for example).

Wang et al. (2005), focused on Chinese consumers and the effect that Chinese collectivist culture has on consumer's decisions to purchase pirated products. As one of the first studies focusing on Chinese consumers, the study first tested an expanded version of a previous model based on TPB which is used to examine Singaporean consumers, in the context of China. Then, an exploratory factor analysis was carried out and three factors (i.e. attitude toward piracy behaviour, attitude toward the behavioural consequences and attitude toward purchasing behaviour) were found to affect Chinese consumers' attitude towards piracy. The study contributed to the literature by revealing three dimensions of consumers' attitude toward digital piracy. In addition, the study considered cultural effects on music piracy behaviour, which gave new insight into piracy behaviours. However, the data used in this study was collected using a student sample from two universities in China. This became the potential limitation of the study as it drew on only students. Sang et al. (2015) reconfirmed the validity of the Theory of Planned Behaviour in predicting piracy behaviour. The study also found that among different types of variables (i.e. TPB variables, social psychological variables and expanded TPB variables), there existed significant differences

between American and Korean college students in terms of their illegal downloading behaviour. For example, subjective norm is a significant predictor of digital piracy intentions in the U.S. but not in Korea. According to the authors, future studies investigating piracy behaviour should therefore take cultural dimensions into consideration.

In terms of building theoretical frameworks, TPB scholars combine one or all TPB constructs with the insights gained from other theories to yield novel research outcomes. For instance, Yoon (2011) combined the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the ethics theory and proposed an integrated model to explain the digital piracy behaviour. After setting up the conceptual framework, the author collected data from college students through questionnaires and used the structural equation modelling techniques in analysing the data. The results showed that all hypotheses are supported. This means that the combined model has nomological validity. Finally, the author pointed out that the limitations of his study that the sample should have covered a larger range of people rather than focus on college students while determining the effects of other demographical variables such as age and religion. In addition, future research should consider actual behaviour instead of intention, although actual music piracy or other digital piracy behaviours are hard to measure.

Cronan and Al-Rafee (2008) examined the factors influenced the intention to pirate digital content. Besides the factors in the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the authors also examined whether past piracy behaviour and moral obligation could altogether enhance the explanatory power of the model in the case of piracy research. After collecting data from college students, the data analysis result showed that planned behavioural factors in addition to past piracy behaviour and moral obligation could explain about 71% of the intention to pirate variance, and the addition of these two constructs into the model could significantly increase the explaining power of the model. However, the addition of past behaviour as a new antecedent of behavioural intentions is questioned by Ajzen (2011) as this variable is not independent from the existing variables. Although past behaviour in the eyes of Ajzen (2011) is not an independent antecedent of behavioural intentions, it somehow captures some attributes of the unexplored antecedents of

intentions, and this leads to the increase in explaining power demonstrated by the expanded models.

In a later stage of the music piracy research, researchers have started to consider the impact of music streaming services on music piracy behaviours. Cesareo and Pastore (2014) proposed and tested a model that examined consumer's intentions to try subscription-based music services (SBMS). The model, which is based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, has been expanded with ethical considerations. By using a non-student sample, data was collected from around 500 respondents. After exploratory factor and confirmatory factor analysis, the relationship between the construct was examined using structural equation modelling. The results show that economic benefit, hedonic benefits and moral judgement are the main factors influencing consumers' piracy decisions. Meanwhile, consumers' willingness to try SBMS is directly influenced by consumers' interest and involvement with the streaming services themselves.

In addition to TPB constructs, moral obligations or personal norms are often added to the theoretical framework by researchers. Based on an extended Theory of Planned Behaviour framework, Arli et al. (2015) examined the impact of moral equity and relativism on piracy behaviour. Using snowball sampling techniques, the data was collected from a large private university in Indonesia. The results of the data analysis showed that moral equity significantly and negatively affects the purchase of illegal CDs and software, while relativism only positively affects the purchase of pirated software and the effect on illegal CDs is therefore insignificant. Indonesian consumers also feel that purchasing illegal CDs is more morally wrong than buying pirated software. The research regards itself as the pioneering research in this topic in the context of developing countries.

According to the above studies, the main strategy for this stream of music piracy research based on TPB is to combine TPB variables (i.e. attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural norms) with other variables (i.e. moral obligations, past behaviour, emotions, anticipated outcomes, etc) to form a new theoretical framework to explain or predict

music piracy behaviours. Although adding these additional variables into the existing framework could enhance the theory's predictive power as reflected in a significant increase in the variance explained in behavioural intentions, these research attempts could not contribute to the advancement of the theory itself. The reason for this is that the added additional variables often fails to meet one or more requirements to be added to the framework. According to Ajzen (2011), if one variable is to be added to the TPB, it has to meet the following criteria:

- The variable should strictly follow the principle of compatibility, which means it should examine the same behaviour as the existing variables;
- There should be a causal relationship between the proposed variable and behavioural intention and actual behaviour;
- The variable to be added to the framework should be conceptually independent from other variables;
- The proposed variable should have the potential to be applied to a wide range of social behaviours;
- The addition of this new variable should significantly increase the predictive or explanatory power of the theory.

Another limitation of these existing studies is that the researchers used the measurement scales retrieved from the previous studies, and the use of previous measurement scales might lead to biased research outcomes. The measurement scales of the relevant variables for TPB questionnaire should be based on the salient beliefs derived from a pilot study with a representative sample. If the sample is not identical with previous studies, then the research should conduct a pilot study instead of employing measurement scales from other studies.

2.4 The Perceived Social Influence of Consumers

Based on the assumption of social psychology, our behaviour is affected by the environment, or the context (Myers, 2014). Subjective norms, a construct from TPB, capture the impact of social

environment on individual behaviours and how decisions or behaviours are affected by the people around us and those who are important to us. According to TPB, subjective norms are the perceptions on whether others would approve a behaviour. Consumers' purchasing decisions are also affected by his or her social referents, and this has received considerable attention from scholars. For example, scholars have examined the effect of providing relevant information on the attitude and behaviours of peers on an individual's decision-making or behaviour (i.e. Goldstein, Cialdini, & Griskevicius, 2008a; Hummer & Davison, 2016). These studies are conducted with the aim of reducing harmful behaviours to the individual or the group (Miller & Prentice, 2016). With the outcomes derived from this stream of research, effective norm-based behavioural interventions could be designed to change or modify harmful behaviours such as college drinking, drug abuse or wasting various resources. Meanwhile, norm-based behavioural intervention could also encourage consumers to consume more responsibly, and to purchase pro-environment products or not to choose counterfeit or pirated products.

Perceived norms and attitudes toward alcohol consumption are found to be reliable antecedents of various drinking behaviours and alcohol-related problems such as college drinking behaviour (DiBello et al., 2018). To design effective behavioural interventions aiming at reducing this risky behaviour, scholars have proposed that the use of social norm marketing (SNM) techniques could lead to satisfactory behavioural change (Miller & Prentice, 2016). For example, if the aim is to reduce college drinking, a message, which conveys the idea that the majority of students should have 3 or fewer drinks in an evening, could be delivered to the college students through various channels. When it comes to pro-environmental behaviour, such a message could compare one's air conditioning use unfavourably to one's neighbours. The reason that these kind of norm messages have the potential of changing people's perceived norms as well as their behaviours is that the messages include distributional information. This enables the readers of the messages to compare their own behaviour with others. With a similar mechanism, providing individuals with personalised normative feedback (PNF) could also achieve satisfactory intervention outcomes. However, not all of the individuals would be positively affected by the message as some of them might misinterpret it or regard the message as suspicious.

In addition, changing norms does not guarantee a change in behaviour (Miller & Prentice, 2016). The way that normative messages are conveyed or delivered, the construction of the normative messages and the targeted behaviour are all influential to the effectiveness of the intervention. A large number of studies have confirmed that the normative influence from close referents (i.e. referents such as peers or parents) is perhaps the most powerful norm-based intervention strategy (i.e. Yang, Wang, & Mourali, 2015a). Studies have also shown the importance of the Internet on the shaping of an individual's attitude or behaviour. Yang and Wang (2015) examined the effect of five different socialization agents on college students' piracy behaviour, namely parents, peers, traditional media, the Internet and music industry. Results showed that these socialization agents exert different impacts on piracy behaviour. Peers and the Internet exert direct impact on both attitudes and behaviour, while parents and music industry only have indirect impact on emerging adults' piracy behaviour through shaping their attitudes. Also, the authors found that these socialization agents could have different impacts on different consumer segments. This work contributed to the literature by examining the different impacts exerted by different social referents, which further reveals the working mechanism of how social norms affect behaviours.

In addition to the source of subjective norms, the content of the normative message is crucial. Different kinds of normative messages could exert different impacts in terms of changing people's intentions and behaviours.

In a study examining the impact of normative messages on intentions to contribute to environmental initiatives, Meyer and Yang (2016) have found that giving individuals information on how many peers participated in the programme of contributing to environmental initiatives could have a larger effect on these individual's intentions to participate than giving them information on the amount of money has been donated or spent on the pro-environmental initiative. According to this research, the content of the norm-based messages is an important factor leading to the effectiveness of the message, and the practitioners should be cautious when

designing such promotional campaign using normative messages if they wish to achieve a satisfactory result.

Besides examining the impact of different social referents, scholars have also conducted cross-cultural exploration of the impact of subjective norms. From the national culture perspective, Minton et al. (2018) examined the impact of pragmatism, which is one of the cultural characteristics defined by Hofstede (1980), on consumers' intentions to conduct sustainable consumption. Besides the findings that consumers' intentions to adopt sustainable consumption could be partially explained by his or her country's level of pragmatism, the research also found that consumers' attitudes toward sustainable consumption is the mediator of the relationship between his or her country's level of pragmatism and his or her intentions to conduct sustainable consumption. Similarly, Culiberg and Elgaaid-Gambier (2016) proposed that an individual's pro-environmental behaviour is affected by his or her perceived social norms of their relevant others, and this is in turn affected by the pro-environmental norms at the country level (PNCL). Using the data collected from Slovenia and France, the results indicated that the norms of relevant others mediate the relationship between PNCL and individual behaviour. Meanwhile, this research also found that French consumers are less sensitive to this indirect effect exerted by the country-level norms.

When it comes to digital piracy behaviours, Cho et al. (2015) have made contribution to the literature by exploring the process through which people make inferences about the normative environment about digital piracy. The author not only examined the effect of egocentric heuristics via social projection and social learning via communication exposure on the perceptions of social norms, but also explored the rarely researched interaction between these two theoretically different mechanisms. Using a national sample of 620 Internet users, the data analysis using hierarchical regression showed that although the two mechanisms operate concurrently, the communication exposure could somehow moderate social projection positively, negatively or insignificantly, depending on the perceiver's own behaviour, the level of his/her motivation or

their estimation target. This research has shed new light on the functioning mechanism of social norms on an individual's behaviour.

Although subjective norms are generally found to be an important antecedent of an individual's intentions as well as actual behaviours, their predictive power is relatively smaller than attitudes toward the behaviour and perceived behavioural control in most cases (Armitage & Conner, 2001). Research on the impact of subjective norms on music piracy intentions often yields conflicting results. Some studies have confirmed the predictive power of subjective norms on music piracy (Morton & Koufteros, 2008; Yoon, 2011), while some studies reported no such relationship between subjective norms and piracy intentions (Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008). Considering this unclear relationship between subjective norms and behavioural intentions, some scholars have called for a further conceptual expansion of the normative part of the TPB to enhance the applicability of the theory itself (Armitage & Conner, 2001). In their review, Armitage and Conner concluded that the most possible explanation for the weak predictive power demonstrated by the subjective norms in terms of behavioural intentions is a result of single-item measurement adopted by various scholars. However, contradictory conclusions on the effect of subjective norms on behavioural intentions still exist even if scholars started to use multi-item measurement for subjective norms, which means that the weak predictive power may only be partially caused by the demerits in measurements. Therefore, the issue remained unclear and a careful and more in-depth examination into subjective norms or the normative antecedents of our social behaviours is needed.

2.4.1 Further Conceptualisation of Subjective Norms

Perhaps the most influential development of the normative component in TPB is the further conceptualisation of subjective norms proposed by Cialdini et al (1990). Inspired by the mixed and sometimes contradictory findings on the effect subjective norms have on behavioural intentions, Cialdini and his colleagues have suggested that "...norms do have substantial impact on human action; however, the impact can only be properly recognised when researchers separate two types of norms" (Cialdini et al. 1990, p.1015). These two types of norms are descriptive

norms and injunctive norms, with descriptive norms referring to the perceptions of what most others do and injunctive norms referring to the perceptions of what most others approve or disapprove of doing (Cialdini et al 1990).

Descriptive norms predict or explain human behaviour. They have an informational value in terms of the behaviour in question, and they are argued to provide an information-processing advantage and a decisional shortcut when an individual is making a choice on what to do. This type of norms are confirmed to act as reliable predictors or antecedents of a number of social behaviours even if the behaviours are in a morally neutral position (Cialdini et al., 1990). Another type of social norms are the injunctive norms which involve an explicit *request* on what an individual should do in terms of a certain behaviour. In differentiating these two types of social norms, Cialdini et al (1990, p.1015) stated that "...rather than simply informing one's actions (i.e. descriptive norms), these norms (injunctive norms) enjoin it through the promise of social sanctions." Descriptive and injunctive norms are conceptually different, and they are derived from different sources of human motivation. However, these two types of norms are connected to a certain extent, as what an individual should do is always what most others do. The work of Cialdini and his colleagues has made significant contribution to the social psychology literature. Being able to conceptually and operationally differentiate these two types of social norms would allow us to further examine the normative influence we perceive and the its mechanism of affecting our social behaviours.

2.4.2 The Predictive Power of Descriptive and Injunctive Norms in terms of Human Behaviours

Based on this further expansion of subjective norms, a large number of empirical studies have been carried out to gain insights on the relevant effectiveness of these two types of norms on predicting various human behaviours. The most famous study on this topic is perhaps the "Room with A Viewpoint" study by Goldstein et al. (2008) in the *Journal of Consumer Research*. In this study, the researchers tested the effectiveness of descriptive norm-based messages in encouraging hotel guests' pro-environmental behaviours such as towel reuse.

The research outcomes indicated that comparing to the traditional message of focusing solely on environmental protection, the descriptive norm-based message could effectively increase the frequency of the hotel customers' towel reuse behaviour. In addition, the research also found that the construction of this descriptive norm-based messages could also affect the effectiveness of the behavioural intervention. More specifically, a higher effectiveness is achieved if the normative appeal is constructed based on the individual's immediate situational circumstances. For example, the normative appeal message used in this research is "the majority of guests reuse their towels". When guests read this message, they would be more likely to reuse their hotel towels, as other guests who have stayed in this room have done the same. This study made significant contribution to our understanding of the effectiveness of descriptive norm-based appeals in encouraging certain human behaviours, and it identifies that normative appeals from referents in a similar situation could be most effective.

To further reveal the functioning mechanisms of these two types of subjective norms, Melnyk et al. (2011) tested the impact of the level of cognitive deliberation on descriptive and injunctive norms. According to their argument, less effort could be used to process a piece of information (i.e. when consumers are in a cognitive load status), the consumers would be less likely to be affected by this message. Hence, when consumers are in a status of cognitive load, or with lower level of cognitive deliberation, the impact of subjective norms could be reduced. Considering the different motivational basis of descriptive and injunctive norms, the authors also assumed that cognitive deliberation would increase the influence of descriptive norms and decrease the influence of injunctive norms on attitudes and behavioural intentions, as the explicit request involved in injunctive norms might trigger an individual's thoughts against the suggested behaviour. The research findings confirmed their hypotheses, which showed that cognitive load had a negative effect on norm formulations. Moreover, cognitive deliberation amplifies the impact of descriptive norms while decreases the influences of injunctive norms. The research further revealed the functioning mechanisms of these two types of subjective norms from an information-processing perspective, and they have suggested that marketers should pay more

attention on the channels and context in which the social norm-based marketing messages are communicated to the consumers, as the choice of marketing channels and context might influence the effect of normative appeals (Melnyk et al., 2011).

To explore how personality traits affect the effect of different subjective norms, White and Simpson (2013) employed several behavioural experiments. They examined whether the effectiveness of different types of subjective norms depends on whether the individual or collective level of the self is activated. Their results showed that when consumers' collective self is activated (i.e. when they think that the collective goals are more important than their personal goals), both injunctive and descriptive norms are effective in encouraging a pro-environmental behaviour. However, if consumers' individual level self is activated (i.e. when consumers think that their personal goals are more important than the collective goals), descriptive norm-based appeals are more effective while injunctive norm-based appeals become ineffective, and this is a result of the fact that the individual self could be benefited by the informational benefits that brought by the descriptive norm-based appeals. This research further revealed the complexity of the functioning mechanism of injunctive and descriptive norms, and the effect of these two types of subjective norms are determined by our pursuit of personal or collective level goals.

Their research, which connects the different types of norms and consumers' personality traits, is of particular importance to marketers from a practical perspective. More specifically, marketers could perhaps design and deliver effective marketing appeals based on this research. For instance, when consumer's individual-level self is activated or primed, descriptive norm-based marketing messages are more effective, and in this situation, injunctive norm-based marketing appeals should not be used as it might not yield satisfactory results in affecting consumer behaviour.

In order to further reveal the functioning mechanisms of how perceived descriptive norms affect behaviours, a group of scholars have conducted a study researching the relationship between the effect of different descriptive social norms (i.e. provincial descriptive norms and general descriptive norms) and construal level (Ryoo, Hyun, & Sung, 2017). According to the construal

level theory, an individual tends to represent psychologically near events by low-level construal that is peripheral, concrete and local; for psychologically distant events, an individual frequently uses high-level construals that are always abstract and essential to represent them (Fujita, Henderson, Eng, Trope, & Liberman, 2006; Trope & Liberman, 2010). The theory indicated that when consumers were presented with low construal level messages, provincial descriptive norms (i.e. normative information of a reference group that is proximal to one's local setting) adopting sustainable consumer behaviours might be more effective. In addition, when the norm-based messages are delivered using high construal level messages, the persuasive power of provincial norms and general norms (i.e. normative messages that come from a reference group that is distant to one's local setting) are quite similar, indicating that the superiority of provincial norms would be alleviated when paired with high construal level messages. Their research has important theoretical and practical implications for marketing academics and practitioners, as it identified the important relationship between the congruence of construal level and different descriptive norms and the effect of descriptive norms on attitudinal and behavioural change (Ryoo et al., 2017).

Besides the extent to which the referents are proximal or distal to one's local setting, scholars also paid attention to the credibility of the source of norm-based messages or information. In a study of the effective use of descriptive norm-based messages in encouraging green behaviour, it is confirmed that when the perceived credibility (i.e. information on an endorser's profile which is used by consumers to judge the credibility) of the social referents are high, the descriptive norms-based messages would be more effective in changing people's behaviours (Elgaaied-Gambier, Monnot, & Reniou, 2018). In other words, the high credibility of the sources of the descriptive norm-based messages could enhance the effect of their persuasive power. The research suggested that when using descriptive norm-based messages in encouraging pro-social behaviours such as green behaviours, it would be ideal to enhance the credibility of source of the norm-based appeals so that the consumers could be more likely to alter their undesired behaviours to more desired ones.

The further conceptual expansion of subjective norms into descriptive subjective norms and injunctive subjective norms has been exploited by the researchers and combined with established theory. For instance, in a study into people's intentions to use green IT at an individual-level, Yoon (2018) has extended the technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989) to include descriptive norms and injunctive norms to gain further insight into the normative aspect of human behavioural antecedents. The research found that descriptive norms could have a direct impact on peoples' intentions to use green IT, and this descriptive norms towards green IT are affected by an individual's perceptions on government regulations and his or her environmental beliefs. The addition of descriptive norms, together with other antecedents described in the technology acceptance model (i.e. perceived usefulness or perceived ease-of-use) could explain 77% of the variance in the intention to engage in the use of green IT. This research has important theoretical and practical implications. Specifically, pro-environmentalism has been confirmed as a crucial boundary condition of the technology acceptance model in explaining green IT usage.

Besides pro-environmental behaviours, scholars also investigated the different impact injunctive norms and descriptive norms have on health-related behaviours. In a study into adolescents' health eating behaviours, Stok et al. (2014) have used norm message manipulation to test the effectiveness of the two types of norms. Research findings indicated that adolescents who received descriptive norm-based messages would consume significantly more fruit in days following the messages, while those who received injunctive norm-based messages would only consume a similar portion of fruit compared to the control group in which no normative appeals were delivered to the adolescents. In a study into alcohol drinking behaviours, Lac and Donaldson (2018) surveyed more than 300 college students about their perceived injunctive and descriptive norms on drinking behaviours, and the results showed that only descriptive norms are predictive to drinking behaviours. The results also showed that there is no significant correlation between students' perceived injunctive norms and their drinking behaviour. However, according to the research, injunctive norms do correlate with college students' attitudes toward drinking behaviours.

The theoretical expansion of subjective norms into descriptive and injunctive norms gives scholars a new perspective on the normative influences the social context imposes on human social behaviours. Descriptive norms were argued to explain or predict human behaviours through the informational value they could provide. This kind of social norm could provide information to the decision-makers on the behaviours of others. Injunctive norms, which are conceptualised as a different source of normative motivation of human behaviour, are argued to contain an explicit request on what should be done to be considered as socially acceptable. The extant researches have examined the different effect of descriptive and injunctive norms on human behaviours which significantly enhanced our understandings of these normative motivations and their functioning mechanisms. These studies have relied on a crucial assumption that the descriptive norms and injunctive norms toward a certain human behaviour is clear to the decision-makers. However, in some cases or under certain circumstances, an individual's perceptions on these social norms could be ambiguous. In other words, we may not have enough valid information on what others do and what is considered to be socially acceptable concerning the behaviour of interest. This normative ambiguity and its effect has been discussed in sociology works into violent behaviours (Horowitz & Schwartz, 1974), but it has not been employed in consumer behaviour research to the best of our knowledge.

2.5 Implications on Music Piracy Research

2.5.1 The Choice of Theory in the Current Research

Numerous theories from psychology (i.e. cognitive dissonance theory, theory of reasoned action, theory of planned behaviour and social cognitive theory), communication studies (i.e. uses and gratifications approach, social projection and communication exposure), and information system research (i.e. the technology acceptance model, Internet addiction and unified theory of acceptance and use of technology) were employed in the studies into music piracy behaviours. The theory of planned behaviour proposed by Ajzen (1991) has been chosen as the most comprehensive as it includes both personal and social level antecedents of music piracy behaviours.

According to the institution theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), the analysis of a focal behaviour would require the researcher to fully consider the context through which the behaviour is formed. When examining the music piracy behaviours in China, it is imperative to investigate the industrial, cultural and legal context of China regarding the music industry, as these factors might contribute to the distinctive features of consumer behaviours within a certain market (i.e. the Chinese music market) (Scott, 1987; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991). The analysis of Chinese music consumers' music piracy behaviours would not be comprehensive without these investigations into the development trajectory of the Chinese music market.

As discussed in the above sections in terms of the differences between Chinese and Western music markets, the Chinese music market and its consumers have demonstrated distinctive features compared with those from Western music market. From the rise of P2P download and MP3 format in 2000, to the popularity of online music between 2001 and 2005, the music sharing model and the distribution channel of music products have changed. Free and pirated versions of music products have also increasingly impacted the profits of the domestic music market, causing strong dissatisfaction among the five international record giants such as Universal, EMI, Warner, Sony and BMG.

Looking back at the fifteen years of the China's online music industry, it can be understood as the "history of rights transfer" about music copyright. However, in this process, whether it is the formulation of relevant market rules or the adjustment of copyright disputes in the industry, there are few related music management organizations. There is only one organization that is established related to music copyright management, which is the Chinese Music Copyright Association (CMCA). Founded in 1992, it is a non-profit organization that specializes in safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of composers, lyricists and other music copyright owners. In the more than ten years of online music development, besides the "most strict

copyright order¹", which is proposed and become effective in 2015, is valuable and impactful to the market regulation, there are few other rules that can regulate Chinese music market development (Tong, Yan & Hao, 2008).

Under this trajectory of music market development, where no or little regulation has been implemented to protect the music copyright, Chinese music consumers' awareness of copyright might not be sufficient to stop their music piracy behaviours considering the weak enforcement of music copyright protection under the specific institutional context in China. Based on this fact and considering the fact that anti-piracy laws might not achieve a long-term effect in controlling the piracy behaviours within the market (Adermon and Liang, 2014), it is then imperative to reinvestigate the music piracy issue from a micro-level perspective. Studying the psychological decision-making process of Chinese music consumers' piracy decisions might provide useful insights in designing and implementing effective marketing tools in educating the music consumers with the aim of increasing their level of awareness in terms of music copyright protection.

The development of the "new institutionalism" proposed by DiMaggio and Powell (1991) was focused on the use of cognitive and cultural explanations in analysing various individual and organisational behaviours. Therefore, the current study discusses the social-level factors that lead to music piracy behaviours based on the gap identified in the literature. Specifically, the different impact of descriptive norms and injunctive norms on music piracy or other unethical consumer behaviours have not yet fully been explored. According to the theory of planned behaviour, subjective norms are one of the crucial antecedents of human social behaviours. Subjective norms are the perceptions of various social norms, either descriptive or injunctive, that have an influence on the decision-making process of an individual. A similar theory is the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), which argues that the human social behaviour or knowledge is the result of an

¹ In 2015, the National Copyright Administration issued the "Notice on Ordering Online Music Service Providers to Stop Unauthorized Spreading of Musical Works", which is regarded as the most stringent copyright order in the history of Chinese music copyright.

individual's observations on other behaviour through social interaction. However, the social cognitive theory is general in nature and does not allow detailed examination of different motivational sources concerning the normative influence on social behaviours. Therefore, the current thesis employs the theory of planned behaviour as the guiding theory in gaining more insights into music piracy behaviours in China.

2.5.2 The Choice of Methodological Approach in Music Piracy Research

Most of the extant studies used quantitative approaches to investigate music piracy behaviours, but only a limited number of studies have adopted a qualitative approach or mixed method approach in studying this phenomenon. Among these quantitative studies, the most frequently used data collection method is the use of surveys. This may be the result of the fact that there is little or no availability of large cross-sectional or longitudinal datasets dedicated to the topic of the music piracy phenomenon, especially the datasets that measure the psychological factors of music consumers. However, some scholars have used innovative data sources such as clickstream data (see Aguiar and Martens, 2016) in econometric modelling and analysis. This positivist approach (i.e. quantitative studies) in examining music piracy behaviour has revealed important findings but has also led to discrepancies in terms of the findings.

Considering the specific characteristics of the music market in China, instead of posing the pre-existing questionnaires to the Chinese music consumers, an exploratory qualitative approach followed by a confirmatory quantitative approach seems to be more suitable for the current project. In this study, a pragmatist approach would be taken where great significance would be attached to the research questions. In order to answer the research questions in this project concerning Chinese music consumers' music piracy behaviours, a mixed method approach would be taken. More specifically, as the research question is explorative in nature, an exploratory sequential mixed method design would be implemented. In this mixed method design, the first stage of the research would be to conduct a qualitative study to explore the potential antecedents of Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions, this would be followed by a quantitative study where surveys would be administrated to a large number of Chinese music consumer.

As the surveys used in the second stage of the research would be based on the research findings from the first stage, the quantitative conducted in the second stage of the current research would be able to function as the confirmatory component of the whole project, as the quantitative stage of the project could check the generalisability of the research findings from the qualitative study. Meanwhile, the use of both qualitative and quantitative data concerning music piracy would further enhance the reliability of relevant research findings. Therefore, based on the need to answer the research questions, the exploratory nature of the current project and the aim of enhancing the reliability of research findings, a mixed method approach would be adopted for the current study (Yu, 2012).

2.5.3 The Gaps in Music Piracy Literature

Music piracy behaviour has been regarded as one of the major threats to the online music industry since its emergence, and it is still imposing problems on the sustainable development of the industry even though the industry has embraced the new business model of providing music streaming services. In current music piracy literature, various psychological, social and cultural factors have been identified as the antecedents of this unethical consumer behaviour. With the help of numerous theories including the theory of planned behaviour, factors including attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and past behaviour/experience are argued to be influential for individuals to make the decision on whether to conduct music piracy or not. Based on these research endeavours and findings, important theoretical and practical implications concerning mitigating music piracy behaviours are proposed. In the review conducted by Fleming et al (2017) where systematic review of unlawful file sharing literature based on the theory of planned behaviour is carried out, they call for more attention to be put onto the attitudinal, social factors as well as the behavioural control of music consumers rather than the legal aspects to aim at reducing the behaviour. The current thesis would be aimed at providing a more detailed examination of these aspects of music piracy behaviour by addressing the following gaps identified through the literature review. Gaps and limitations of the existing literature are illustrated in Figure 6 below.

Incomplete Understanding of the Impact of Social Norms on Music Piracy. According to Cialdini (1990), social norms can be categorised into two types, namely descriptive norms and injunctive norms. Existing studies that have investigated the impact of social norms use injunctive norms to substitute subjective norms, which neglects the examination into the impact of descriptive norms on music piracy decisions. Scholars have examined the impact of normative influence from different sources, including parents, peers, media, and the music industry (Yang, Wang, & Mourali, 2015b). However, the impact of descriptive norms and the differences in the effects of injunctive and descriptive norms were not explored in music piracy context. Therefore, the current study aims at exploring the differences in the functioning mechanism of different social norms on music piracy behaviours. The research findings are expected to be insightful not only for music piracy behaviours, but also for other unethical consumer behaviours in terms of the infringement of intellectual property rights.

Sampling Limitations. Though there are numerous existing studies that have investigated the antecedents of music piracy behaviours by employing the theory of planned behaviour, these studies mainly focus on Western countries (i.e. U.S., U.K., European countries). The examinations of the piracy conventions of Chinese music consumers who are from a different culture and in a different music market with a distinctive trajectory of development are limited. Music consumers in China may have a different view toward music piracy behaviours as their awareness of intellectual property rights protection is largely affected by the legislations within China and the business model of the Chinese music industry. Therefore, a further in-depth examination into their music piracy intentions would potentially reveal new insights into how their music piracy decision is made. This may lead to a more comprehensive understanding of music piracy behaviours as well as other unethical consumer behaviours from a social-psychological perspective. The use of the Chinese sample would further enhance the understanding of the functioning mechanism of social norms in affecting behaviours, because subjective norms, including descriptive and injunctive norms, are argued to be related to cultural differences from a cross-cultural psychological perspective (Smith, 2015).

Methodological Limitations. Another limitation of the current music piracy literature is the use of quantitative approaches in understanding music piracy behaviour. Based on the above discussion, the formation of music consumers' piracy intentions might be correlated to the cultural differences and the distinctiveness of the music industry of different regions and countries. Therefore, using quantitative approaches alone would not enable a comprehensive understanding of the piracy behaviour. In quantitative studies, the common strategy is to impose the pre-existing theoretical assumptions to the study subjects. In addition, the technological context of music consumption behaviours has changed with the introduction of the new music streaming business model, and music consumers' piracy intentions under this new technological context is rarely explored. The current research would employ an exploratory sequential design and investigate the music piracy behaviour using a mixed method approach from a pragmatic viewpoint. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative data would help scholars to yield rich and reliable data for the analysis on music piracy intentions.

2.5.4 Research Objectives

In the current thesis, the overarching goal is to reach a more comprehensive understanding of why Chinese music consumers engage in music piracy behaviours despite the change in music industry's business models (i.e. from music downloading to music streaming). It is argued in the current study that a further examination of the antecedents of Chinese music consumers' attitudes, subjective norms (i.e. injunctive and descriptive norms) and perceived behavioural control over music piracy behaviour would reveal new insights into the understanding of the behaviour and other unethical consumer behaviours concerning the infringement of intellectual copyright. Considering how behavioural decisions are affected by social norms which are correlated with cultural differences, the main focus of the current thesis would therefore be the perceived social influence of Chinese music consumers. In addition, based on the further conceptual expansion of social norms into descriptive and injunctive norms, the aim of the current research is also to reveal the functioning mechanism of these two different types of social norms in terms of affecting music consumers' decisions to engage in music piracy.

The research findings of the current project yield important practical implications to marketers and policy-makers in the music industry. For example, when constructing marketing messages aiming at reducing music piracy behaviours, the current research could provide insights into the choice of descriptive norm or injunctive norm-based messages delivered to the music consumers. In addition, a deeper understanding of the distinctive features of Chinese music consumers could be gained, specific strategies could be developed to more effectively change music consumers' piracy behaviours not only in China, but also in countries or regions that share similar characteristics with China in terms of the insufficient copyright protection awareness.

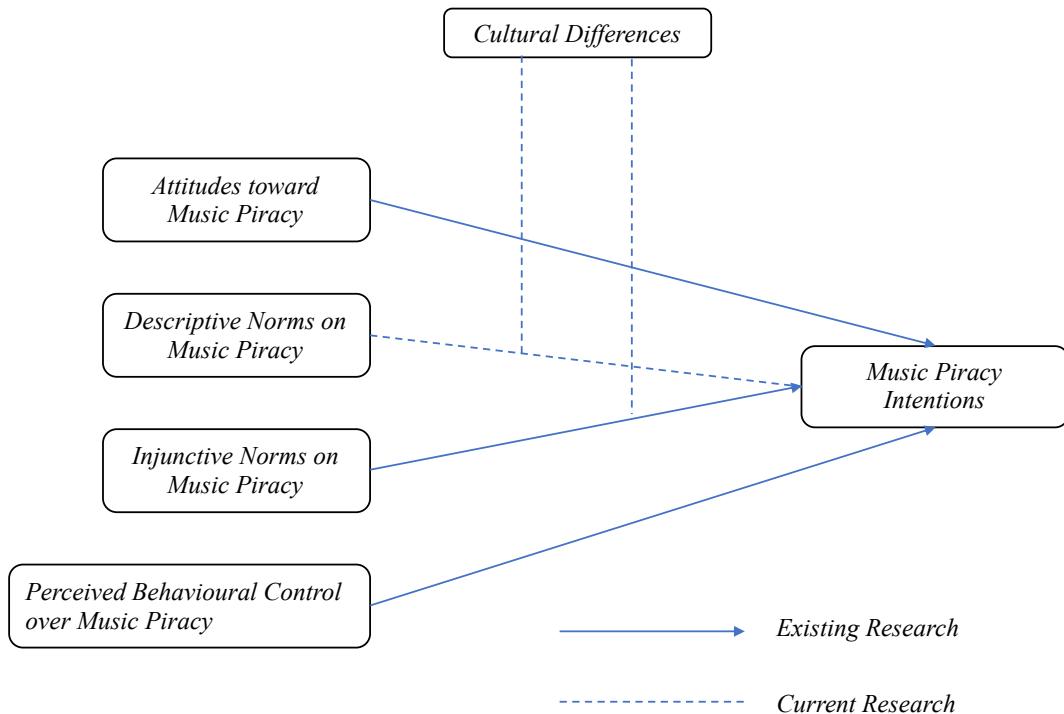


Figure 6 Research Gaps in the Literature

2.6 Chapter Review

This chapter has given a comprehensive review on the music piracy literature. Starting from the music piracy phenomenon, the first part of the literature review examined empirical studies on the topics including the industrial background of music piracy, the research on the antecedents

of music piracy behaviours, the impact of music piracy behaviours on music sales, the efforts that have been taken to combat music piracy behaviours such as DRM and anti-piracy laws, and the impact of the music streaming business model on music sales and music piracy behaviours. Although the introduction of the new music streaming business model might have a mitigating effect on music piracy behaviours, it is still a major concern of record labels, artists and online music platforms as the number of paid music streamers is still low, and China has a much lower conversion rate of paid users of music streaming services compared to Western countries.

In addition, the theoretical foundations of conducting music piracy research has also been discussed with a focus on the theory of planned behaviour proposed by Ajzen (1991). The development of this theory, the methods of measuring TPB constructs, the applications of TPB into the examinations of various human social behaviours as well as the approach of using TPB in music piracy research are discussed in this section. This is followed by a section dedicated to the normative aspect of TPB, namely social norms. In this section of the literature review, further theoretical conceptualisation of subjective norms and the distinctive differences in injunctive norms and descriptive norms are reviewed. The main focus of the current thesis is the perceived social influence of Chinese music consumers and its mechanism of impacting the decision-making process on their music piracy decisions. Considering the fact that the use of DRM technology and the implementation of anti-piracy laws are not effective enough in reducing the frequency of music piracy behaviours, this research might provide further insights on the social-psychological approach in discouraging music consumers' piracy intentions.

Based on the above literature review, the gaps in the music piracy literature and the research objectives of the current research are discussed. There are two main limitations in the literature that have been identified through the literature review. The first limitation lies in the incomplete understanding of the perceived social influence of music consumers in terms of their decisions on conducting music piracy behaviours. The distinctive impact of descriptive norms and injunctive norms on music piracy intentions are not yet discussed in detail. The second limitation of the extant literature is the sampling issues with the majority of music piracy literature uses

respondents recruited from a Western culture, and the respondents mainly consist of university students from a convenient sampling strategy. From a methodological perspective, the third limitation of the existing music piracy literature is the use of quantitative approaches, and not enough importance has been attached to explore the nuanced details of the formation of music consumers' piracy intentions through a qualitative or mixed method approach. Therefore, the aim of the current thesis is to bridge these gaps in the music piracy literature by designing and implementing an exploratory sequential mixed method study to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the music piracy behaviours in a different culture under the new technological context.

Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology: A Mixed Methods Approach

3.1 Chapter Overview

The last chapter of the thesis has given a comprehensive literature review on the existing music piracy studies and have identified the gaps in the literature. The literature review has covered a wide range of topics including different empirical and theoretical studies related to music piracy or digital piracy behaviours. In the literature review, different aspects of music piracy research are discussed including the background and impact of music piracy, the introduction of music streaming services as a new business model, different theoretical frameworks used in the extant studies (i.e. exchange theory, theory of planned behaviour, ethics theory, etc.) Then the literature review focuses on the perceived social influence of music consumers, and it involves the identification of further research directions concerning the theoretical expansion of subjective norms into descriptive norms and injunctive norms.

Based on this comprehensive literature review, the limitations of the existing studies are also discussed from different perspective including the sampling strategies, theoretical development and methodological approaches. One of the limitations is the use of quantitative approaches. Using only quantitative approaches to study the music piracy behaviour would neglect important insights from different music consumers (i.e. music consumers from different culture or having different music consumption habits). The current thesis adopts an exploratory sequential mixed method design to study the nuanced details of music consumers' piracy intentions where both qualitative and quantitative approaches of inquiry would be employed. The use of mixed method approach is based on the pragmatism point of view which emphasises the importance of the research questions and using this approach of inquiry would enhance the validity of relevant research findings as different types of data (i.e. qualitative and quantitative) are collected and analysed. Mixed methods approach also provides the opportunity to reach a holistic understanding of the music piracy behaviours.

This chapter would give a comprehensive explanation and justification of the research design and methodology of the thesis. The thesis constitutes of two empirical studies, the first one is a qualitative and the second one is a quantitative study. In this chapter, the rationale of both

empirical studies including the choice of research methods, sampling strategies, data analysis techniques and processes will be discussed. This chapter intends to give a comprehensive and general introduction on the research design and methodology of the current thesis, and in each chapter of the empirical studies, a more detailed and in-depth discussion on the methodology and design is discussed.

3.2 Research Philosophy and Paradigms

Researchers choose their approach in scientific inquiry based on their view of the world or paradigm. This view of the world is represented through their choice of quantitative, qualitative or a mixed methods approach in conducting their studies (Creswell, 2018). According to Creswell (2018), there are four main types of worldview that are employed or demonstrated in scientific research. These worldviews differ in ontology (i.e. what should be considered as real in the world), epistemology (i.e. the approach or way we should employ in gaining new knowledge from what we already know), axiology (i.e. what role value plays in research), methodology (i.e. what processes should be used to carry out research) and rhetoric (i.e. the commonly used language in scientific research).

These worldviews consist of a set of philosophical assumptions of individual researchers. They function as guidelines in directing research (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Ontology is the determination of whether the reality under investigation is independent from the researcher. This discussion on the nature of reality is crucial to the choice of methodological approaches in research. For instance, if a researcher perceives that there is only one reality in this world and this reality is external to him or herself, then this individual research might adopt a quantitative approach in scientific inquiries. The discussion on the nature of reality is also a reflection of an individual researcher's epistemological assumptions. Epistemological assumptions of researchers, which are closely connected to their ontologies, are the discussions on what should be considered as knowledge, and what is the appropriate way of gaining this knowledge. Based on an individual researcher's ontological and epistemological assumptions in terms of conducting scientific research, proper methodological technique could then be chosen to be applied to

various research questions. For example, a qualitative approach would be deemed inappropriate if a researcher assumes the singularity of reality in terms of his or her ontology of research.

Postpositivism Stance. There are four main types of worldview that vary with each other in terms of their implications for research. For researchers who adopt a postpositivist stance, their ontological assumption would be that the reality is external to them, and there exists only one reality about the world and how it works. Therefore, for postpositivist researchers, the principles for gaining new knowledge are to keep a certain distance from the reality that is being investigated and guaranteeing impartiality. Deductive approaches are often employed by this type of researcher based on their epistemological notion that the knowledge could be gained and could only be reached through a hypothesis testing and deductive approach. The frequently used style of these researchers is to first identify a set of hypotheses and test them by employing a deductive quantitative approach. In this type of research works, the language used are quite formal as the subjectivity is strictly prohibited or discouraged.

Constructivism Stance. While postpositivist researchers perceive that the reality is singular, and the knowledge could only be gained through a deductive approach and often in a quantitative manner, the researchers who adopt a constructivist stance regard the reality to be multiple. Based on the ontological assumption that reality is multiple rather than singular, constructivist research would regard that if they want to gain new knowledge, they have to be closer to the study objects, and subjectivity is anticipated in this form of research. For this kind of researcher, the most frequently used methodological techniques in gaining research data is to collect and analyse data through qualitative methods including focus groups, in-depth interviews and archival data such as images or texts. For the qualitative data they collect aimed at answering their research questions, an inductive approach in their analytical strategies would often be adopted. In other words, they have no pre-assumed hypotheses to be tested but allow key points to emerge naturally through inductive coding processes. The language used in these research works tend to be less formal than the research conducted by postpositivist researchers.

Transformative Stance. Another worldview adopted by researchers is the transformative stance. This research paradigm is often used in research that is aimed at enhancing the awareness of the human rights and social justice, especially for those who are underrepresented using a social science perspective. Researchers who adopt this type of worldview regard the reality to be multifaceted, and they would use a collaborative approach in gaining knowledge, and they often put themselves into the group of the study objects. In writing up their research, these group of researchers would always use an advocacy style to enhance the ability of raising public awareness.

Pragmatism Stance. One research paradigm or worldview that is often adopted by researchers who use a mixed methods approach is the pragmatic stance. This research paradigm attaches great significance to the research questions to be answered. Pragmatist researchers perceived the reality to be both singular and multiple, and their different ontological assumptions guide their choices of methodological techniques. Practicality is at the heart of the epistemology of pragmatist researchers. If a research adopts pragmatism approach in his or her scientific inquiry, the frequent methodological technique he or she would use is the mixed methods approach. In mixed methods studies, both qualitative and quantitative data concerning a research question, or a set of research questions would be collected and analysed critically and rigorously. In addition to the use of both qualitative and quantitative data, the most distinctive characteristic of mixed method studies is the combination of both qualitative results and quantitative results in order to answer the research question.

Most existing research on music piracy behaviours are quantitative in nature, which in turn demonstrates the researchers' preference of philosophical stances towards postpositivism. However, the suitability of using a postpositivist approach in behavioural research has been criticized by numerous scholars. One important principle of postpositivism is the uniformity and singularity of the reality. This conflicts with the argument that human behaviours are affected by the social context, and that human social behaviours do have different meanings under different contexts of research (Erickson, 2011). In other words, the postpositivist approach might oversimplify human behaviours by not considering the complex nature of human behaviours or the

use of unified numerical measures in investigating human behaviours (Creswell and Clark, 2018). However, the use of quantitative methods based on the postpositivist approach could yield unbiased research findings if the numerical measures used in the study are derived from a close examination of, and communication with, the representative sample of the targeted population of research.

In the view of constructivist researchers, the reality of the world is not solely determined by one person. The reality of the world should be consisting of the views of many research participants on specific issues or objects. This is also the foundation of conducting qualitative research, as when collecting qualitative data such as interview transcripts, importance would be attached to each participants' voices and their opinions on the issue under investigation. According to Guba (1990), unlike the value-free observations used by postpositivists in understanding the world, in constructivism research, the only source of reality is the researcher, whose subjectivity and value dispositions are attached great significance in the process of generating new knowledge. While the objectives for quantitative research based on a postpositivist stance is to identify to relationship between different variables, the major objectives for qualitative research is to answer Why, What and How questions. There are also critiques on the constructivist approach in scientific inquiry. The research findings derived from this type of research are argued to be ungeneralizable to a wider population (Creswell, 2018).

Considering the fact that both the postpositivism and constructivism stances have their own strengths and weaknesses, instead of debating which is more applicable for conducting scientific inquiry (i.e. the Paradigm Wars), the two philosophical stances and methodological techniques could be mixed together so that both the quantitative and qualitative methods could be employed in answering the same research question or set of questions. The mixed methods approach is widely accepted as the third main paradigm in management research and has an ever-increasing impact on this field of research. In mixed methods studies, the use of both quantitative methods and qualitative methods could triangulate the whole study and lead to more in-depth insights on the research questions at the same time. This is difficult to achieve by using only a qualitative or

quantitative approach in research. In addition to taking advantage of the benefits of using both qualitative and quantitative methods, the use of mixed methods in research design could also minimize the individual weaknesses of using both methods alone in exploring human social behaviours (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

3.3 The Justifications on the Use of Mixed Methods Approach

There are three main types of mixed methods designs that are frequently used in social science researches, namely convergent design, the explanatory sequential design and the exploratory sequential design (Creswell and Clark, 2018). The choice of different types of mixed methods research is also guided by the pragmatic philosophical assumptions. In other words, when a pragmatic research is considering the choice of the mixed methods design that would be implemented in the research process, the most important question to consider is that which mixed methods design would best answer the research questions. Making the right choice of mixed methods research would help the research in describing his or her research approach to relevant audiences and make the research project manageable and rigorous.

The convergent design. In this research design, this is also referred to as the parallel design, as both the quantitative research and the qualitative study are conducted on the same topic. The intent of choosing this mixed methods design is to provide triangulated results about the research topic. In such a research design, the research would often employ two different databases (i.e. a qualitative and quantitative one) that draw from the very same sample in the qualitative and quantitative studies. This kind of mixed methods research is sometimes referred to as simultaneous triangulation (Morse, 1991), or concurrent triangulation (Fetters, Curry, & Creswell, 2013) . The convergent mixed methods research design might be the most straightforward type of mixed methods design and has been popular among researchers since the 1970s. The primary reason for choosing this research design is that it could make use of the advantages brought by both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. It also allows the researchers to be able to compare the results of the quantitative and qualitative study in order to reach a more holistic understanding of the research topic.

There are four major steps in conducting a convergent design. In the first step of the research project, a quantitative study and a qualitative study are designed. Both quantitative and qualitative data are collected through two distinctive studies. In the second step, quantitative techniques are used in analysing the quantitative data to draw conclusions such as statistical inferences, and qualitative approaches are employed in the qualitative data analysis process to identify the themes within the data. The third step in this research design is to combine the results from two studies together. In the final step of a convergent mixed methods research, the combination of both the qualitative and quantitative results are interpreted. The primary focus of the interpretation is to identify “to what extent and in what ways the results from the two types of data converge, diverge, relate to each other, and /or produce a more complete understanding.”

(Creswell and Clark, 2017, p.145)

The advantage of the convergent mixed methods design is that it is straightforward to understand and describe. This type of research design is also quite efficient in that both the qualitative and quantitative data are collected in one data collection process. Apart from the benefits of choosing this research design, the design also imposes challenges. These challenges include combining the qualitative and quantitative data, as these two datasets consist of different types of data (i.e. textual and numerical). Another critical challenge is to explain reasons for the divergence between the qualitative and quantitative data analysis results. The general research process of a convergent mixed methods design is illustrated in Figure 7 below.

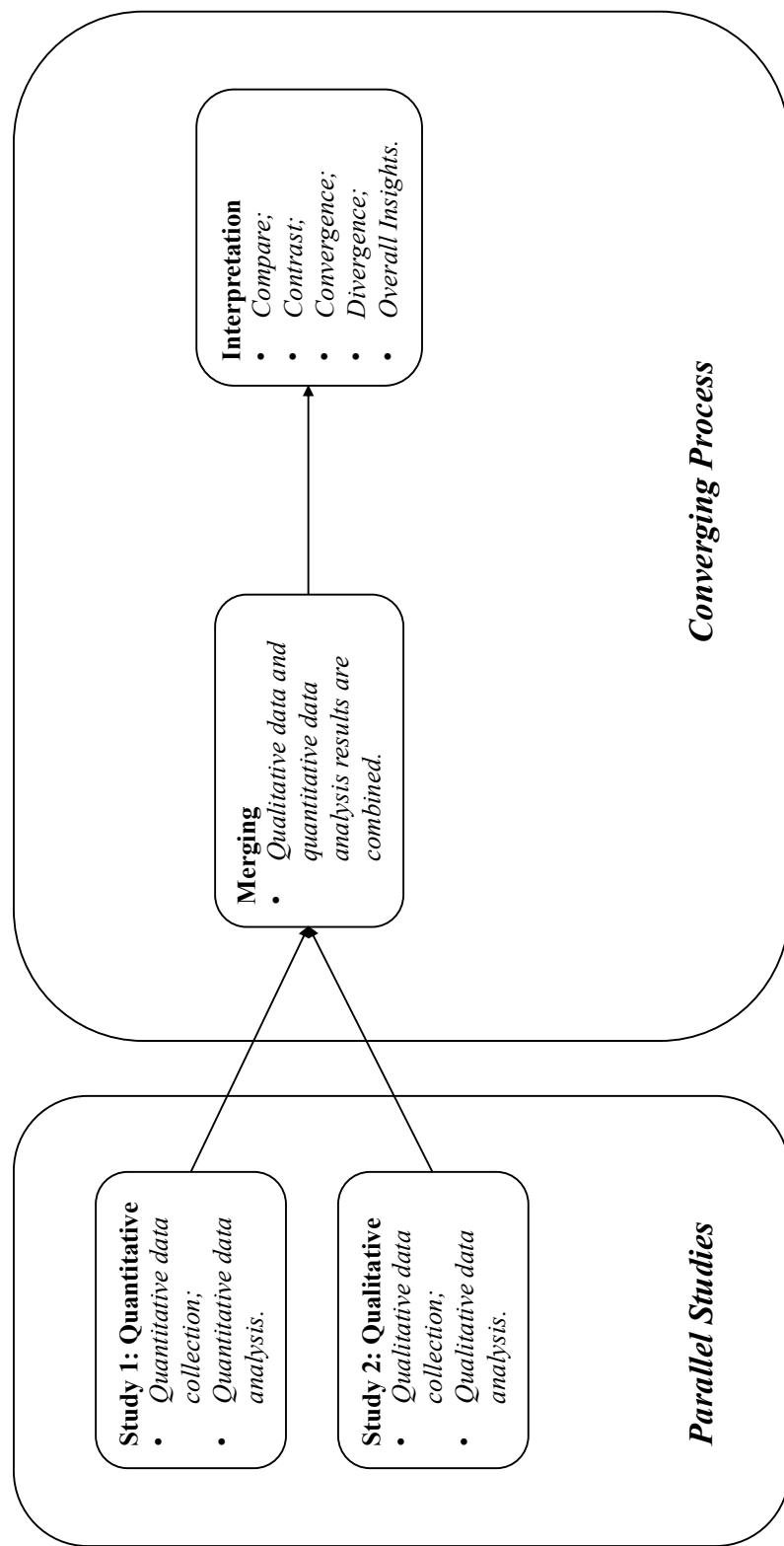


Figure 7 The Convergent Mixed Methods Design

Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design. The second core mixed methods design is the explanatory design in which both quantitative and qualitative research is conducted in sequential

order. In this research design, the research begins with conducting a quantitative study which is followed by a qualitative study to complement the “explanation” of the quantitative research findings. Unlike the convergent design in which the quantitative and qualitative study are conducted at the same time and using the same sample, the quantitative and qualitative studies are conducted in a sequential order in the explanatory sequential mixed methods design by using two distinctive samples.

The frequently used justification for using the explanatory sequential mixed methods design is that the quantitative results need to be explained in-depth. This is due to the fact that the results of a quantitative research study might be ambiguous, and not intuitive enough. In this situation, qualitative follow up research could help in getting more in-depth insights into the research problem. This could provide additional explanation of the quantitative research findings, especially if the findings are non-intuitive or unexpected. In addition to this, the researcher could choose the explanatory mixed methods design when he or she has substantial knowledge about the variables that would be used in the research as well as the corresponding measurement scales. In other words, the explanatory mixed methods design is perhaps most useful when the research problem and the researcher are more quantitatively oriented (Creswell and Clark, 2018).

In an explanatory mixed methods research, the research project would always start from a quantitative study. This indicates the fact that the researcher might adopt a postpositivist stance at the very beginning of the whole inquiry process. Following a postpositivist stance, the researcher is guided to design the data collection methods, instruments, and hypotheses to test. As the research project starts with a quantitative study, the guiding theory or theoretical framework is used to deductively form the research hypotheses in the quantitative research. Such a theory or theoretical framework could also be used in guiding the coding processes in the later, qualitative study and in the integration process of the quantitative and qualitative research findings. The general research process of an explanatory mixed methods design is illustrated in Figure 8 below.

There are two points of integration of both qualitative and quantitative findings. The first point of integration is between the quantitative study and the qualitative study where the researcher determines the direction of the qualitative study based on the findings from the quantitative study. For example, the research might be interested in an unexpected quantitative finding and wish to explore further. Then the research could design qualitative research based on this unexpected result and gather more in-depth information on the topic. This would help the researcher to investigate the topic from another perspective thus making it easier to explain this unexpected result. In addition, the second point of integration happens when the researcher combines the findings from both the qualitative and quantitative studies to draw an overarching conclusion or answer to the research problem. This integration involves the explanation of how the qualitative findings help in explaining the quantitative result.

Similar to the convergent mixed methods research design, the explanatory mixed methods design has its unique strengths and challenges. Although it might be more complex than the convergent design where quantitative and qualitative study are carried out at the same time and the data are collected from the same sample of research, the explanatory mixed methods design is still straightforward to understand and describe. It is also attractive to researchers who are more quantitatively oriented. Still, challenges exist with this type of mixed methods research. For instance, in two separate studies where data are collected from two distinctive samples, the researcher is required to take additional effort and time to draw the final conclusion toward the research question. Another challenge is that after the researcher finishes the quantitative study, he or she must be able to identify which aspects of quantitative findings should be further explored or explained. After identifying the research directions from the quantitative findings, the researcher would face another challenge that he or she needs to identify whom to recruit as the research participants for the qualitative study.

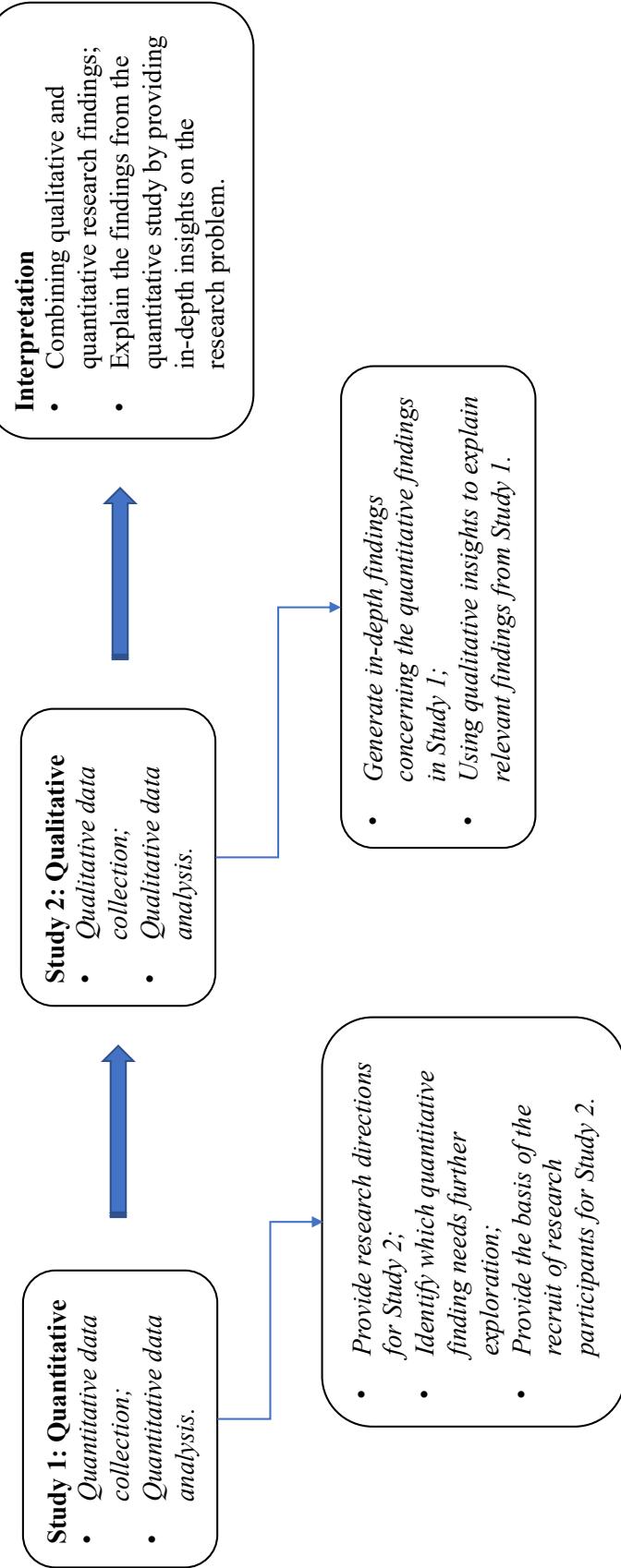


Figure 8 The Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design

Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Design. There are three main stages in an exploratory sequential design: the qualitative phase, the development phase and a quantitative phase. In the qualitative phase, the researchers collect and analyse qualitative data through various methods including conducting interviews or carrying out a comprehensive literature review. In the development phase of this research design, the main goal is to utilize the qualitative findings in the process of generating new “products”. These products could be a new variable, new measures for the variables, new experiment activities and even research-facilitating tools including apps or digital tools that could be used in the later stage of a research project (John W Creswell, Fetters, & Ivankova, 2004). Later in the quantitative stage, the researcher would use this product developed based on the qualitative findings in the subsequent quantitative data collection process. According to Creswell and Clark (2018, p.163), the most commonly used approach for this research design is to “...develop an instrument as an intermediate step between the phases that builds on the qualitative results and is used in the subsequent quantitative data collection.”

In an exploratory sequential mixed methods research design, the guiding theory could be applied to the research process in two different ways. Since the first study is qualitative, the researcher might adopt an inductive approach in analysing the qualitative data. By using an inductive data analysis approach, a theory or theoretical framework could be developed in the process. This is often referred to as a grounded theory approach. However, the theory could also be applied to the research when developing the new product in the development phase between the qualitative study and the quantitative study. If this is the case, the theory or the theoretical framework could be combined with the qualitative findings in developing the product that would be used in the quantitative stage of research. In the current study, the theory (i.e. the theory of planned behaviour) comes to the research process when the new product is being developed. In other words, the research findings from the qualitative research are combined with the theory of planned behaviour to develop the survey that would be used in the quantitative study for the data collection process.

There are numerous strengths and challenges of conducting research using an exploratory mixed methods research. The major benefit of using this type of research design is that “the research design is useful when the need for a second, quantitative phase emerges based on what is learned from the first, qualitative phase.” (Creswell and Clark, 2018, p.170) Since two distinctive research approaches are used in the exploratory mixed methods research design, two different samples need to be identified and recruited. The first sample, which is used for drawing qualitative insights, tends to be small and representative in nature, as this kind of sample reveals highly relevant research findings that would help in answering qualitative research questions. For the second sample that would be used in the quantitative study, the sample tends to be large and general, as the primary purpose of conducting the quantitative research is to test the generalisability of the qualitative findings of the research in a former phase.

In addition to the challenges of recruiting different samples in two empirical studies, another major challenge of conducting an exploratory sequential mixed methods research is that the researcher must be able to determine which qualitative results are to be used in the quantitative stage of research (Creswell and Clark, 2018). Conducting research that involves an exploratory sequential design would also require the researcher be skilled in both quantitative and qualitative research. The general research process of an exploratory sequential mixed methods design is illustrated in Figure 9 below.

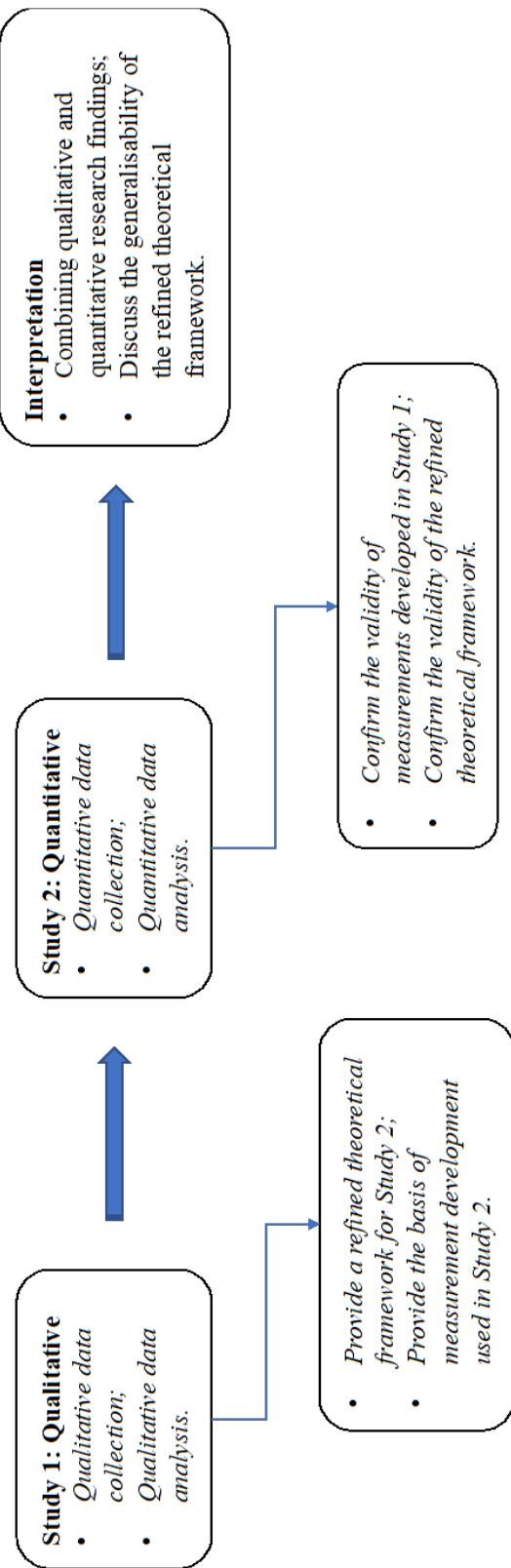


Figure 9 The Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Design

3.4 The Design of an Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Study

As the current study is exploratory in nature, and it seeks answers to the question of what constitutes Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions, a mixed methods approach is deemed appropriate as it would help triangulate the study and check the generalisability of relevant research findings. The first step of the current research is to explore the potential antecedents of music piracy behaviours in China while considering the specific Chinese characteristics of the music market and general public's awareness of intellectual copyright protection. Using quantitative approach alone would neglect other potential antecedents of music piracy behaviour brought by the distinctive features of the Chinese music market and using qualitative approach alone would decrease the generalisability and validity of relevant research findings.

The current research takes a pragmatic stance, and great importance is attached to the research questions. Aimed at answering the research question, an appropriate methodological technique is chosen in this thesis. The overarching research question is "what are the antecedents of music piracy behaviours in China?", and this question is indeed exploratory in nature. For an exploratory research question, a qualitative approach of inquiry would be deemed appropriate as it would use an inductive analytical strategy to explore as many facets of the issue (i.e. music piracy behaviour) or be as objective as possible. However, if the question is only investigated using a qualitative approach, the generalisability of the research findings would be unknown. Therefore, this qualitative study would be followed and complemented by a quantitative study where the research findings of the qualitative study would be tested through a numeric approach to a wider population. The two empirical studies together form the basis of the triangulation for the current research, and the validity of the overall research findings would be enhanced. The main qualitative method that would be used in this thesis is the semi-structured in-depth interviews with a representative sample of Chinese music consumers. We would recruit Chinese music consumers based on a criterion to ensure their representativeness. In this way, the research findings of the qualitative study could be used for the formation of numerical measures in the subsequent quantitative study.

Overcoming the limitation imposed by the distinctiveness between data and reality is difficult as only one source of data and the analysis based on it have been used. Though qualitative data is often difficult to measure, calculate and archive, it has the potential to complement the quantitative data by bridging the gap between the reality and the quantitative data and analysis. Considering the existing studies on the topic of music piracy, a mixed methods approach is rarely employed despite the fact that combining both qualitative and quantitative study would enhance the validity of the inquiry process. The use of a quantitative approach is more dominant in music piracy research, as it does not allow the researchers to explore the impact of culture or the distinctiveness among music markets of different regions or countries. Therefore, to gain a more in-depth understanding of the music piracy behaviours of Chinese music consumers, and to check the generalisability of the qualitative research findings, a mixed methods approach would be adopted where both qualitative and quantitative data concerning Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions would be collected and analysed.

Following the above discussion on the justifications of the use of a mixed methods approach, the current research would adopt an ***exploratory sequential mixed methods design*** (Creswell, 2018). The overarching research question for the current thesis is to identify the factors leading to Chinese music consumers' music piracy behaviours. In order to answer this research question, both qualitative and quantitative studies need to be carried out. As the research question in the current thesis is exploratory in nature, a qualitative research project is conducted to identify the potential influencing factors of music piracy behaviours. In this qualitative stage of research, the research findings could be helpful in refining a theoretical framework (i.e. TPB) to better explain the music piracy behaviours among Chinese music consumers. Based on this refined theoretical framework, a quantitative study is conducted in the second stage where the numerical measures used in this quantitative study would be based on the findings derived from the qualitative phase. This refined theoretical framework is then tested through the implementation of the quantitative study as the data would be collected from a broader sample.

Specifically, in ***Study 1***, qualitative data would be collected by conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews with Chinese music consumers with both music piracy and legal streaming music experiences. A research participant of the qualitative study must meet these two requirements at the same time, as the emergence of music streaming services might influence their music piracy behaviours (see Chapter 2). It is expected that rich qualitative data would be generated through the interviews and that patterns or themes could then be identified during data analysis. Based on the data analysis results of Study 1, a refined theoretical framework based on TPB is expected, and the rich data in this stage of the research will provide a solid basis for the development of the quantitative survey in the next stage.

The first point of integration of the qualitative study and the quantitative study is between the two studies. After the data analysis procedures in Study 1, a theoretical framework could be proposed. This theoretical framework, which is used for guiding the data collection process in Study 2, is the new product of the research project that combines the existing theoretical framework in explaining music piracy behaviours and the qualitative insights from Study 1. In addition to this refined theoretical framework, another product emerged from the qualitative data analysis process. In Study 1, a new variable was identified from the thematic analysis process. This variable does not seem to be fully investigated by the previous research on music piracy. The qualitative findings (i.e. quotes from research participants) on this new variable are then used in the development process of the measurement scale for this newly emerged variable. This newly developed measurement scale is then used in Study 2 for data collection purposes.

In ***Study 2***, a quantitative survey would be designed and implemented to a wider population. The aim of this stage of research is to provide triangulation of the current research by checking the generalisability of the refined theoretical framework. The validity of the quantitative survey is therefore enhanced as the numerical measures are developed based on the qualitative research findings and relevant existing literature on music piracy. According to Creswell (2018), in order to enhance the validity of a quantitative survey, it is imperative for the researchers to grasp a holistic understanding of participants' views of the issue of objects under investigation. Therefore,

two empirical studies (i.e. a qualitative study followed by a quantitative study) would be carried out in the current thesis, and the overarching research design for the current thesis is illustrated in Figure 10 below.

In the third stage of the research, the quantitative results and the qualitative results are integrated in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the music piracy behaviours in China, and thus to answer the research question of the thesis. This is the second point of integration of the quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The choice of this exploratory sequential mixed methods design is based on the aim of answering the research question of identifying the antecedents of Chinese music consumers' piracy behaviours. The rationale for this approach is that the qualitative stage of the research (i.e. Study 1 in Chapter 4) provides the foundation of the quantitative stage of research (i.e. Study 2 in Chapter 5) in terms of measurement development and the guiding theoretical framework, and the quantitative stage of research confirms the validity of these measurements and the robustness of the proposed theoretical framework. The combination of these two approaches of inquiry answers the overarching research question by providing a comprehensive understanding of the research object (i.e. music piracy behaviours). In these two stages of research, two different samples were recruited for the analysis. Study 1 uses a representative sample of music consumers who can provide details on their decision-making process of conducting music piracy behaviours under the technological context of music streaming services. For Study 2, a representative sample would be drawn from a large population consisting of Chinese music consumers. Data collection and analysis strategies as well as ethical considerations would be discussed in the following sections.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

In an exploratory sequential mixed methods design, both qualitative and quantitative data would be collected and analysed by the researcher. Generally speaking, the data use for the qualitative study tends to be collected from purposive samples where in-depth insights on the research question could be retrieved and analysed. As the qualitative phase is exploratory in nature, the research participants are usually asked open-ended questions as in semi-structured interviews or

focus groups. However, the purpose of the second, quantitative study is to verify the qualitative findings or to check the generalisability of the qualitative findings. Therefore, the research participants for the quantitative study is ideally to be a random sample which would effectively eliminate the bias in data collection and analysis.

Unlike the explanatory sequential mixed methods design where the quantitative and qualitative data are often drawn from the same sample of research participants, in exploratory sequential mixed methods design, the data are collected from two distinct samples. Different samples are used because the research participants of the qualitative study may think about the research objects differently due to in-depth interaction with the researcher. Further to this, these participants might not be suitable for data collection in the quantitative study.

3.5.1 Study 1: Qualitative Data Collection

The first stage of the research in the current thesis is a qualitative study. Specifically, the qualitative study is aimed to explore the potential influencing factors that lead to Chinese music consumers' music piracy behaviours. In order to answer this research question, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data for analysis. Qualitative approach allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the research object as it would reveal more nuanced details rather than general findings that would be generated by the quantitative studies. In quantitative studies, there would always exist a pre-assumed theoretical framework in guiding the inquiry by generating testable research hypotheses. However, it does not allow researchers to identify new theoretical constructs that play vital roles in determining human social behaviours.

In the existing music piracy research, the dominating approach of inquiry is to take a quantitative approach while using numerical measurements of theoretical constructs from previous studies. This would raise critical problems as the measurements of theoretical constructs developed or employed in previous studies might not be compatible with the current research context. For example, considering the current thesis, the existing measurements of theoretical construct concerning music piracy behaviours were mainly developed in Western culture. Cultural

differences would impose a significant impact on human social behaviours from various perspectives (Smith, 2015). For instance, in Western cultures where individualism dominates, music consumers' music acquisition decisions might less likely to be affected by others as they value their own goals and achievements over the goals of the group level. In Eastern cultures such as China and Japan, music consumers' music acquisition decisions are more likely to be affected by people around them, as collectivism dominates these cultures (Husted, 2000; Wated & Sanchez, 2005). Therefore, these measurements developed from Western cultures might not be suitable for investigations into piracy behaviours in China where the music consumers share a different psychological and cultural feature.

In addition to the cultural differences that quantitative research fails to take into consideration, the distinctiveness of the Chinese music market, which might be the result of a different development trajectory of the relevant technologies and business models in the music industry, might also impose a significant impact on the way Chinese music consumers perceives music piracy behaviours. For example, as discussed in the industrial background in Chapter 2, the Chinese music market did not experience the legal downloading era in the same way as most Western music markets did. This might be influential to Chinese music consumers' awareness toward intellectual copyright protection. This in turn might affect their music piracy decisions. Therefore, to fill in the gap in the existing literature on music piracy or other unethical consumer behaviours in the digital era in a broader sense and to answer the research question that is exploratory in nature, a qualitative approach of inquiry is deemed appropriate and is preferred in Study 1.

In line with most of other qualitative investigations into human behaviours, a purposive sampling strategy is employed with the snowballing technique as described below to recruit research participants for Study 1. According to Curtis et al. (2000), purposive sampling strategy would allow researchers to recruit research participants who are familiar with the research topic, and these participants could help in answering the specific research question by providing the researcher with rich and insightful qualitative data based on their own experiences and views of

the issue. In order to recruit valid research respondents for the interview, the respondents must meet the following criteria:

- a) They must be a user of legal music streaming services in China,
- b) They must have had experience in conducting music piracy (i.e. downloading music from illegal sources).

The snowballing technique works thus: To reach potential individuals that might be available for the interviews, the researcher starts by contacting his own contacts. These initial respondents must fulfil the abovementioned two criteria. After each interview, the initial contacts are requested to recommend potential interviewees who also satisfy these criteria, and the additional respondents are recruited. The combination of a purposive sampling and snowballing technique could provide the researcher with enough potential interviewees for the qualitative study. At the end of the data collection process of the qualitative study, a total number of 36 interviews were conducted. The 36th interview did not yield useful new insights to the understanding of the research problem, and this means that the research reached a theoretical saturation at the 19th interview. Hence, the researcher stopped at the 36th interview and the data collected from these interviews are used in the following data analysis procedure.

The study sample consists of 36 participants from various provinces in China, and these respondents are of different age groups and genders. Details of the demographical data concerning the research participants can be found in the relevant section of Chapter 4 (i.e. Study 1).

Before each interview started, an interview protocol was produced based on the comprehensive literature review in terms of the potential factors that might lead to music piracy behaviours. The development of the interview protocol is a dynamic process in the sense that after each interview, some themes or broad questions in the protocol might be modified according to the previous interviews (See Appendix A). The interview protocol was divided into three main themes;

namely 1) attitudes toward music piracy behaviours, 2) subjective norms of music piracy and 3) perceived behavioural control over music piracy behaviours.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face where possible but also on the telephone and on WeChat, a Chinese instant messaging software that supports making voice and video calls. Before conducting the formal interviews, the interviewees were given a brief introduction to the main theme of the study, and how their anonymity would be guaranteed. The use of different channels for interviews allow the researcher to reach potential research participants who are located in different cities. A consent form was given to the interviewees for their signatures prior to the interviews indicating the purpose of the research and the measures to ensure confidentiality. The interviews lasted for 34 minutes on average, and all the interviews were transcribed.

3.5.2 Integration: Scale Development for Study 2

One challenge involved in the data collection process of any exploratory sequential mixed methods design is that the researcher must be able to determine which part of the qualitative findings should be used for developing quantitative measures for use in the quantitative study. This consideration is of particular importance when the purpose of conducting an exploratory sequential mixed methods design is to develop or test a new variable (Creswell & Clark, 2018). According to the suggestions given by Creswell and Clark (2018), the key to develop a suitable quantitative measure lies within the qualitative data analysis process. It is suggested that the researcher should use a typical technique in analysing qualitative data where concepts and themes are identified, and those themes are then categorised into broader dimensions. These concepts, themes, dimensions and the corresponding quotes of the qualitative research participants could then be used into the design of quantitative measures, as Creswell and Clark (2018, p.316) stated “For example, a key theme may suggest a new variable and inform the selection, modification, or design of an instrument to measure that variable.”

Probably the most significant challenge of collecting and analysing data for an exploratory sequential mixed methods research is the development of quantitative measures. Generally, to

develop well-constructed quantitative measure requires the researcher to conduct a rigorous study. Instead of conducting a separate research study to develop a quantitative measure, researchers that adopt an exploratory sequential design in their research project could use the qualitative finding from the first stage of research to locate the literature where existing measures could be found and employed in the current research. This approach is also recommended by Gilbert Churchill Jr., who offered his insightful suggestions on the procedure for developing better measures for marketing research (Churchill, 1979). According to Churchill, the reliability and validity of marketing research measures could be improved by incorporating a qualitative phase of study (i.e. focus groups, critical incidents, insight stimulating examples, etc.) in the process of identifying and purifying the measurement items (Churchill, 1979). In this thesis, a newly emerged variable, namely normative ambiguity, was identified through the data analysis of the qualitative study. To test the generalisability of the proposed theoretical framework, a quantitative measure is then needed for this new emerged variable. As suggested by Creswell and Clark (2018), the measurement instrument for this newly emerged variable is developed following the guidelines provided by DeVellis (2016) to ensure the rigor in scale development of the new variable, and the specific steps in constructing the measurement for the new variable is demonstrated in Table 1 below.

Steps	Recommendations	What have been done in the current thesis
1	Determine what to measure	<i>Through the first, qualitative study, a newly emerged variable (i.e. normative ambiguity) is identified</i>
2	Generate an item pool that consists of potential measurement items for the variable	<i>Quotes of the research participants of the qualitative study are used to construct the item pool</i>
3	Conduct an expert review of the item pool	<i>The potential items that measures the newly emerged variable was reviewed by some of the participants in the qualitative study and PhD candidates</i>

4	Refine the item pool based on the expert review	<i>Wordings of the measurement items were adjusted according to the feedback of qualitative research participants and PhD candidates</i>
5	Administer the survey to a development sample	<i>A pilot test was conducted to assess the validity of the measurement items of the study constructs</i>
6	Evaluate the measurement items in the questionnaire	<i>Based on the result of the pilot study, the measurement items with factor loadings less than 0.60 were removed (Joe F. Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012)</i>
7	Reliability checks	<i>Reliability of the measurement items was assessed through the PLS-SEM technique in the quantitative study</i>

Table 1 Scale Development Process in the Current Thesis

3.5.3 Study 2: Quantitative Data Collection

In Study 2, a quantitative study is carried out to test the generalisability of the proposed theoretical framework from Study 1. As stated in the previous sections, the qualitative data used in Study 1 could help the researcher to gain a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding on the antecedents of Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. However, qualitative study alone does not provide a satisfactory validity as the proposed theoretical framework and the causal paths in this framework is not tested. Therefore, a quantitative study is designed and implemented with the following aims:

- a) To test the generalisability of the proposed theoretical framework in Study 1,
- b) To test the validity of the measurements of the theoretical constructs based on the findings of Study 1.

As the quantitative study is at the individual-level aiming at understanding the formation of Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions, a questionnaire would be used in the data

collection process, as the use of survey methods could measure the parameters at the individual level. In the current study, the questionnaire used in the survey were constructed based on the research findings of Study 1 as well as the critical review of the existing literature on music piracy. More specifically, when constructing the measurement items of the survey study, the researcher has referred to the existing studies on music piracy where the measurement scales were revealed in their studies. In evaluating these measurement scales from the existing studies, one important criterion applied in this process is to see if the two studies (i.e. the existing study and the current study) have a similar research setting.

The guidance given by the existing study is limited, as there is limited amount of research investigating the music piracy behaviours in developing countries with technological contexts of music streaming business models. Therefore, the most crucial source of constructing the measurement scale is the findings of Study 1. Based on the wording structure of the existing measurement scales identified in the existing studies, the measurement scales for the current study is developed by combining the adjusted and representative quotations into the existing scales. 2-4 items were constructed to measure how each study is constructed with the aim of achieving high construct validity. Consistent with most music piracy research that uses a quantitative approach, a 7-point Likert scale was used when constructing the measurement scales.

As the quantitative study involves a pilot study as well as a formal study ($N=30$), 2 different samples were recruited. For the pilot study, a sample of convenience was drawn from the university faculties and postgraduate students. In the pilot stage of the study, 30 questionnaires were collected and analysed, and measurements with a factor loading under 0.60 were deleted. Also, the pilot participants gave useful suggestions on the wordings of the measurement items used in the questionnaire. After collecting feedback on questionnaire items from several pilot participants, some wordings of the items were adjusted to reduce the ambiguity that could have led to bias in the data. As the study participants would all be Chinese music consumers, and the questionnaire is written in English in line with the literature, all the measurement items were translated and back translated to ensure that the Chinese version of the survey would be identical

to the English version. The details of the study constructs as well as their measurement scales used in Study 2 can be found in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.

In order to get a larger sample, the formal questionnaire was transformed into the online format using the service provided by Sojump², an online survey service frequently used for academic research when the study participants consist of a majority of Chinese consumers. To attract Chinese music consumer to participate in the study, the online questionnaires were distributed on the online forum of Baidu Tieba³, where internet users of similar interests would gather together and discuss the things they have a common interest in. A total number of 343 valid questionnaires were collected for further analysis, and the details of the research respondents could be found in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1.

3.6 Data Analysis Strategies

3.6.1 Study 1: Qualitative Data Analysis

The interview transcripts were analysed following a thematic analysis approach in both the deductive and inductive manner. In the first stage of the coding procedure, the interview transcripts were categorised into three main dimensions based on the antecedents of the theory of planned behaviour following a deductive approach. Through this deductive coding process, nuanced details of what the Chinese music consumers' attitudes toward music piracy were identified, as were how they perceived the descriptive and injunctive norms around music piracy, and information on their perceived behavioural control over music piracy behaviours was also gathered.

Then, in the second stage of the coding procedure, an inductive open coding approach is adopted with the aim of identifying the detailed insights of the formation of the music consumers' music

² <https://www.wjx.cn/>

³ <https://tieba.baidu.com/>

piracy behavioural intentions. The open coding approach also allows the researcher to identify new insights that are not yet covered by the literature. For example, in this research, a new theme has emerged from the open coding process, which is the normative ambiguity.

The data analysis strategy involved in the qualitative study is an iterative process, and constant comparisons are used in the data analysis process to allow the identification of themes or categories and the differentiation between different themes and categories (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Based on the comprehensive literature review, three broad dimensions of the antecedents of music piracy behaviours were identified. Actual interview data were deductively coded to match with these broad dimensions. The open coding procedure allows the new themes to be emerged from the interview transcripts. These new insights as well as themes were compared with the existing broad dimensions derived from the literature. Subthemes of the broad dimensions as well as the newly emerged themes were identified to gain a deeper understanding of these themes. This qualitative data coding procedure were repeated, and the interview transcripts and the relevant literature were analysed and compared constantly. The details of the thematic coding analysis (i.e. quotations, first-order concepts, second-order themes and aggregated dimensions) could be found in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.

3.6.2 Study 2: Quantitative Data Analysis

In analysing the survey data collected from the online questionnaires, a Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM) technique was implemented. PLS-SEM algorithm was argued to have better performance in research that is exploratory and with complex theoretical frameworks (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). Two distinctive advantages of PLS-SEM algorithm compared to the conventional covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) are that it does not require normative distribution of the data and could generate empirical insights when the sample size is relatively small (Joe F. Hair et al., 2012). PLS-SEM has been applied to research in various fields including marketing (Joe F. Hair et al., 2012; Joseph F. Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013; Jorg Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009), management information systems (Ringle, Sarstedt, & Straub, 2012), hospitality research (Ali, Rasoolimanesh, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Ryu, 2018) and

technological adoption studies (Mital, Chang, Choudhary, Papa, & Pani, 2017). Data analysis and the selection of cut-off values based on the guidance of Hair et al (2012) in applying PLS-SEM in marketing research were adopted. In this study, a PLS-SEM algorithm was employed to test the hypotheses developed above as the research was exploratory in nature.

The quantitative data analysis has two main stages. The first stage is to overall evaluate the structural model, and this is done through examining the construct reliability and the model fit. Specifically, the construct reliability is assessed by looking at two different dimensions, namely internal consistency reliability and discriminant validity. This is achieved by looking at the following performance of the structural model:

- The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the latent constructs, these values should exceed the cut-off value of 0.50 to demonstrate desired convergent validity (R. Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Jorg Henseler et al., 2009);
- In terms of internal consistency, the most frequently used measure of the existing studies is Cronbach's alpha (i.e. Zheng, Luo, & Wang, 2014). However, some scholars (i.e. Hair et al., 2012) have argued that reporting Composite Reliability is preferable to Cronbach's alpha, as it is a more reliable measure of the internal consistency (Joe F. Hair et al., 2012). Therefore, in the current study, Composite Reliability is used as the measure of internal consistency of the structural model, and the composite reliability of each construct should exceed 0.70 to ensure good internal consistency reliability;
- In the current study, the Fornell-Larcker test (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) test (Jörg Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014) and the cross loadings check are used in assessing the discriminant validity of the constructs of the measurement model.

For the Fornell-Larcker test, the square root of AVE for each construct in the study should exceed the absolute values of the correlations with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Meanwhile, for the HTMT test, the results should all be below the cut-off value of 0.85 as suggested by Hair et al. (2017). If the structural model could satisfy all these criteria, then this would indicate a good or satisfactory reliability of the model. The overall model fit could be assessed using two indicators, namely the R^2 and Q^2 . R^2 shows the overall explaining power of the model, while the Q^2 value indicate the predictive relevant of the model as a whole. In addition to assessing the reliability of the model and the model fit, in the second stage of the data analysis process, the PLS-SEM technique also assesses the path coefficient of the structural model. This allows us to identify the significant paths between different study constructs in the model and is crucial to test the hypotheses.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The research ethics guidelines of the University of Liverpool are strictly followed. Before the interviews in Study 1, the research participants were given substantial necessary information on the project and the contact information of the researcher. A consent form was signed by each interviewee informing them that the interview would be recorded, and the data would be used for research purposes only. In the quantitative data collection in Study 2, the first few paragraphs introduced the purpose of the research, how the respondents' anonymity would be guaranteed and how the data would be used.

3.8 Chapter Review

In this chapter, the research design and methodology of the current thesis is discussed. Detailed information on the data collection methods and data analysis approaches concerning both the qualitative and the quantitative study and further details can also be found in the following chapters. The chapter first introduced the overall research design of the thesis, which is an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach where a qualitative study is carried out followed by a quantitative study (See Figure 10 below for the overall research design). Then, the chapter discusses the philosophical assumptions that guide the research in social sciences as well as the major mixed methods designs including the convergent design, the explanatory sequential design and the exploratory sequential design. The rationales for the chosen methodology are also

discussed. The thesis adopts an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach as the research question is put at an important place. From a pragmatic perspective, the methodology should be chosen aiming at the research questions of any study. In the current study, the research question is exploratory in nature and this requires a qualitative study to investigate the issue. In addition, to enhance the reliability of the research findings from the qualitative study, a quantitative study is needed to check the generalisability of the qualitative findings.

In the qualitative study, semi-structured in-depth interviews with Chinese music consumers were used as the data collection method, as this method helped the researcher to identify the nuanced details of their attitudes, perceived social norms and perceived behavioural control toward music piracy behaviours. Several propositions are developed through the analysis toward the qualitative interview data in a thematic coding and open coding approach. A questionnaire is then designed based on the qualitative findings as well as the existing literature on music piracy to test the generalisability of the proposed theoretical model in Study 1. The survey is administered in an online form to reach a larger sample. After the data analysis of the quantitative study, the results from both Study 1 and Study 2 are integrated to generate the overall discussion and conclusion for the current thesis.

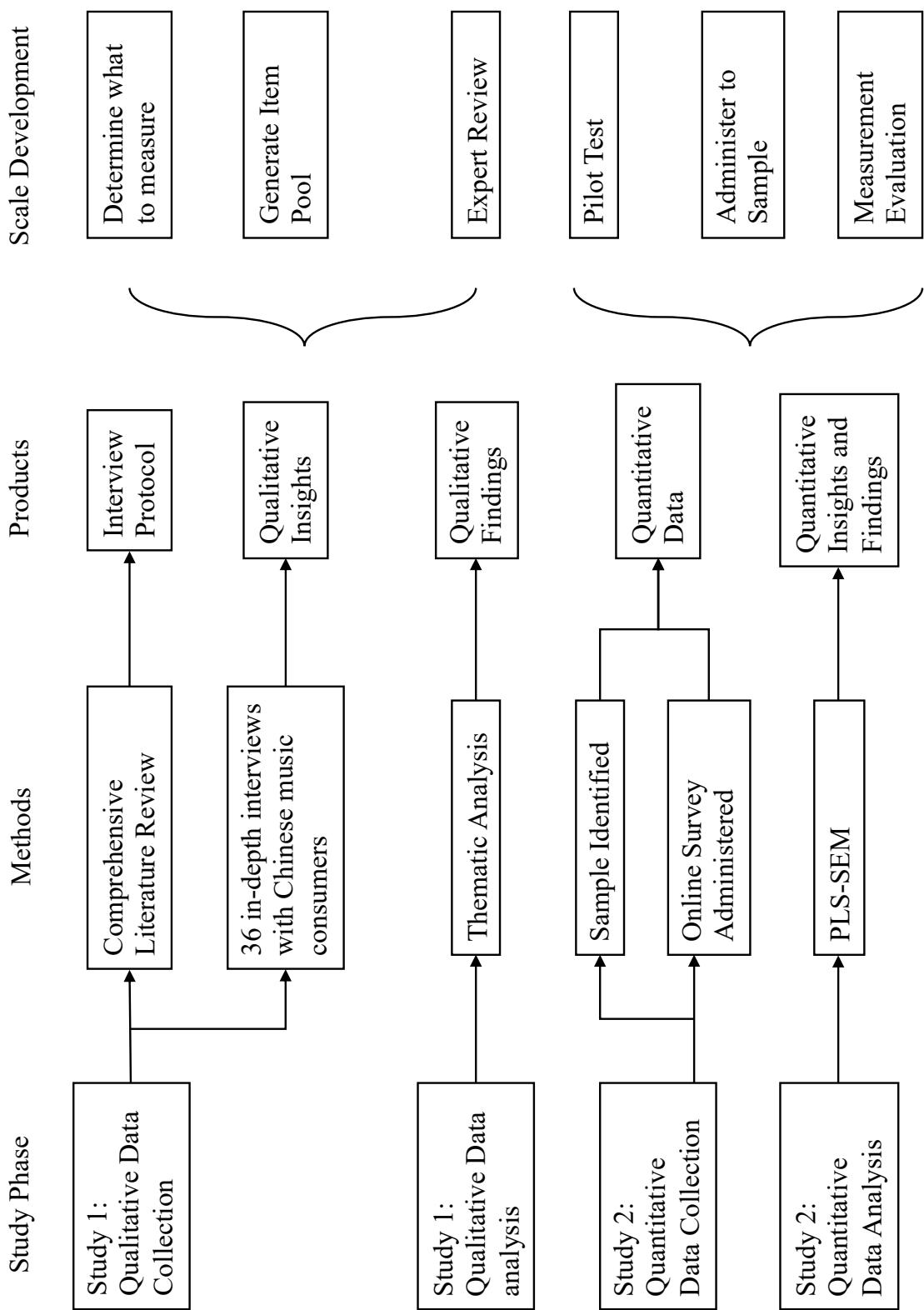


Figure 10 The Overarching Research Design

Chapter 4

Study 1: Decision Making in the Acquisition of Information Goods in Emerging Markets: An Investigation Through the Lens of Mixed Tape Music Consumers

4.1 Introduction

Two decades into the Digital Age, it has become apparent that new information and communication technologies have not only redefined the boundaries of markets but have forced services/products providers in the entertainment industry to create new business models and venture onto unchartered territories. Accounting for an estimated US\$15 billion globally in 2015 (IFPI, 2016), the music industry has seen rapid changes in the delivery channels of its products. Alongside the innovative ways of storing and distributing music products facilitated by the advancement in information technologies, piracy problems also emerged to threaten the music industry globally. Digital piracy has been recognized as an unethical consumer behaviour which hindered the profit generation of the entertainment industry and its sustainable development (Chiou et al., 2005). In China, a country that has high piracy rate across various copyright protected products (Bai & Waldfogel, 2012), combating digital piracy is of much higher significance when cultural industries become crucial to its economic growth by maintaining and developing its cultural soft power (China Daily, 2017).

Consumers' awareness toward intellectual property rights (IPR) protection is crucial for technology- or content-driven multinationals (MNEs) to successfully operate in emerging markets (Smeets & de Vaal, 2016). An increased IPR protection effort of an emerging market could lead to its increased imports on knowledge-intensive products such as music, movies, and books (Awokuse & Yin, 2010). However, China has been argued to have relatively weak enforcement of IPR protection (Brander, Cui, & Vertinsky, 2017). Given the non-excludable and non-rivalrous aspect of information goods (i.e. music), they are known to share the characteristics of 'public goods'. Their acquisition, or 'consumption', through unsanctioned means is then usually recognized as socially undesirable (Sinha & Mandel, 2008) as it would lead to the under-provision of the good in question. Following the arrival of online file sharing platforms at the turn of the century, the academic literature then turned its attention to the new piracy phenomenon and produced valuable knowledge on the behavioural framework of digital piracy (see e.g. Bae & Choi, 2006; Culiberg, Koklic, Vida, & Bajde, 2016; Donner, Marcum, Jennings, Higgins, &

Banfield, 2014; Fleming, Watson, Patouris, Bartholomew, & Zizzo, 2017; Kwong & Park, 2008).

In this context, it has been noticed that research into the impact of emerging information technologies such as streaming technology on IPR violating behaviours, especially investigations using qualitative approaches with a focus on emerging markets, is quite limited in spite of the fact that China has been recognized as a country that suffers from quite a severe digital piracy problem. Despite China's apparent move from the 'free' to 'paid' model of music consumption, there is a noticeable lack of knowledge and information on the preferences and behaviours of Chinese consumers responding to digital innovation (Hinings, Gegenhuber, & Greenwood, 2018) in the music industry. Due to the fact that the term copyright protection was coined in the Western world, Chinese consumers of digital products might not be able to reach clarity in terms of normative beliefs. It is possible that Chinese music consumers may experience difficulties in forming the normative beliefs against digital piracy since their awareness of copyright protection is ambiguous and that this may lead to piracy in the online music industry and of other forms of digital content consumption (i.e. e-books or movies). Indeed, as the Chinese market has experienced fundamental socio-demographic transformations in the past years, the market behaviour of the 'new Chinese consumer' needs further research in order not only to inform innovative business strategies and services to prevent digital piracy but also to contribute to the investigation into these unethical consumer behaviours under the technological transformation.

As China's music industry has entered a new era of adopting streaming technologies in providing digital contents, considering the fact that Chinese music consumers have a relatively long history in digital piracy, most of them would still conduct music piracy even if they are users of legal streaming services in China possibly due to the status quo bias (Samuelson & Zeckenhauser, 1988) or other considerations such as the insufficient awareness of music copyright protection. Before the industrial changes in the music industry, without purchasing CDs, almost the only way to acquire music products was to conduct music piracy. Hence, music consumers who are used to downloading songs from illegal sources on the Internet may not be willing to adopt a piracy-free streaming technology of acquiring music product, in that they have invested

psychologically in the previous way (i.e. conducting piracy) of music acquisition. This group of music consumers has been described as “mixed tape” music consumers, as their existence does not fit within the previous dichotomous approach (i.e. either pirates or non-pirates) in digital piracy research (Sinclair & Green, 2016a). The current research would investigate the piracy intentions from these largely ignored group of music consumers to gain new insights for theory advancement and practical implications.

Therefore, to address the gap in the existing literature, the purpose of this study is to explore Chinese music consumers’ decision-making process by exploring the main dimensions of Chinese consumers’ motives towards music acquisition under the guidance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1985) to answer the question on why do they pirate while using streaming services. The results revealed different dimensions of Chinese music consumers’ attitudes toward digital piracy, how their decision making is influenced by their social referents, and their perceived control over digital piracy behaviours. The emergence and impact of normative ambiguity have been identified and discussed under the context of digital piracy. The paper will first give a comprehensive introduction on the background information of the music industry in China and the literature review on theoretical frameworks, which will be followed by the data collection and analysis. Propositions, theoretical contributions and managerial implications will also be discussed.

4.2 Industrial Background: Online Music Industry in China

4.2.1 Distinctive Features of the Music Delivery Channel in China

According to IFPI, there are 68 million people worldwide using premium (paid) streaming music services in 2015 (IFPI, 2016). One of the market leaders of streaming services, Spotify, claimed that the number of subscribers reached 60 million in July 2017 (Resnikoff, 2017). Historically, in Western countries, the development of music delivery has three stages, starting from physical

storage devices such as CDs and tapes. Then, developing information technologies such as faster Internet connections (Borja et al., 2015) and the continuous advancement of digital devices that facilitate digital music consumption (Magaudda, 2011), allow consumers to download music through online music service providers. In the third stage, streaming music services have become the first choice of most music consumers.

However, this model cannot be applied in China. Possibly due to the lack of the awareness of IPR protection (Rahmatian, 2010), when the music industries in Western countries embrace the digital era (i.e. digital downloading becomes the dominating way of music acquisition), there was no well-regulated digital music market in China. When Western countries were experiencing the download stage of the development process, the majority of Chinese music consumers were following the trend of massive illegal downloading. They were also unable to buy legal music products online unless using legal sites such as iTunes stores of other countries or regions. Availability was therefore one of the influencing factors that led to music piracy. Recently, a number of streaming services started to provide services to Chinese consumers including Apple Music, Xiami, QQ Music and Netease (IFPI, 2016). These online music platforms allow their users to reach a comprehensive music library for free, and music consumers could choose to subscribe to their premium services by paying a flat rate and they could enjoy the subscriber-exclusive content and high-quality music for the period of subscription.

Unlike Western countries, China has long cultivated a shared communal tradition. It might be relatively more difficult for Chinese consumers to form a unified clarity about the behaviours that are socially acceptable in terms of the acquisition of the IPR-protected information goods as their copyright protection awareness is far from sufficient. With the continuous advancements in information technology, the Western music industry had been responding to the changes in how music is delivered and stored by creating new business models (i.e., streaming music services) while the Chinese music market is dominated by top-down government strategies and regulations where innovative business models in the music market emerged at a later stage. Unlike the more mature streaming business models in the Western countries, China's streaming music services

are still at an early stage, in that only a small portion of the music consumers are paying to subscribe to streaming services. The music industry and its sustainable development are of high significance since it is a crucial part of the country to maintain and further develop its ‘cultural soft power’ by enabling the music market to deliver cultural products to satisfy the needs of different music consumers.

4.2.2 Music Piracy in China

According to IFPI’s Global Music Report 2017, China is now ranked 12th in terms of the market value of digital industry (IFPI, 2017). In July 2015, the National Copyright Administration of People’s Republic of China (NCAC) enacted the most restrictive prohibition to stop all online music service providers from distributing unauthorized music products. With the latest regulatory change, music service providers in China are seeking new business models to generate profit and to legitimize the “new” music market. From this perspective, recent academic research in China investigating the Chinese music market has mainly focused on discussing the issue of protecting the intellectual property of copyright holders, leading scholars in China to propose solutions including drawing up and improving on laws. However, as concerned by the digital service providers in China, the issue of digital piracy is still severe and it is impairing consumers’ adoption intentions towards adopting paid streaming services (IFPI, 2017). The driving factors that lead Chinese music consumers to commit IPR violating behaviours while using streaming services remain unclear.

4.3 Explaining Digital Piracy Behaviours: The Theory of Planned Behaviour

4.3.1 Attitudes, Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioural Control

When investigating people’s intentions of conducting a certain behaviour, the theory of planned behaviour (hereafter TPB) is often used as the theoretical framework. Proposed by Ajzen (1985), TPB is developed from its preceding version, the theory of reasoned action (hereafter TRA) by adding perceived behavioural control as one of the factors influencing people’s intention of

performing a certain behaviour. The addition of perceived behavioural control was to enhance the model's predictive power in decision-making process in terms of behaviours that the subject has insufficient volitional control. The theory of trying and the theory of goal-directed behaviour were also proposed to cover behaviours in which people have limited control over the outcomes (Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1990). In their model of trying, the limited control on the behaviour outcomes was designed to be captured by self-efficacy rather than perceived behaviour control in TPB. TPB has been shown to efficiently improve the predictive power in human behaviour related research questions (Ajzen, 1991) in a broad range of disciplines and fields. According to TPB, attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are the three factors influencing people's intentions. Ajzen and Fishbein defined the attitude as 'a person's general feeling of favourableness for that behaviour' (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980b). Subjective norm refers to the social influence in the form of 'word-of-mouth', especially the words from family members and close friends (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), and perceived behavioural control, which is one's perception of technical barriers, affect one's choice of adoption (Ajzen, 1985).

Controversial Findings on the Effect of Subjective Norms. Previous research on the impact of subjective norms on unethical consumer behaviour which is relevant to digital piracy is controversial. Some researchers have confirmed the significant impact of subjective norms (Morton & Koufteros, 2008; Yoon, 2011), while other researchers found that subjective norms do not have significant impact on the intention of conducting piracy (Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008). In terms of the impact of subjective norms, it is widely assumed that there exist clear normative beliefs which could be utilized by the decision maker to form subjective norms. But in various less-developed markets where music streaming services are emerging rather than maturing, ambiguous normative beliefs may impede the adoption as well as reduce consumers' willingness-to-pay. In a recent review on norm-based behavioural interventions, when assessing risky behaviours, decision makers tend to choose social referent in regarding to social identity considerations while for public goods consumptions, they tend to choose referents who are physically and geographically close to decision makers, indicating the effectiveness of subjective

norm is depending on the type of social referents or source of motivation (Miller & Prentice, 2016). But what if the social referents chosen by the decision maker are not able to deliver descriptive or injunctive messages due to the unclear normative beliefs? For a better understanding of the impact or predicting power of subjective norm on behavioural intentions, more research is needed to uncover the functioning mechanism of subjective norm in the decision-making processes (Smith, 2015).

4.3.2 Normative Ambiguity toward Digital piracy

In previous research, normative ambiguity has been identified in sociological research into conflict and violent contexts (Horowitz & Schwartz, 1974). In their research, normative ambiguity was defined as the “absence of higher-order rules for reconciling contradictions between conflicting codes for conduct in situations ...” (Horowitz & Schwartz, 1974, p.242). However, this definition was given in the context of violence. Following this line of reasoning, the definition of normative ambiguity could be extended to cover a broader range of human behaviours. In this research, we define ***normative ambiguity***, which was identified and conceptualized from the interviews, as the situation where the individual is unable to possess precise normative beliefs toward the behaviour of interest from their social referents. In the specific context of music piracy behaviour in China, normative ambiguity might be observed since the concept of copyright was not originated in China and Chinese music consumers had been enjoying the “free” music services for years, and as a result, the referents chosen by the music consumers may not be able to deliver negative descriptive and injunctive messages against music piracy behaviours to the music consumer.

According to Ajzen (1985), subjective norm captures the social influence imposed by individuals’ social referents. These social referents include your family members and close friends. We argue that, one crucial assumption for these social referents to be valid is that they must possess clear normative beliefs toward the behaviour of interest (i.e., whether one should conduct digital piracy

or not). In another word, for the family members and close friends functioning as valid social referents, they must be able to easily decide how to respond in the context of digital piracy since there exists a higher-order rule in dealing with music acquisition behaviours. While in China and many other less-developed markets, intellectual property protection issues involved in the music acquisition process might be ambiguous, given the fact that most Chinese music consumers are not paying for the online music services in China. In this case, these potential social referents, as well as the social influence imposed by them, might be invalidated by the presence of normative ambiguity toward digital piracy.

4.4 Method

Considering that the aim of the current study is to explore new insights into the intentions of mixed tape music consumers to conduct digital piracy behaviours under the new industrial context, a theory-guided qualitative approach guided by the constructivism philosophical stance has been adopted. Another purpose for choosing the qualitative approach is to complement the existing literature in music piracy, where quantitative studies, usually aimed at quantifying the effect of specific antecedents on piracy intentions, are dominating. Qualitative investigations complement our understandings on these unethical behaviours in the sense that we can listen to the voices from various participants. By investigating the music piracy issue in China from a constructivist stance, it allows us to give voices to various music consumers in China and retrieve their opinions on the issue. In this way, further exploration of formation of music consumer's attitudes toward digital piracy behaviours, how they were influenced by their social referents and their perceived behavioural control toward digital piracy were possible. Semi-structured interviews as well as the open coding technique enabled the generation of new insights that were unable to be reached by simply using a quantitative approach. This study further advances the understanding of various unethical consumer behaviours from a social-psychological perspective.

36 in-depth semi-structured interviews with respondents from various provinces in China were conducted through online interviews through WeChat. 12 interviews were conducted using a text-based approach since the 12 respondents claimed that they were more comfortable with it, while 24 interviews were conducted through video chat. In most previous investigations studying music piracy or software piracy, the researcher often recruit college students as a sample of convenience (Borja et al., 2015; Ishii, Rife, & Kagawa, 2017; Lysonski & Durvasula, 2008; F. Wang et al., 2005). This is questioned by various scholars concerned by the generalization of the findings of student samples. In this project, the paper would make its contribution to the literature by extending the student sample to reach music consumers of other groups such as white-collar workers to improve the generalization of relevant findings.

4.4.1 Sampling Method

The sampling has two stages. In the first stage, targeted respondents with purposive sampling strategy were identified based on the requirement that the respondents should be music consumers who are currently using legal music services in China (i.e., either users of free streaming services or paid streaming services) but who had had music piracy experiences in the last month. Following the procedures of purposive sampling (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) and snowballing techniques (Bryman, 2016), the respondents were recruited through Baidu Tieba, an online discussion forum in China. Baidu Tieba are themed discussion forums where users who have the same interest could communicate with each other in the form of creating a new topic, commenting in other topics and responding to others' comments on the same topic. It is an important and useful channel for information dissemination and gathering among people of different interest groups, which makes it an ideal place for purposive sampling. Specifically, an invitation was sent to the users of Oricon (i.e. the gathering place for music lovers of East Asian music) and Billboard Tieba (i.e. gathering place for music lovers of Western music) respectively to enrich the sample. The targeted sample is illustrated in Figure 11, this sample is largely ignored in previous piracy-related research and as "mixed tape" music consumers, they may provide new insights on the attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control of different music

acquisition behaviours. The mixed tape nature of the targeted sample is able to provide information on both positive and negative aspects of music piracy, which would help academics and relevant practitioners to reach a more comprehensive understanding of consumer's music piracy intentions. In this way, enough relevant informants to collect valid data on the main research question could be found.

Then, in the second stage, in order to get more data entries, the respondents are then invited to refer new qualified respondents based on snowballing sampling strategy, a similar sampling approach adopted by Sinclair & Tinson (2017). Following this sampling framework, 36 respondents from 16 different provinces in China were reached. When taking a deeper look at the respondent's information, it could be found that the respondents are using various legal streaming services in China. These online music platforms are providing legal online music services to Chinese music consumers. The emerging and the widely acceptance of these music platforms are signalling a new era of online music industry in China, since these music service providers are using the new business model which is a combination of free ad-funded service and subscription-based services to formulate the industry and market. Among all these music platforms, Netease Music is dominating the market in China. There over 58.3% of respondents who have reported that the most frequently used music platform is Netease. This is followed by QQ Music (25%) from Tencent, and Apple Music (5.6%) from Apple.

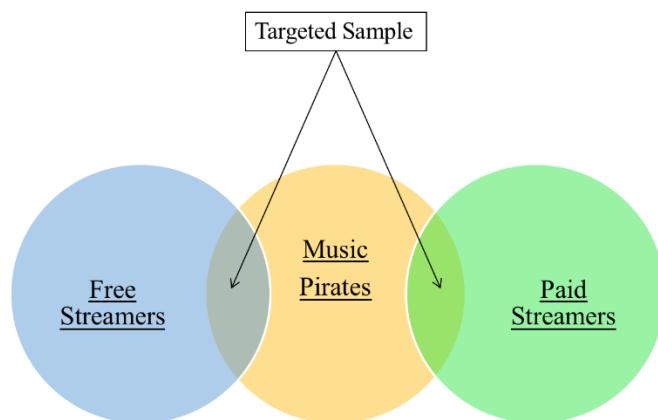


Figure 11 Targeted Sample of Mixed Tape Music Consumers

4.4.2 Coding Strategy

The interviews were conducted online, and all transcripts were analysed with the Qualitative Data Analysis Package NVivo 11. When conducting the sampling, respondents of different ages and of different income groups have been intentionally chosen. This sampling strategy ensures enough variance in respondent's location, income and age. In the current research, a deductive coding strategy with the thematic analysis approach has been adopted. The interview questions are based on the theory of planned behaviour and attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are coded as a priori parent nodes in NVivo. After that, relevant response texts were coded into these parent nodes and categorized into different child nodes. During this cycle of coding, open coding is allowed to make emerging ideas identifiable (Saldana, 2016). Deductive coding saves researchers' time when conducting theory-guided research, and enables them to discover the relationship between parent nodes and their child nodes (Saldana, 2016).

4.5 Findings

Under the guidance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the interviews were sectioned into three parts. In the first part of the interviews, music consumers' attitudes toward digital piracy behaviours were discussed. Interviewees were asked questions such as "What do you think about music piracy behaviours?" and relevant "why" questions designed to assess their attitudes (See Appendix A). In the second part of the interviews, interviewees were asked questions about their family members' and close friends' opinions on music piracy. From this part of the interviews, we intend to extract information relating to how these music consumers' music acquisition decisions are influenced by their social referents. Lastly, in the third part of the interviews, respondents were asked questions such as "What do you think is the most difficult part when conducting music piracy?" or "Do you encounter any technical problems in the process of downloading illegal music files from the Internet?" By asking these questions, relevant responses could be used to assess perceived behavioural control over music piracy behaviours. Beliefs either facilitating or impeding music piracy behaviours are presented in Figure 12. The example

insights retrieved from the interview transcripts, as well as the first order concepts, second order themes and the corresponding aggregate dimensions are outlined in Table 2.

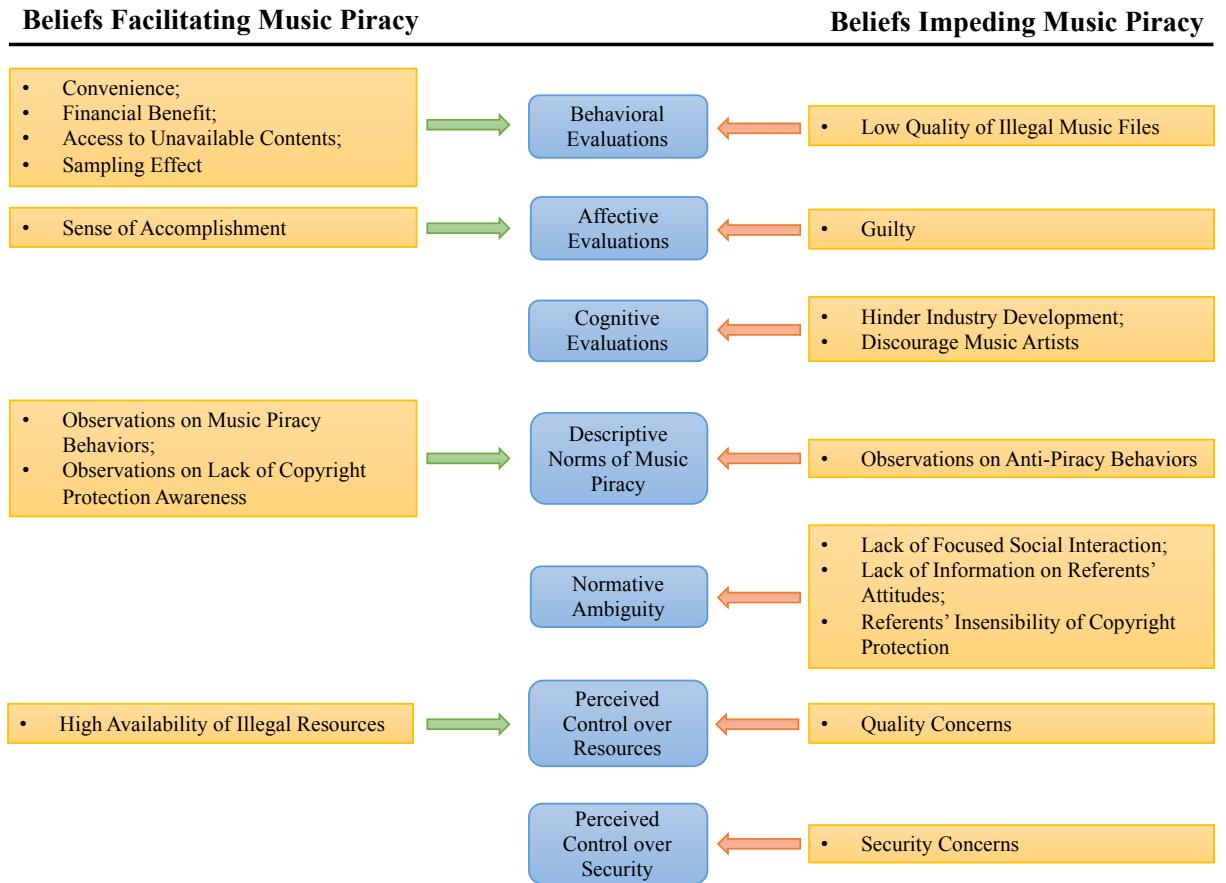


Figure 12 Mixed Tape Music Consumers' Beliefs on Music Piracy

4.5.1 Attitudes toward Music Piracy: Behavioural, Affective and Cognitive Evaluations

In order to investigate what Chinese music consumers think about music piracy, they were asked to talk about their experiences and attitudes toward music piracy since attitude has been defined as the favourable or unfavourable feelings toward the issue (Ajzen, 2011). According to the three-dimensional categorization of attitudes, findings on the consumer insights around their affective, behavioural and cognitive evaluations toward music piracy are organized (Breckler, 1984). Affective elements of attitudes refer to the emotional evaluations of the object, and positive affective evaluations would result in positive attitudes toward the object; behavioural elements

of attitude are generated through past experiences with an attitude object and it is assumed that people would infer their attitudes toward an attitude object through evaluating past experiences with this object; cognitive elements of attitude refer to the beliefs or positive and negative attributes an individual associates with the object (Breckler, 1984).

Behavioural Evaluations. Past experiences of music piracy behaviours are crucial for Chinese music consumers to form positive attitudes toward music piracy. These consumers had evaluated some attributes of music piracy and described music piracy behaviour as convenient when comparing to the use of legal streaming platforms in China. In using legal streaming services, it is difficult if you wish to have all your favourite songs in a single playlist due to the licensing restrictions, in that some of your favourite music may only be available in another platform as a result of exclusive licensing between the record label and the platforms. Therefore, by conducting music piracy you would be able to put all your favourite songs in a single playlist. Some respondents have reported the fact that even if they feel bad about conducting music piracy, they would still do it since some certain songs are unavailable through the legal services and they have to look for information resources from Peer-to-Peer (P2P) networks in order to retrieve the music files. Besides the convenience provided by music piracy, consumers also perceive that music piracy could help them save money in the sense that on China's streaming platforms, you are not able to purchase a single song from a full album and you have to purchase the whole digital album with some songs you may not wish to purchase. Another positive behavioural evaluation of music piracy is that by conducting music piracy, you would be able to get access to the songs you could not find on legal platforms due to the media content regulations imposed by the government. The sampling effect is one important reason for streamers to engage in music piracy in China, in that by downloading songs from illegal sources, consumers are also able to sample these songs before purchasing them on the legal platforms:

“As you know, on those online music platforms, you will need to purchase the specific albums first and then you would be able to listen to the songs of that album. This is quite unreasonable, as we don’t know if we will like the album or not. It is like to buy something

to eat for the first time and you are not sure if you would like the flavour or taste. So, as for music consumers like me, I would need to listen to the songs first and then I can make the decision on whether or not to purchase that album. The only way I can do this is to download songs from the Internet, where others who have purchased the album have uploaded the songs to share. It is true that if I don't like the songs, I would choose not to buy the album on legal sites, and if I don't like them, I would keep the downloaded songs and I will not buy the album."

[R7, Male, 23)]

However, consumers have also identified the limitations of music piracy through past experiences. One of these limitations is the low quality of music files from illegal sources. It is interesting to see that nearly 1/3 of the respondents have shown their unsatisfactory feelings on the poor quality of pirated music [e.g., "Sometimes you can't open the downloaded music files since the format is not supported, and the quality (of pirated music) is lower than expected, this gives me an unpleasant (music consumption) experience", R8, female, 25].

Affective Evaluations. Music consumers in China hold different affective evaluations toward music piracy behaviours. Affective elements of attitudes are consumers' emotional evaluation toward the attitude object (i.e. music piracy behaviours). Some consumers stated that the process of conducting music piracy could bring you the sense of accomplishment as when you found the songs you were searching for, you would have the same feeling as if you have accomplished a task. Many respondents reported that conducting music piracy is a natural thing, for example, R13 stated that "It (music piracy) seems to be a moral issue and conducting piracy seems not so good, but it's quite normal and natural. Think about the days when we only had CDs, one of the friends who bought the (legal) CD could share it with you, would you consider this as piracy? And think about the huge number of fans of a certain artist, these fans would definitely buy their albums from legal sources, so these artists will be fine". These positive affective elements of attitudes toward music piracy may increase the music piracy intentions.

At the same time, music consumers also hold negative affective evaluations toward music piracy, and more specifically, some music consumers asserted that they would experience a feeling of guilt when conducting music piracy. R17 (male, 26) suggested that “Music piracy would affect the income of artists and music producers”. This is a reflection that Chinese music consumers are now starting to consider artists’ well-being. According to the analysis of the interview texts, the guilty feeling caused by piracy could be regarded as the tension generated by the existence of two contradictory beliefs of the respondents. Based on the cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1962), when the individual is possessing two contradictory beliefs, the individual is expected to experience the feeling of tension as a result (Redondo & Charron, 2013). In order to ease the tension, the individual could either create a new belief or alter his/her behaviours (Metin & Camgoz, 2011) or create a new belief. R30 (female, 19) reported that “It would give me an uncomfortable feeling when downloading illegal songs, since I thought I should have bought the legal copies, but I didn’t”. According to this respondent, she is experiencing a tension as a result of her contradictory beliefs toward music piracy. In this case, the respondents could ease her tension either through creating a new belief:

“Everyone is downloading, so it might be OK for me to download. Downloading songs from the Internet is so easy and quick, it is even quicker than using the legal service. Although I would feel a little bit guilty when I do this, but nobody would know how I get my music files. I mean, no one is monitoring our Internet activities and what you have downloaded using the Internet. Besides, it is OK for your friends know that you get these songs from Tieba or Weibo, because they might have done the same thing. It is the quality of the music files that matters, not the way you get them. Sometimes my friends even share their music files with me just because they get them before official release or because the music files are of great quality.”

[R30, Female, 19)]

Cognitive Evaluations. Cognitive evaluations are the beliefs and thoughts music consumers associate with music piracy behaviours. The cognitive evaluations of attitudes toward music

piracy of these “mixed tape” music consumers are mainly negative ones. First, around half of the respondents mentioned that downloading illegal music products would give artists unfair treatments [e.g., “Producers and artists have devoted their time and money in creating music works, I think fighting piracy is for the protection toward this group of artists” R34, female, 27]. Some respondents have also considered the negative impact of music piracy on the sustainable development of the online music industry in China [e.g., “(Music piracy) would significantly affect artists’ creativity”, R21, male, 25]. Music consumers also stated that music piracy would not encourage artists to write songs, so we would have increasingly less good music to enjoy with ever-decreasing music quality. The negative cognitive evaluations toward music piracy are the evidence or the result of music consumer’s involvement in the music industry as they start to consider artists’ welfare and the sustainable development of the industry. Some music consumers would have both positive and negative feelings toward conducting music piracy:

“It is so hard for me to say whether download illegal music files from the Internet is good or bad as this is a quite complex issue to think about. For the artists and other stakeholders such as the record labels and the online music platform, it might be bad as if we are downloading, they might get less income to pay the copyright holders. However, downloading is not all bad, some people in China are just not used to use these legal services, not to say asking them to pay for some untouchable digital albums. In this situation, they could only listen to the songs through downloading from other illegal sites, and only in this way (i.e. music downloading) can they have access to the songs. This might be good for the artist because the music consumers who download their songs can also listen to their songs, and these consumers might go to the artists’ live performance or even buy the tangible CDs.”

[(R13, male, 26)]

4.5.2 Subjective Norms of Music Piracy Behaviours: The Impact of Descriptive Subjective Norms and Normative Ambiguity

According to previous studies, an individual's subjective norms toward an object could be categorized into descriptive subjective norms and injunctive subjective norms (Cialdini et al., 1990). A higher level of subjective norms can lead to higher intentions of conducting a focal behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Descriptive subjective norms refer to the observations on others' actual behaviours regarding an object, while injunctive subjective norms come from the explicit request of others on how one should behave in terms of a focal behaviour. Therefore, these perceived norms could also be interpreted as the individual's perceived appropriateness of his or her behaviour and in the current study, the perceived appropriateness of music piracy behaviours.

Descriptive Subjective Norms of Music Piracy. Mixed tape music consumers may observe both positive and negative behaviours toward music piracy from others and generate both positive and negative subjective norms of music piracy. The interviewees reported that they have widely observed music piracy behaviours from their social referents (i.e., their family members or close friends) [e.g., "My family members would never pay for music, they are so used to downloading music files from illegal sources on the Internet and it would be so hard for them to change their behaviours", R11, female, 27]. These observations on others' music piracy behaviour may increase the intention to conduct music piracy since they might feel that music piracy is somehow socially acceptable as many of their family members and friends are pirating instead of paying for music products.

Some respondents also stated that they have observed anti-piracy behaviours from their social referents. For example, R30 (female, 19) stated that "Many of my classmates are using legal streaming services and a lot of them are using paid services". It is interesting to have noticed that both R2 (male, 23) and R4 (female, 32) claimed that their awareness toward copyright protection has been strengthened by their experiences of studying abroad. R2 was educated in the U.K. for his bachelor's and master's study. He stated that "At first, I have (sic) no feelings (toward music piracy), but now I feel terrible when pirating music files because I didn't respect their copyrights. It is the shift in the understanding of the cultural industry brought by studying abroad that

changed my mind". Also, R4, a white-collar Canadian-educated Chinese female who is currently working in Suzhou, pointed out that:

"When I was studying abroad, everyone respected copyright, and we attached great importance to copyright protection issues. We were shocked by the prices of books when we needed to purchase our own copies. In Canada, a textbook would cost you 500 RMB, and in China, you can buy the same book with less than 50 RMB, although the quality might be different. Things like text books and audio CDs are much more expensive compared to the price in China, I think this is another reflection of Canadian's copyright awareness as seen commonly in Western countries. At that time, my friends are all paying for those books and CDs, no one was downloading illegal versions. So, when we come back to China, it feels natural for us to pay for the online music services. The average price of a digital album on Chinese online music platforms is about 20 RMB, it is much cheaper than a tangible CD in Canada, which may cost you like 150 RMB. So, I think the major issue here is the public awareness toward the intellectual copyright protection, if the general public respect the fact that intellectual property is important to the copyright holder, it might be easier for them to pay. Maybe the online music platforms could design some educational programmes to the consumers to let them understand the importance of protecting the intellectual property rights."

[(R4, female, 32)]

Mixed tape music consumers' observations on others' anti-piracy behaviours may encourage music consumers to use available legal services. In China, from an individual's perspective, it seems that some music consumers regard consuming legal online music service as a kind symbolic consumption that raises awareness of his or her own self-identity in the same way as the consumption of other products such as luxury or tailor-made products does.

Consumption decisions are of great importance as identity is represented by clothing and accessories, for example (Escalas & Bettman, 2005). This could be explained by the Self-Brand

connection consumers wish to build in order to be “accepted”. R31, who is a white-collar worker, stated that “I am paying for the streaming service (Netease Music), because almost all my colleagues are using it. Using paid services instead of pirating would show others your respect to music copyright”. Using a symbolic brand (i.e., using paid service from a legal streaming platform) may help certain music consumers to show their status or values through social comparison. This kind of social comparison, which may be more salient in a working context, may encourage music consumers to enrol in legal services instead of conducting piracy.

Normative Ambiguity of Music Piracy. One interesting insight from the data is that normative ambiguity is widely observed from the respondents. *Normative ambiguity*, in the context of music product acquisitions, refers to the situation where music consumers are unclear about whether his or her social referents approve music piracy or not. There are two factors contributing to normative ambiguity. First, respondents reported that they seldom discuss this music piracy issue with their social referents. This lack of focused social interactions with their referents makes it difficult to retrieve information on their referents’ attitudes toward music piracy. Moreover, respondents also observed the insensibility of music copyright protection from their referents [e.g., “I don’t think they would care about this (music copyright protection), it could be difficult for them to understand why they should pay for music products or services”, R10, female, 25]. This is perhaps evidence that their referents may not be able to deliver injunctive messages with an explicit request on how one should behave in terms of music product acquisition.

In the analysis of the interview transcripts and memos recorded during these interviews, we notice a lack of information on these mixed tape music consumers’ injunctive norms of music piracy. Typical answers to questions inquiring significant others’ opinions on music piracy involve uncertainty (answers with “I don’t know their opinions” or “I don’t think they would consider this (copyright) issue”). The uncertainty may be caused by ambiguity in terms of what normative beliefs are:

“Well, this is a difficult question to answer. We (i.e. the respondent and his family or friends) barely talk about this topic (music piracy), and nobody cares how you get your music files. So, it is the same that I don’t know how they think about the behaviour, some might be OK with it, and I think a small portion of my friend might say no, but I am really not sure about this. No one would stop your music downloading behaviours, it is quite weird if somebody does it.”

[(R9, male, 27)

The issue of normative ambiguity affects both the interviewees and their social referents used to form subjective norms. If social referents encounter normative ambiguity, they are no longer qualified to serve as referents. The individuals themselves are no longer able to retrieve relevant injunctive messages from these referents in terms of music piracy behaviours. Hence, the impact of subjective norms in predicting behavioural intentions might somehow be moderated by the emergence of normative ambiguity.

Unlike descriptive subjective norms, which are retrieved through observing others’ behaviour, injunctive norms are retrieved through others’ explicit requests on a focal behaviour (Melnyk et al., 2011). In their research into the relationship between cognitive deliberation and the effect of descriptive and injunctive norms, the authors argued that a decreased influence of injunctive norms on behavioural intentions was the result of cognitive deliberations on such norms. However, the research finding is built on the assumption that the decision makers hold a clear understanding of what injunctive norms are, in that they are exposed to an explicit injunctive message in the experimental process. In the current study, we found that if the injunctive message is not properly communicated to the music consumers from their social referents, it would be hard for them to form injunctive subjective norms toward music piracy behaviours. Hence, the presence of normative ambiguity (i.e., if an individual is not clear what is approved from their referents) may weaken the formation of injunctive subjective norms and in turn can lead to a decreased influence of this kind of subjective norms on behavioural intentions.

4.5.3 Perceived Behavioural Control of Music Piracy: Information Resources and Information Security Concern

In the third part of the interview, the respondents' perceived behavioural control of music piracy behaviours was assessed and discussed. First, respondents were asked questions regarding the perceived difficulty of conducting music piracy. Most of the respondents reported that the piracy procedure is easy, and very seldom did they encounter technical problems in retrieving illegal music files. As R34 stated, the web search engine makes it easy to look for illegal music files as many music consumers are willing to share purchased music products through P2P networks. This high availability of illegal music files on the Internet would result in music consumer's higher perceived behavioural control toward music piracy, which in turn leads to higher piracy intentions:

"In China, it is quite easy for us to search for illegal music files on the Internet. It is even easier if you are an active user of Baidu Tieba, where people would buy the CDs and share the music files on it. I can always find the music files I want from it and you can ask someone to upload it for you. They are willing to do that, and I don't actually know why. Maybe for downloading these music files, you would need a little bit of IT knowledge. For example, some of the music files are stored in the cloud storage services, and you need to retrieve the files with a password from the music sharer. But overall, it is quite easy and fast to get what you want from the Internet."

[(R5, male, 31)]

Apart from the high availability of music files on the Internet, respondents have shown their concerns toward the quality and safety of the pirated music files. R10 (female, 25) pointed out that when downloading songs from illegal sharing websites, it is necessary to download useless software and therefore computer viruses become more common. The quality and safety concerns would contribute to the reduced intentions to conduct music piracy as legal streaming services could provide music consumers with music of high quality and information security.

Insights	First Order Concepts	Second Order Themes	Aggregate Dimensions
R3: "Conducting music piracy makes it convenient to get access to some songs. You could have all your favourite songs in one playlist, but you may not able to do this on legal platforms as no single platform has license from all record labels."	Convenience	Behavioural Evaluations	Attitudes toward Digital Piracy
R4: "It is good that piracy can help us save money, as we may not want to buy the digital albums. Normally there are around 10 songs in a digital album, and you might only like 2 or 3 songs of them. In this situation, you would feel like you have to buy something that you don't really like."	Financial Benefit		
R19: "Music piracy helps me to get access to the songs that are unavailable on these (streaming) platforms. Sometimes the songs I wish to listen to are not available on the online music platform due to the copyright issues or the government control."	Access to Unavailable Contents		
R13: "Music piracy can allow more music consumers to listen to the songs, maybe these consumers would become one of the fans, which in turn creates value for the artists."	Sampling Effect		
R8: "Sometimes the piracy experience is not so good, especially when the downloaded music files are of low quality. When you compare the high-quality music with the low-quality illegal music files, you would find where the differences are."	Low Quality of Illegal Music Files		
R1: "The process of conducting music piracy could be described as pleasant as you would have a sense of accomplishment when you find the song you need on the Internet."	Sense of Accomplishment		
R8: "I feel bad when I pirate music, it's like I am doing something bad to the artist as well as the music industry as a whole, they have put tremendous effort in composing, writing lyrics and recording."	Guilty		
R14: "Music piracy can be bad for the music industry and the artists, as they are making a living on this (legal distribution of music products). If we don't pay for the music, they would not have sufficient income to support their creative works, and we would have no new songs to listen to. This is also bad for the online music platforms."	Hinder Industry Development	Cognitive Evaluations	Subjective Norms of Digital Piracy
R34: "Music piracy is not good as it would discourage artists to create new songs, which in turn would result in reduced number of songs we can listen to from these artists."	Discourage Music Artists		
R10: "When it comes to a song that needs payment before downloading, my friends always find illegal versions and share with each other. For the songs that you could listen to without buying	Observations on IPR Violating Behaviours	Descriptive Norms of Digital Piracy	

<i>memberships, they may download or listen to these songs online."</i>			
<i>R4: "I think music piracy is a natural thing for the general public. No one would be punished if he or she download music from illegal sources. Download music from the Internet does not violate laws, right?"</i>			
<i>R18: "They (family members or close friends) don't care about it (music copyright) at all! For them, listening to the music is not an essential thing in their life."</i>	Observations on Lack of IPR Protection Awareness		
<i>R25: "They probably would laugh at me if they know that I pay for streaming services. It seems insane to pay for music and most of my friend download songs from the Internet, and it is really easy to do that."</i>	Observations on Anti-piracy Behaviours		
<i>R8: "One of my friend puts a lot of attention on protecting copyright, he never downloads illegal music files. In addition, he would always encourage us to adopt legal music services and tell us the benefits of becoming a paid user of one of the streaming music services in China."</i>	Observations on Anti-piracy Behaviours		
<i>R33: "Most of my friends are using legal streaming services, and many of them are paid streamer. This may due to the fact that they really love to listen to the music, and the membership fee is not high."</i>			
<i>R26: "We barely talked about this issue (music copyright protection). It seems nobody would care whether you download songs illegally. Listening to the music is a rather personal thing, and we would not discuss with others of how we get these songs in your phone or music players."</i>	Lack of Focused Social Interaction		
<i>R30: "Actually I don't care about what they think, it is solely my own decision on how to acquire music products. Why would discuss this with them?"</i>	Lack of Focused Social Interaction	Normative Ambiguity	
<i>R1: "I don't know how my friends think about music piracy, but I would pay for the music I like, it's just a personal choice, and I don't really care much about how they think about it (music piracy)."</i>	Lack of Information on Referents' Attitudes	Normative Ambiguity	
<i>R10: "It (copyright protection) really doesn't matter for them. They just need music to listen to, no matter how and where the music file is retrieved."</i>	Referents' Insensibility of Copyright Protection		
<i>R34: "It's not difficult at all! I am not fluent in computers, but searching on Baidu makes everything easier, including downloading music from illegal sources. Most of my MP3 files were retrieved in this way, you just need a little bit of computer knowledge."</i>	High Availability of Illegal Information resources	Perceived Control over Information Resources	Perceived Behavioural Control toward Digital Piracy

R15: "Overall, it seems easy to me downloading songs from the Internet (illegal information resources). It's just sometimes difficult to find a music file of high quality."	<i>Quality Concerns</i>		
R17: "It's not difficult at all, unless you are looking for music files with high quality. Most music files that were uploaded onto the Internet are of low quality, but if you get these music files from legal resources, you can have high-quality music files."			
R2: "In terms of concerns, sometimes it is hard to find songs of satisfactory quality, and the illegal music files may contain computer virus. I remember that when I was in my high school, I have done something stupid that my music player crashed after I put in a music file downloaded from the Internet."	<i>Information Security Concerns</i>	Perceived Control over Information Security	

Table 2 Example Insights and Coding Procedure

4.6 Discussion

4.6.1 General Conclusion

The current study explored music consumers' IPR violating intentions in a new industrial context with streaming technologies dominating the market, and with a specific focus on mixed tape music consumers (i.e., music consumers who are pirates and streamers at the same time). As argued in the previous literature, this group of mixed tape music consumers is largely ignored in the extant research (Sinclair & Green, 2016a). By investigating this group of consumers, both the pros and cons of conducting digital piracy behaviours in terms of consumer attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are examined. More specifically, the affective, behavioural and cognitive elements of consumers' attitudes toward music piracy are identified, in addition to their descriptive subjective norms and perceived control of information resources and information security associated with music piracy behaviours. In addition, normative ambiguity is widely observed in the respondents, and this may influence their piracy intentions and moderate the effect of injunctive subjective norms. The qualitative approach adopted by the current study enables the researchers to conduct in-depth investigations on the antecedents of digital piracy intentions in the new industrial context with streaming technology dominating the

market. The insights of the study provide both theoretical and practical implications in terms of a more comprehensive understanding on digital piracy intentions and how to encourage consumers to enrol in legal services. The proposed theoretical framework is illustrated in Figure 14 below.

4.6.2 Theoretical Implications

By taking a qualitative approach, the current study complements previous research in quantifying the correlational relationships among key variables predicting consumers' digital piracy intentions (see Chiou et al., 2005; Culiberg, Koklic, Vida, & Bajde, 2016; Fleming, Watson, Patouris, Bartholomew, & Zizzo, 2017), which in turn advances the understanding of why music consumers who are using legal music services would choose to engage in music piracy behaviours. In a meta-analysis of the driving factors of digital piracy, the result indicated that music piracy intentions could not be predicted by subjective norms (Fleming et al., 2017). They argued that the reason underlying this finding are that consumers are not paying too much attention to referents' approval or disapproval in terms of music piracy. However, the current research shed new light on this from a normative perspective arguing that the presence of normative ambiguity in emerging markets may invalidate the effects of injunctive subjective norms. Existing studies on the effects of subjective norms on behavioural intentions commonly asked respondents with questions on the degree of perceived approval of focal behaviours from an individual's social referents. There were no opportunities for respondents to determine whether their social referents approve the focal behaviour or not in existing quantitative studies.

According to the findings of the current study, normative ambiguity may be contributed to by the lack of focused social interactions and music consumers' observations on others' insensibility on IPR protection. Chinese music consumers have been conducting music piracy without any legal sanctions for a relatively long period, and just as it was reported by the respondents, it may be challenging for some music consumers in China to form the normative belief that conducting

music piracy is wrong. Hence, the close friends as well as family members of an individual may not be able to deliver injunctive messages against music piracy to music consumers. As argued by Fleming et al. (2017), music consumers may refer to their own attitudes and evaluations of the appropriateness of music piracy behaviours to a greater extent than others' opinions, when these music consumers experience normative ambiguity, they are unable to receive injunctive messages in terms of music piracy and thus would rely on their descriptive subjective norms (i.e. their observations on others' behaviours in terms of music acquisition) and their own attitudes toward music piracy. Therefore, we propose:

Proposition 1: *Normative ambiguity (i.e., you don't know whether your social referents approve or disapprove in terms of the focal behaviour) is widely observed in mixed tape music consumers in China. The lack of focused social interactions between music consumers and their social referents and music consumers' observations on others' insensitivity of IPR protection may contribute to this.*

Normative ambiguity may be positively associated with digital piracy intentions both directly and indirectly. Previous investigations into the effectiveness of norm-based behavioural change revealed the fact that if an individual learns that a certain behaviour has a high commonness, he/she would feel that the focal behaviour is less bad (Mollen, Rimal, Ruiter, Jang, & Kok, 2013). From the public good perspective, the learning of the commonness of a focal behaviour would have the power to turn a good actor to a free-rider as they know that the negative outcomes of this behaviour would be widely diffused (McAdams, 1997). Therefore, considering the digital music market in China and regarding online music products as public goods, the majority of music consumers have been conducting music piracy for a long time, it is easy for an individual to develop beliefs such as "There are a lot of people downloading music files from illegal sources, so it should be fine if I do the same". Those who are high in normative ambiguity may not have a comprehensive understanding of whether their chosen social referents approve the focal behaviour (music piracy), and as a result, the social pressure of not performing the behaviour

imposed by these referents on individual's behavioural intention would be weakened. In other words, consumers high in normative ambiguity are unclear about what the injunctive norms are that would cause higher music piracy intentions, as they have a lower chance of receiving injunctive messages against music piracy. At the same time, due to a higher level of perceived appropriateness of music piracy, an individual is more likely to possess favourable feelings toward music piracy, as would be reflected by a higher level in attitudes, which in turn would result in higher music piracy intentions.

Therefore, based on the findings of the current research, we propose:

Proposition 2: *Normative ambiguity may be positively associated with digital piracy intentions as music consumers may not be able to receive injunctive messages against digital piracy behaviours, and a portion of their effect may be mediated through music consumers attitudes and descriptive subjective norms. However, descriptive subjective norms facilitating digital piracy behaviours are widely observed.*

Based on the findings relevant to normative ambiguity, it is indicated that the impact of social norms in consumers' decisions in adopting a novel technology (i.e. streaming services) should be assessed from two dimensions, the clarity dimension and the strength dimension, especially for consumers from emerging markets. The *clarity* dimension of a social norm measures an individual's level of clarity of a perceived social norm; while the *strength* dimension measures an individual's willingness to conform with certain social norms. Therefore, the social norms perceived by an individual could be categorized into four different conditions as illustrated in Figure 13. The social norms classified in the top-right quadrant should have the highest influencing power on an individual's behavioural intentions, while those classified in the bottom-left quadrant should be the least influential ones. Hence, the behavioural interventions based on social norms should be designed accordingly in order to achieve better intervention outcomes. Future studies could further explore the effective norm-based behavioural interventions according to this two-dimensional approach in categorizing an individual's perceived social

norms. For instance, future studies could try to address the research question whether delivering descriptive messages about others' behaviours could result in better behavioural intervention outcomes if the perceived social norms are weak (i.e., the individual is not clear about the social norm of the focal behaviour) and strong (i.e., the individual has a strong motivation in conforming with the social norm of the focal behaviour).

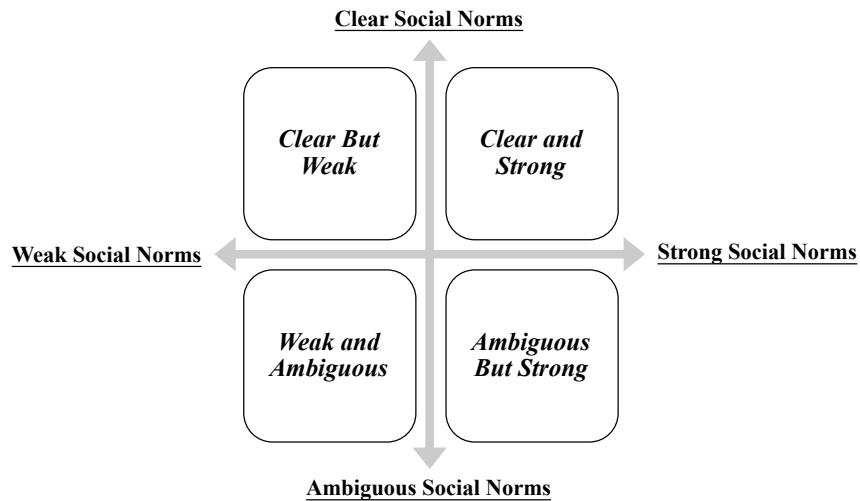


Figure 13 The Two-dimensional Approach in Categorizing Perceived Social Norms

Apart from normative ambiguity from the normative perspective, the current research also identified the formation of both positive and negative consumer attitudes toward music piracy. Mixed tape music consumers' positive attitudes toward music piracy mainly come from their behavioural evaluations on past music piracy experiences. The convenience, financial benefit, access to otherwise unavailable songs, and sampling effects provided by music piracy behaviours are positive behavioural elements of consumers' attitude facilitating digital piracy behaviours, while the low quality of pirated music files becomes the impeding behavioural element of the attitude toward music piracy. Meanwhile, mixed tape music consumers showed contradictory affective evaluations over music piracy. Some music consumers would describe the process of music piracy as a journey to achieve a sense of accomplishment, while some respondents feel guilty when conducting music piracy. As for the cognitive evaluations of music piracy, mixed tape music consumers would associate music piracy behaviours with beliefs that "Music piracy

would hinder the sustainable development of music piracy” and “Music piracy would lead to reduced creativity of artists”. The cognitive evaluations of music piracy behaviours may be the driving factors that encourage these mixed tape music consumers to use legal streaming services. The decomposition of mixed tape music consumers attitudes toward music piracy supports the trisection of attitudes into the affective, behavioural and cognitive elements (Breckler, 1984). Therefore, we propose:

Proposition 3: *Music consumers’ attitudes toward music piracy could be decomposed into three categories, namely affective elements (sense of accomplishment and guilt), behavioural elements (convenience, financial benefits, access to unavailable songs, sampling effect and low quality of pirated music files), and cognitive elements (hinderance of industrial development and discouragement of music artists).*

In assessing mixed tape music consumers’ perceived behavioural control over music piracy behaviours, we found that their behavioural control could be contributed by their perceived control over information resources and perceived control over information security. One of the concerns of conducting music piracy is the information resources (i.e., illegal music files), due to the high availability of such content on the Internet, most consumers claimed that it is easy to conduct music piracy. However, the quality of pirated music files is sometimes dissatisfaction as reported by the respondents. Another concern is the information security associated with music piracy, as the downloaded music files may contain computer viruses. The high availability of illegal information resources on the Internet may result in higher piracy intentions, while music consumers’ concern toward music file quality and information security may result in reduced piracy intentions and higher intentions to enrol in legal streaming services. Therefore, we propose that,

Proposition 4: *Mixed tape music consumers’ perceived behavioural control over music piracy behaviours could be decomposed into two categories, namely*

perceived control over information resources (high availability of illegal music information resources and low quality of pirated music files) and perceived control over information security (computer viruses embedded in pirated music files).

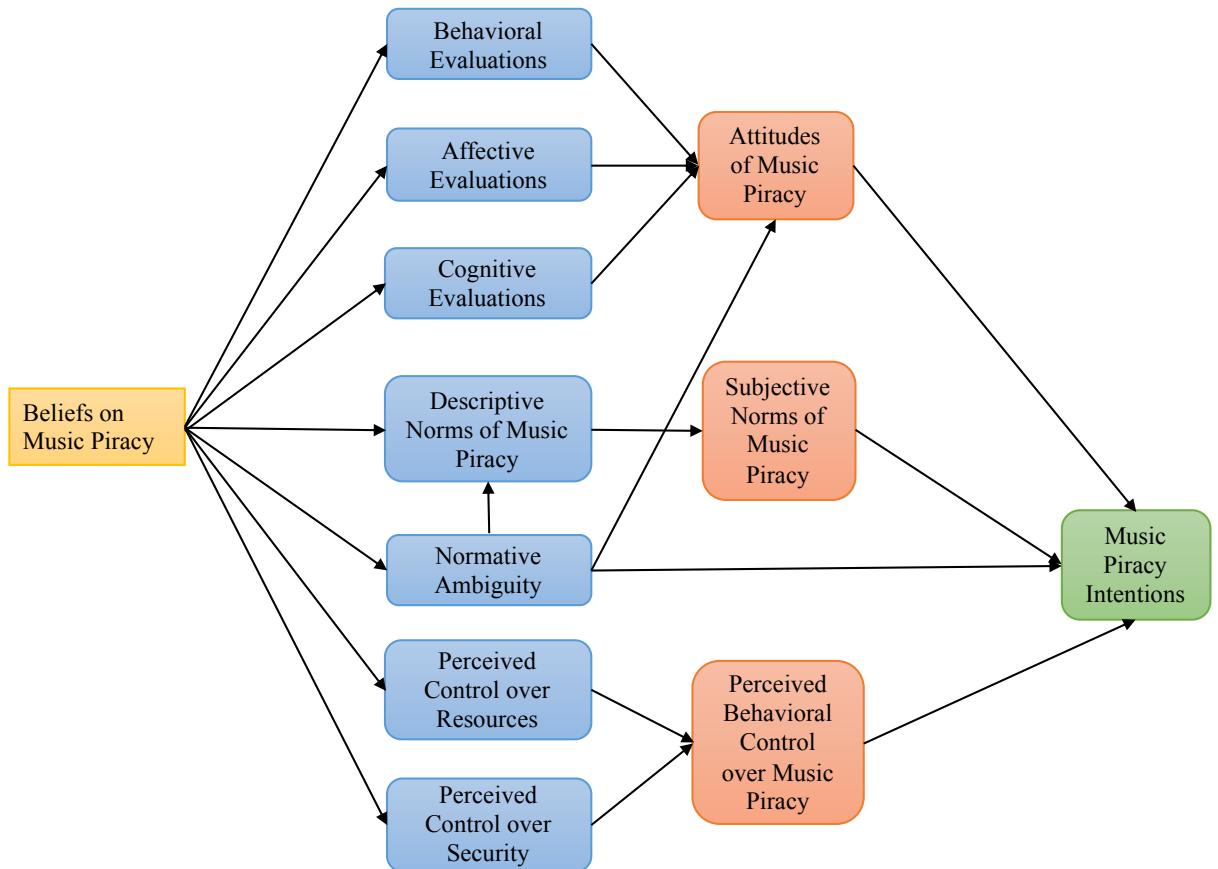


Figure 14 Proposed Theoretical Framework of Music Piracy Behaviours

4.6.3 Managerial Implications

Based on the above propositions, the current research also advances the understanding of music piracy behaviours in a new industrial context from a practical perspective. Combatting digital piracy and encouraging consumers to enrol in either free ad-based and paid streaming services are of great significance for the sustainable development of the digital entertainment industry especially for firms operating in emerging markets. By taking a qualitative approach, the current

study gives more insight into how attitudes are formed in terms of digital piracy behaviours, how music consumers' music acquisition decisions are influenced by their social referents, and in turn the constitution of their perceived behavioural control over digital piracy in an emerging market. Corresponding business strategies and social policies could be designed according to these findings.

Improving IPR Awareness through Norm-Based Interventions. Following the analysis on normative ambiguity as described in Propositions 1 and 2, one way to reduce IPR violating intentions is to reduce normative ambiguity in terms of digital piracy among consumers. This might be achieved by designing and implementing marketing programs to enhance IPR protection awareness and encourage focused social interactions on this topic, especially through the effective use of social media and networks. Moreover, based on the finding that descriptive norms are widely observed among respondents and may have a strong predictive power on their digital piracy behaviours, relevant norm-based behavioural interventions (Miller & Prentice, 2016) aiming at reducing piracy intentions could be implemented. More specifically, it is suggested by the Theory of Planned Behaviour that higher level of descriptive norms leads to higher behavioural intentions. Communicating descriptive messages to consumers that others are using legal services/products might encourage digital pirates to enrol in such legal services and encourage mixed tape music consumers to use streaming services more frequently instead of conducting digital piracy.

Encouraging the Adoption of Legal Services. According to Proposition 3, the cognitive evaluations of music piracy seem to be the driving factors which encourage mixed tape music consumers to enrol in legal streaming music services, as they perceive music piracy as a kind of behaviour that hinders the sustainable development of the music industry and discourages music artists. As argued by attitude scholars, in non-Western cultures, the normative process plays a more important role in shaping individuals' attitudes (Albarracin & Shavitt, 2018). Designing norm-based behavioural intentions regarding the negative impact of music piracy on the industry and its artists may result in better outcomes in cultivating consumers' attitude against digital

piracy which in turn would encourage them to engage in legal services in emerging markets. Proposition 4 is insightful for marketers in the digital IPR-related industry as it reveals the potential appealing attributes that legal services could offer. Based on the findings in terms of music consumers' concern toward information resources and information security, an emphasis on the comprehensiveness of the music library, as well as the high quality and information security of music files within the platform could enable music consumers to perceive higher level of behavioural control over adopting streaming music technologies, which may possibly reduce their piracy intentions as they would perceive legal services as potential alternatives to music piracy that provides them with comprehensive, secure and high-quality digital content.

4.6.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

The current research adopts a qualitative approach in exploring the antecedents of Chinese music consumers' music piracy behaviours. It has been targeted at a largely ignored group of music consumers in the previous piracy-related research; mixed tape music consumers (i.e., music consumers who are pirates and streamers at the same time). 36 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted. Investigations into this group of music consumers revealed new insights for academics and practitioners to advance their understandings of IPR violating behaviours from a social-psychological perspective.

The research has revealed important insights into music piracy behaviours, including the formation of consumer attitudes toward digital piracy, how consumer decisions in acquiring information goods are influenced by their social referents as well as how their perceived behavioural controls over digital piracy are identified under the guidance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour. In addition, normative ambiguity, which captures the degree to which an individual is unclear about whether his or her music piracy behaviour would be approved by their social referents, is identified as an emerging variable that might affect music consumers' piracy intentions.

Despite the theoretical and practical implications of the current research, it is not without its limitations. The current research is exploratory in nature; therefore, a qualitative approach is

applied in the investigative process. However, the generalisability of the qualitative findings is not assessed. Therefore, in future research endeavours, researchers could design and implement a quantitative study based on the qualitative insights of the current research. In addition to the proposed theoretical framework for explaining music piracy behaviours that could be tested in a quantitative manner, the details of the quotes or statements of the research participants could be used in the process of scale development of the emerging variable (i.e. normative ambiguity). To further enhance the generalisability and reliability of the research findings, researchers could also conduct a similar study on other unethical consumer behaviours within the digital domain. For example, researchers could conduct in-depth interviews with users of legal and illegal video streaming services to explore their intentions to conduct other piracy behaviours such as movie piracy.

Another future research direction could be to further explore the antecedents of normative ambiguity among Chinese music consumers. According to the current research, normative ambiguity in terms of music piracy might be induced by the music consumers' lack of focused social interaction with social referents, their lack of information on referents' attitudes toward music piracy behaviour and their observations on the referents' insensibility of copyright protection. Therefore, future research could attempt to identify and confirm the antecedents of normative ambiguity as it would reveal important theoretical and practical implications for piracy research and control.

Chapter 5

Study 2: Normative Ambiguity Surrounding Socially Responsible Online Behaviours: Insights from Mixed Tape Music Consumers

5.1 Introduction

Deciding the way to acquire digital products or services in a less-developed digital entertainment market with insufficient awareness of copyright protection can be ambiguous. This ambiguity could be generated by uncertainty in music consumers' perception on the legitimacy of his or her music acquisition behaviour or the extent to which the behaviour is socially acceptable. Due to the insufficient awareness of copyright protection among Chinese music consumers and those from other emerging markets, it might be difficult for them to possess a clear normative belief toward music piracy behaviours. There are two reasons for this: First, the term "intellectual property rights" was coined in the Western world. It provoked discussion by scholars in this context but little attention has been given to markets where consumers might experience difficulties understanding what copyright is and why it needs protection. In addition, Chinese music consumers have long been enjoying the "free" music services until recently the Chinese government has posited the strictest regulation on the online music industry in late 2015. This requires all service providers within the industry to stop using and distributing any illegal music files.

Facilitated by the development in information and communication technologies (ICTs), music piracy has then emerged as one kind of socially responsible online behaviour that threatens the sustainable growth of the digital entertainment industry. However, understanding of these socially undesirable online behaviours (i.e. music piracy, movie piracy, etc.) are far from comprehensive, in that research findings on consumers' perceived social norms surrounding digital piracy are somewhat controversial. According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are the three crucial factors leading to certain behavioural outcomes (Ajzen 1985, 1991). The Theory of Planned Behaviour, in addition to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), have been widely integrated into research in predicting and explaining human behaviour in terms of healthcare (Armitage, 2005; Montanaro & Bryan, 2014), technology adoption (Mital et al., 2017), pro-environmental behaviours (Cordano & Frieze, 2000; Greaves, Zibarras, & Stride, 2013) and various consumer behaviours.

TPB has also been used as the theoretical framework in digital piracy research and showed satisfactory explaining power (Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008; Yoon, 2011). TPB was said to open additional constructs to the original framework if the additional construct could help in increasing the explaining power of the model (T.-I. Han & Stoel, 2017). Scholars found that adding additional constructs such as moral obligation (Yoon, 2011) and self-identity (Goles et al., 2008) would increase the variance explained in their samples and research into socially responsible consumer behaviours. According to extant studies, the impact of social norms varies with different level of consensus about these norms. Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of social norms from an ambiguity perspective, which is designed to capture the degree of consensus towards these social norms.

In a recent report by IFPI, the concern of the online music service providers in China is how to convert their non-subscribing users to become paid subscribers in the streaming music business model (IFPI, 2017). Obviously, this transformation from free to paid subscription will require the perception that music products are copyright protected and music piracy should not be condoned. According to the IFPI report (IFPI, 2017), at present, the conversion rate is still at a low level when compared to other markets (In China, the average number is about 3%, while for Spotify, the number could reach around 40%), reflecting that only a relatively smaller portion of the music consumers in China is holding that belief. The market players might be able to organize marketing campaigns or deliver message appeals to educate music consumers. As indicated in the previous research (Miller & Prentice, 2016), one crucial assumption for this kind of norm-based behavioural intervention to be effective, is that the decision makers should choose their social referents according to different types of decisions to make, and the effectiveness of this kind of behavioural intervention depends on the frequency and motivations of the social interactions between you and your social referents (Morris & Liu, 2015).

But when we take one step backwards, what will happen if the music consumer is unclear about whether their chosen referents approve the focal behaviour or not? This might be the case in China and many other less-developed music markets, for the reason that music consumers in

these markets might not be able to reach a clarity in the normative beliefs concerning digital piracy. As a Westerner, you might be experiencing no difficulties in saying that music piracy is wrong, as you have been educating to protect and respect copyright and have been exposed to an environment where conducting music piracy would be given legal sanctions. Things are different in China, or any other countries where the topic of copyright protection is regarded as not relevant or not important enough to the consumers. In other words, you may not be able to tell whether your chosen referents (most likely to be your close friends and family members) approves music piracy behaviours or not.

This study aims to contribute to the literature by empirically quantifying the impact of this normative ambiguity on behavioural intentions to conduct digital piracy behaviours. In addition, the study also examines the impact of injunctive norms from the dimensions of both strength and clarity. The remainder of this paper reviews the literature on related theoretical frameworks and constructs. Research methods and data analysis results are discussed as are the theoretical contributions made by the paper and its managerial implications.

5.2 Theoretical Foundations and Hypotheses Development

5.2.1 Antecedents Predicting Piracy Intentions

When investigating people's intentions of conducting a certain behaviour, the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is often used as a theoretical framework. Proposed by Ajzen (1985), TPB is developed from its preceding version, the theory of reasoned action (TRA) by adding perceived behavioural control as one of the factors influencing people's intention of performing a certain behaviour. The addition of perceived behavioural control was intended to enhance the model's predictive power in the decision-making process in terms of behaviours that the subject has insufficient volitional control over (Ajzen 1991). The theory of trying and the theory of goal-directed behaviour were also proposed to cover behaviours in which people have limited control

over the outcomes (Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1990). In their model of trying, limited control over the behaviour outcomes was designed to be captured by self-efficacy rather than perceived behaviour control in TPB. The distinctive advantage of TPB is that the theory is considered to be more parsimonious, while TPB has been shown to efficiently improve the predictive power in human behaviour related research questions (Ajzen, 1991) in a broad range of disciplines and fields.

Ajzen and Fishbein defined attitudes as “a person’s general feeling of favourableness for that behaviour” (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980, p.54). Attitude is assumed to have a positive effect on behavioural intentions. In the context of music piracy, this theory indicates that an individual with more favourable feelings toward music piracy behaviour would be more likely to conduct music piracy. This leads us to the following hypothesis:

H1: *Attitudes toward music piracy behaviour are positively associated with piracy intentions of music consumers in China (+).*

Subjective norms refer to the social influence in the form of ‘word-of-mouth’, especially the words from family members and close friends (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Subjective norms, according to the definition, could be interpreted as an individual’s perceived legitimacy of the focal behaviour, varied with different level of social pressure towards the focal behaviour (Bagozzi, Wong, Abe, & Bergami, 2000). Subjective norms were argued to have two dimensions, namely descriptive norms and injunctive norms. The injunctive norms capture the perceived degree of approval or disapproval (i.e., of what others approve or disapprove), while the descriptive norms capture the prevalence of the behaviour itself (i.e., what others do) (Cialdini et al., 1990).

The descriptive norms and injunctive norms have different mechanisms of motivating a certain behaviour. Descriptive norms give an individual the information regarding others’ behaviours, which in turn provides an informational value to the decision-maker in making decisions in terms of a behaviour. However, injunctive norms involve an explicit request from the social referents

of a decision-maker informing the socially acceptable conducts in terms of a behaviour. According to the definition of descriptive norms, if a decision-maker perceives a high-level of descriptive norms towards music piracy behaviours, he or she would be more likely to engage in this behaviour as the behaviour is commonly observed among his or her social referents. Meanwhile, if a music consumer perceives a high-level of injunctive norms on music behaviour which indicates the fact that music piracy behaviour is generally acceptable by his or her social referents, he or she would also be more likely to engage in this behaviour.

Due to the different motivational sources of descriptive and injunctive norms on human social behaviour, it is imperative to examine the impact of different types of social norms separately to gain deeper insights into how music consumer's music acquisition decisions are affected by social context. Based on the abovementioned arguments, we therefore propose:

H2: Descriptive Norms about music piracy behaviour are positively associated with piracy intentions of music consumers in China (+).

H3: Injunctive Norms about music piracy behaviour are positively associated with piracy intentions of music consumers in China (+).

Perceived behavioural control, which is one's perceptions of technical barriers, or the perceived confidence of successfully conducting the focal behaviour, affect one's behavioural intention (Ajzen, 1985). This construct was added to the framework of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), as scholars had argued that TRA is insufficient, in that it failed to take into consideration the situations in which people do not have volitional control over whether or not to perform the behaviour (Ajzen 1991). It captures an individual's perceived confidence of successfully conducting the focal behaviour while taking into consideration the necessary facilitating resources, skills, and capabilities.

In terms of music piracy behaviours, the facilitating resources would be the fast development in information and communication technologies as well as the easily-accessible illegal resources for music files on the Internet. The skills required to conduct music piracy behaviour mainly involve the capability of using a computer, smartphones and Internet services such as search engine and online forums where illegal music files could be found. Previous research has confirmed the positive association between perceived behavioural control and intentions (Cordano & Frieze, 2000; Fleming et al., 2017). In the context of music piracy behaviours, if a music consumer is proficient in IT skills and knowledgeable about where to find such illegal and downloadable music files, he or she might be more likely to engage in music piracy behaviours. Therefore, according to the Theory of Planned Behaviour, we propose:

H4: *Perceived behavioural control toward music piracy behaviour is positively associated with piracy intentions of music consumers in China (+).*

5.2.2 Normative Ambiguity in Music Piracy

Drawing on Social Norms Theory, an individual's behavioural intentions are influenced by this individual's degree of understanding on what the "norms" are (Miller & Prentice, 2016). Therefore, the degree of consensus of such norms plays an important role on the predictive power of social norms. In previous research, normative ambiguity has been employed in psychological research into conflict and violence contexts (Horowitz & Schwartz, 1974). In their research, normative ambiguity was defined as the "absence of higher-order rules for reconciling contradictions between conflicting codes for conduct" (Horowitz & Schwartz, 1974, p.242). However, this was defined within a specific context of violence. Following this line of reasoning, the definition of normative ambiguity could be extended to cover a broader range of human behaviours. In this research, we define **normative ambiguity** as the degree to which an individual is ambiguous about whether his/her chosen referents approve the focal behaviour or not (i.e., the degree of consensus in terms of injunctive norms). In the specific context of music piracy behaviour in China, normative ambiguity might be questionable since the concept of copyright

did not originate in China and Chinese music consumers had “free” music services for years. The lack of social interactions with referents which focus on the topic of “music piracy” might also be a factor.

Regarding the theoretical framework of the Theory of Planned Behaviour, subjective norms are one of the influencing factors in predicting human behaviours. They capture the impact of social influence or pressure on an individual’s behavioural intentions (Ajzen 1991). According to Ajzen (1985), subjective norms capture the impact of individuals’ social referents on behavioural intentions. These social referents include important individuals or groups, including family members and close friends (Ajzen 1991). We argue that, one crucial assumption for these social referents to have an influence on decision-making is that the decision-maker must have a certain level of knowledge of whether these social referents approve the focal behaviour or not (i.e., whether one should conduct music piracy or not). While in China and other less-developed markets, intellectual property protection issues involved in the music acquisition process might be ambiguous given the fact that most music consumers are not paying for online music services. In this case, the normative ambiguity among music consumers might affect their intention to conduct music piracy.

Existing research on the impact of subjective norms on unethical consumer behaviour relevant to digital piracy is controversial. Some researchers have confirmed the significant impact of subjective norms (Morton & Koufteros, 2008; Yoon, 2011), while other researchers found that subjective norms are not a significant impactor on the intention of conducting piracy (Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008). In a recent review on norm-based behavioural interventions, when assessing risky behaviours, decision-makers tend to choose social referents when regarding social identity considerations, while for public goods consumption, they tended to choose referents who are physically and geographically close to decision makers. This perhaps indicates the effectiveness of subjective norms depends on the type of social referents, the social interactions an individual has with referents and the motivations of such kinds of social interactions (Miller & Prentice, 2016).

But what if the social referents chosen by the decision maker are not able to be helpful in forming decision-maker's normative beliefs possibly due to insufficient social interactions, inconsistent injunctive and descriptive information (e.g., someone said that music piracy is wrong but still download music illegally)? Following this line of reasoning, the perceived legitimacy of the focal behaviour might be affected by the normative ambiguity. Aimed at further investigation into the impact or predictive power of the subjective norms on behavioural intentions, more research is needed to uncover the functioning mechanism of subjective norms in decision making processes (Smith, 2015).

Previous investigations into the effectiveness of norm-based behavioural change revealed that if an individual learns that a certain behaviour has a high commonness, he/she would feel that the focal behaviour is less bad (Mollen et al., 2013). From the public good perspective, the learning of the commonness of a focal behaviour (i.e. digital piracy) would have the power to turn a good actor to a free-rider (i.e. someone who use the public goods without any payment) as they know that the negative outcomes of this behaviour would be widely diffused (McAdams, 1997). Therefore, considering the digital music market in China and regarding online music products as public goods, and that the majority of music consumers have been conducting music piracy for a long time, it is easy for an individual to develop beliefs such as "There are a lot of people downloading music files from illegal sources, so it should be fine if I do the same." Those that score high in normative ambiguity do not have a comprehensive understanding of whether their chosen social referents approve the focal behaviour (music piracy), and as a result, the social pressure of not performing the behaviour imposed by these referents on individual's behavioural intention would be weakened.

In other words, consumers high in normative ambiguity are unclear about what the injunctive norms are, would have high music piracy intentions, as they have a lower chance of receiving injunctive messages against music piracy. Therefore, the individual's perceived appropriateness of the focal behaviour might be higher, as reflected by a higher level of subjective norms. At the

same time, due to a higher level of perceived legitimacy of music piracy, an individual is more likely to possess a favourable feeling toward music piracy, as would be reflected by a higher level in attitudes. Hypothesis 5 addresses the potential mechanism that normative ambiguity would have an effect on behavioural intentions. the proposed theoretical framework is illustrated in Figure 15 below.

H5: Normative ambiguity is positively associated with behavioural intention to conduct music piracy (a), and this effect is mediated through attitudes (b), descriptive norms (c) and injunctive norms (d).

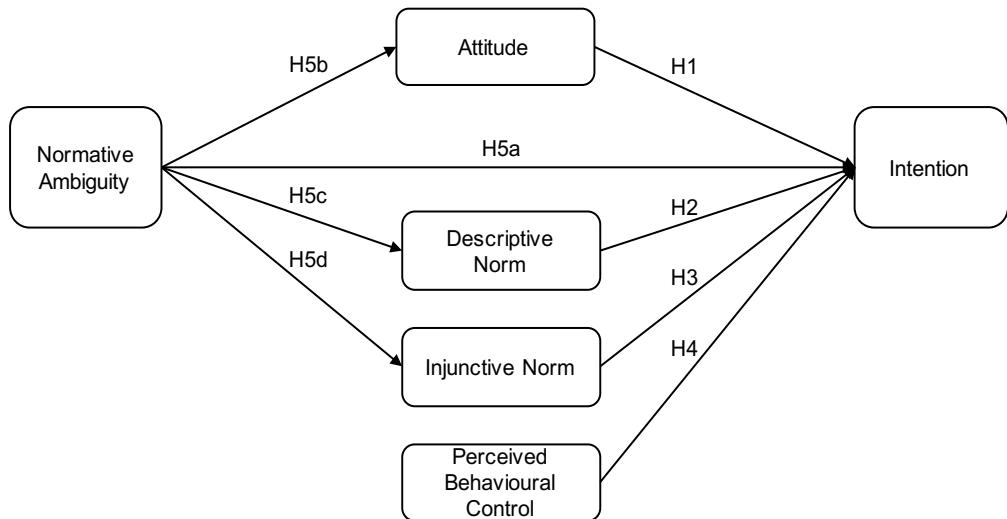


Figure 15 Proposed Theoretical Framework

5.3 Method

5.3.1 Sampling and Measurements

Data analysis was based on the online survey data collected from Chinese music consumers ($N=343$). According to the 41st China Statistical Report on Internet Development published by China Internet Network Information Centre (CNNIC) in Jan 2018, until the end of 2017, China has 0.548 billion online music users. This accounts for 68% of all Internet users in China. About 93.3% (0.511 billion/0.548 billion) online music access music via mobile devices and through

various music applications (i.e., Netease Music, QQ Music, Xiami and Apple Music). The majority (73%) of Internet users in China are aged between 10 to 39 (CNNIC, 2018a). In this study, considering that the age distribution of online music users might be similar to that of the majority of Internet users in China, we intended to collect data from internet users aged between 10 and 40, excluding respondents out of this range. The data was collected through an online survey distributed using ‘Sojump’ (<http://www.sojump.com>), which is an online survey service provider in China used for research purposes (Xu & Ma, 2016).

The respondents were recruited through Baidu Tieba, an online discussion forum in China. Baidu Tieba are themed discussion forums where users who have the same interest can communicate. It is an important and useful channel for information dissemination and gathering among people of different interest groups, which makes it an ideal place for purposive sampling. Specifically, the invitation to participate in the research was sent to Oricon (gathering place for music lovers of East Asian music) and Billboard Tieba (a gathering place for music lovers of Western music) in order to enrich the sample. To increase the sample size, the invitation was then sent out through Weibo, the micro-blogging service in China. Following these sampling procedures, the final questionnaire consisted of 19 items with the sample size being $N=343$. The respondents come from 14 different provinces in China. 152 (44.31%) respondents are male and 191 (55.69%) female.

The measurements used in the online survey (as shown in Table 3 below) were adopted from previous the literature. Only one construct, namely Normative Ambiguity with no prior literature to refer to, and the questionnaire items measuring normative ambiguity is developed based on previous semi-structured in-depth interviews with 36 Chinese music consumers from various geographical locations within China. In those in-depth interviews, when asking respondents about the perceived social pressure of conducting music piracy, common responses included “I don’t really know how they think about it (music piracy), we (the respondent and his referents) barely talk about this topic”.

To enhance the reliability of the measurements, a pilot study was carried out (N=30). Some of the measurement items were removed due to a factor loading of less than 0.60. Initially, the survey items were distributed to the postgraduate research students, and the survey items had been modified according to their recommendations to ensure the accurate understandings of the survey items. The final questionnaire was translated and back-translated to ensure that the Chinese version of the survey would be clear and easily comprehensible to Chinese music consumers. The wording of items used in the survey, as well as the reference sources, are shown in Table 3. All the items are measured using 7-point Likert Scale which was anchored by “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

Item	Question	Source
Attitudes	Music piracy is a wise idea.	Yoon (2011)
towards music piracy	Music piracy is a beneficial idea.	
	Overall, my attitudes toward music piracy is favourable.	
Descriptive Norms	People who are important to me would continue to conduct digital piracy.	de Leeuw et al. (2015)
towards music piracy	People who are close to me are downloading music illegally on a regular basis.	
Injunctive Norms	If I download music files from illegal sources, people who are important to me would approve.	
towards music piracy	In general, people who are close to me would expect me to download music from illegal sources.	
Perceived Behavioural Control on Music Piracy	It is an easy for me to get illegal music files from the Internet.	Chiou, Huang, and Lee (2005)
	I have the essential knowledge and skills on where to find the illegal music files.	
	I am confident to find the illegal music files on the Internet which are of satisfied sound quality.	
	It is always easy for me to find illegal music files if I can't find them on the legal platforms.	
	I intend to conduct music piracy in the next three months.	Yoon (2011)

Intention to conduct music piracy behaviour	It is likely that I will download music from non-legal platforms in the next three months. If I have a chance, I will download music illegal rather than from legal platforms. I always download illegal files from the Internet.	
Normative Ambiguity	I'm not sure whether people who are important to me approve music piracy behaviours or not. I'm not sure whether people who are close to me approve music piracy behaviours or not.	Based on a previous qualitative study

Table 3 The Wording of Items Used to Measure each Construct

5.3.2 Structural Equation Modelling based on Partial Least Squares Estimates (PLS-SEM)

The PLS-SEM algorithm was argued to have better performance in research that is exploratory and with complex theoretical frameworks (Hair et al., 2011). Two distinctive advantages of using the PLS-SEM algorithm compared to the conventional covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) are that it does not require normative distribution of data and that it can generate empirical insights when the sample size is relatively small (Hair et al., 2012). PLS-SEM has been applied to research in various fields including marketing (Hair et al., 2012; Hair et al., 2013; Henseler et al., 2009), management information systems (Ringle et al., 2012), hospitality research (Ali et al., 2018) and technological adoption studies (Mital et al., 2017). We conducted data analysis and the selections of cut-off values based on the guidance of Hair et al (2012) in applying PLS-SEM in marketing research. In this study, we employed a PLS-SEM algorithm to test the hypotheses developed above as our research is exploratory in nature.

5.4 Results

Statistical analysis was conducted by using SmartPLS 3.0, PLS-SEM algorithm has been performed to assess the path coefficients. Bootstrapping (with 5000 bootstrapping samples) test

has also been performed to assess whether the path coefficients are statistically significant or not (Jorg Henseler et al., 2009). By using the PLS-SEM algorithm, the structural model and the measurement model can be assessed concurrently. The internal consistency reliability of the PLS-SEM model was assessed through Composite Reliability, and the factor loadings were employed to assess the indicator reliability. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were assessed to ensure the convergent validity. Discriminant validity was evaluated using Fornell-Lacker criterion and the observation toward factor loadings as well as the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) of correlations. The value of R^2 , as well as the predictive relevance Q^2 , which was retrieved from performing the blindfolding procedure, are employed to assess the overall model fit.

5.4.1 Construct Reliability and Model Fit

Internal Consistency Reliability. As Table 4 shows, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the latent constructs are well above the cut-off value of 0.50 (Henseler et al., 2009), which shows desirable convergent validity (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). In terms of internal consistency reliability, it can be suggested that reporting composite reliability is preferable to the reporting of Cronbach's alpha (Hair et al., 2012). The composite reliability of each construct should be greater than 0.70, and composite reliability of all constructs in our study exceeds 0.90, which shows satisfactory internal consistency reliability (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability
ATT	0.784	0.916
DES	0.855	0.922
INJ	0.873	0.932
INT	0.796	0.939
NA	0.838	0.912
PBC	0.733	0.916

Table 4 Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability

Discriminant Validity. To assess the discriminant validity of our measurement model, the Fornell-Larcker test (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) test (Henseler et al., 2014) and the cross loadings check (Grégoire & Fisher, 2006) were conducted. As Table 5 indicates, the square root of AVE for each construct in the study are greater than the absolute values of correlations with other constructs, which demonstrates the discriminant validity of all constructs used in the proposed measurement model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Cross loadings checks were also performed as presented in Table 6. The Hetrotrait-Monotrait Ratio of correlations was considered as one of the tests for assessing discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2014). As presented in Table 7, the HTMT values were below the cut-off value of 0.85 (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). This again demonstrates the discriminant validity of the proposed measurement model.

	ATT	DES	INJ	INT	NA	PBC
ATT	0.885					
DES	0.186	0.925				
INJ	0.225	-0.145	0.935			
INT	0.512	0.403	-0.050	0.892		
NA	0.171	0.406	-0.147	0.372	0.916	
PBC	-0.028	0.303	-0.240	0.295	0.208	0.856

Table 5 Fornell-Larcker Criterion

The model fit was assessed through R^2 and by conducting a blindfolding test, the Q^2 value (construct crossvalidated redundancy) was calculated to assess the predictive relevance of the model. In this study, the R^2 value of the proposed structural model is 0.438, which indicates satisfactory explaining power. In addition, the Q^2 values calculated from blindfolding procedure for all constructs are greater than zero, which is indicative of predictive relevance of the proposed structural model (Hair et al., 2012; Henseler et al., 2009).

	ATT	DES	INJ	INT	NA	PBC
ATT1	0.855					
ATT2	0.844					
ATT3	0.806					
DES1		0.924				
DES2		0.933				
INJ1			0.913			
INJ2			0.957			
INT1				0.894		
INT2				0.871		
INT3				0.698		
INT4				0.821		
NA1					0.850	
NA2					0.887	
PBC1						0.877
PBC2						0.904
PBC3						0.881
PBC4						0.796

Table 6 Cross Loadings Check of Measurement Items

	ATT	DES	INJ	INT	NA	PBC
ATT						
DES		0.215				
INJ		0.268	0.178			
INT		0.572	0.459	0.058		
NA		0.190	0.492	0.178	0.425	
PBC		0.093	0.349	0.284	0.308	0.238

Table 7 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) of Correlations

5.4.2 Path Coefficients and Test of Hypotheses

The path coefficients of each path in the proposed framework as well as the corresponding P values are presented in Table 8. Significant path coefficients were found from attitudes toward music piracy and piracy intention, from descriptive norms to piracy intention, and from perceived behavioural control to piracy intention, providing supporting evidence for Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4. Besides TPB constructs, normative ambiguity is indicated to be significantly and positively associated with behavioural intention. However, Hypothesis 3 is not supported as the path coefficient from injunctive norms to intention is statistically insignificant.

Paths (Hypotheses)	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values	Result
ATT -> INT (H1)	0.468	0.466	0.050	9.291	0.000***	<i>Supported</i>
DES -> INT (H2)	0.177	0.179	0.053	3.340	0.001**	<i>Supported</i>
INJ -> INT (H3)	-0.055	-0.053	0.049	1.111	0.267	<i>Not Supported</i>
NA -> ATT (H5b)	0.171	0.172	0.061	2.778	0.005**	<i>Supported</i>
NA -> DES (H5c)	0.406	0.408	0.050	8.095	0.000***	<i>Supported</i>
NA -> INJ (H5d)	-0.147	-0.149	0.064	2.303	0.021**	<i>Not Supported</i>
NA -> INT (H5a)	0.170	0.170	0.047	3.643	0.000***	<i>Supported</i>
PBC -> INT (H4)	0.206	0.210	0.048	4.326	0.000***	<i>Supported</i>

***p < 0.001;

**p < 0.05;

*p < 0.1.

Table 8 Path Coefficients: Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Values

According to the path analysis results, **attitude toward music piracy behaviour** is a significant antecedent of Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions, and the result is in line with the existing studies. Attitudes toward the behaviour represents an individual's favourable or

unfavourable feelings toward the behaviour of interest, our results suggest that if a Chinese music consumer is holding more favourable attitude toward music piracy behaviour, then he or she would be more likely to engage in music piracy. Hypothesis 1 proposed this positive relationship between attitudes toward music piracy and music piracy intentions, and thus H1 is supported by the data analysis results.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 depict the relationship between *subjective norms on music piracy behaviour* and the music piracy intentions of Chinese music consumers. According to our results, descriptive norms, which are the individuals' observations on others' music piracy behaviours, are significant predictors of their music piracy behaviours. This indicates that if an individual observes frequent music piracy behaviours among his or her social referents, he or she would be more likely to conduct music piracy as well. Hence, Hypothesis 2 is supported by the data. Interestingly, according to the data analysis results, the injunctive norms, which captures the explicit requirements from social referents in terms of a certain behaviour, are not significantly predicting Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. This leads to the fact that our Hypothesis 3 is not supported by empirical data from Chinese music consumers.

Hypothesis 4 proposes the positive relationship between *perceived behavioural control over music piracy behaviour* and music piracy intentions. According to the data analysis results, perceived behavioural control is a significant predictor of music piracy intentions of Chinese music consumers. Perceived behavioural control describes the perceived confidence of successfully conducting a specific behaviour, which is impacted by the facilitating skills, resources and capabilities. Our data analysis result indicates that if a music consumer is more confident in successfully conducting music piracy behaviour, then he or she is more likely to engage in the music piracy behaviour. This, in turn, demonstrated the importance of relevant skills and resources in predicting Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions.

Hypothesis 5 proposed the relationship between ***normative ambiguity*** and various theories of planned behaviour constructs including attitudes toward the behaviour, descriptive norms and injunctive norms of music piracy and the music piracy intentions of Chinese music consumers. Based on the data analysis results, normative ambiguity is a significant predictor of music consumers' attitudes toward music piracy, their perceived descriptive norms of music piracy, their perceived injunctive norms of music piracy and their behavioural intentions to conduct music piracy.

According to its definition, normative ambiguity is the degree to which an individual is unclear about whether his or her certain behaviour would be approved or accepted by his or her social referents. If an individual is high in normative ambiguity toward music piracy behaviour, he or she is not sure about whether music piracy behaviour would be approved by the social referents. Therefore, if an individual is high in normative ambiguity, this indicates that the individual is not perceiving much information on the explicit request from his or her social referents, and his or her perceived injunctive norms would be lower as a result. This is confirmed by the data analysis result that normative ambiguity significantly predicts injunctive norms, and injunctive norms would decrease with the increase in normative ambiguity. However, due to the fact that injunctive norms are not significantly predicting music piracy behaviours in China, H5d is not supported, and injunctive norms are not mediating the impact of normative ambiguity on the intentions to conduct music piracy behaviours.

Due to the insufficiency of the information regarding injunctive norms, an individual would choose to refer to his or her observations on others' behaviour in making a decision in conducting music piracy behaviour, as these observations would provide the music consumers with informational value in terms of others' behaviour that might be socially acceptable. Therefore, individuals who perceive a higher level of normative ambiguity would be more likely to perceive a higher level of descriptive norms. It is logically appropriate to make this argument that an individual's descriptive norms could be affected by this individual's degree of normative ambiguity. Normative ambiguity captures the individual's perceptual ambiguity in terms of the

appropriateness of conducting a specific behaviour (i.e. music piracy), it is then capable in affecting an individual's descriptive norms and injunctive norms as these two kinds of subjective norms are the individual's perceptions on others' behaviours and what others think they should do. In addition, descriptive norms are significantly predicting intentions of conducting music piracy behaviour. This indicates the fact that descriptive norms are mediating the impact of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions, and thus Hypothesis 5c is supported.

Previous investigations into the effectiveness of norm-based behavioural change revealed the fact that, if an individual learns that a certain behaviour has a high commonness, he/she would feel that the focal behaviour is less bad (Mollen et al., 2013). In addition to a lack of injunctive norm-based messages regarding music piracy of Chinese music consumers, they might develop more favourable feelings toward music piracy considering the prevalence of behaviour among their social referents. This is also confirmed by the data analysis result that normative ambiguity is a significant predictor of attitudes toward music piracy behaviours. In addition to this, attitudes toward music piracy behaviour are significantly predicting music piracy intentions, and this indicates the fact that attitudes toward music piracy behaviours are mediating the impact of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions. Thus, Hypothesis 5b is supported by the data.

Apart from the indirect impact of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions which is mediated through attitudes toward music piracy behaviours and descriptive norms of music piracy, data analysis results also demonstrate that normative ambiguity has a direct impact on music piracy intentions. According to the data analysis results, Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions would increase with an increase in normative ambiguity. Therefore, based on the above discussion on the data analysis results, normative ambiguity not only has a direct positive impact on Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions, it also demonstrates an indirect effect on music piracy intentions which is mediated by music consumers' attitudes and descriptive norms of music piracy behaviours.

5.4.3 Indirect Effect of Normative Ambiguity on Digital Piracy Intentions

The mediation analysis was conducted under the guidance of a two-step procedure (Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010). The first step was to test whether the indirect effect was significant or not. The bootstrapping procedure performed above tested the significance of indirect effects concurrently, and the results indicated that both the indirect effects normative ambiguity has on behavioural intention are significant and positive. The second step of the procedure involves a significance test of the direct effect. In this study, the direct effect of normative ambiguity on behavioural intention is statistically significant. Therefore, a portion of the effect of normative ambiguity on behavioural intention is mediated through attitudes and descriptive norms and normative ambiguity still explains a portion of behavioural intention that is independent from attitudes or descriptive norms. The corresponding data analysis results are illustrated in Table 9 below.

Indirect Effects	Original	Sample	Standard	T Statistics	P
	Sample	Mean	Deviation	Values	
NA -> ATT -> INT	0.080	0.080	0.029	2.724	0.006**
NA -> DES -> INT	0.072	0.073	0.023	3.103	0.002**

**p < 0.05;

*p < 0.1.

Table 9 Indirect Effects of Normative Ambiguity on Behavioural Intentions

In addition, the direct and indirect effects normative ambiguity have on behavioural intention are pointing in the same direction. The evidence jointly confirms the complementary partial mediating role of attitudes and descriptive norms in the association between normative ambiguity and behavioural intention (Zhao et al., 2010), with 24.2% of the total effect mediated through attitudes and 22.4% through descriptive norms. Therefore, music consumers who have a higher degree of normative ambiguity perceive higher legitimacy and possess more favourable feelings toward music piracy behaviours, which in turn positively influences piracy intentions. This supports Hypotheses 5a, 5b and 5c. The final structural model and complementary partial mediating effects are illustrated in Figure 16 and Figure 17.

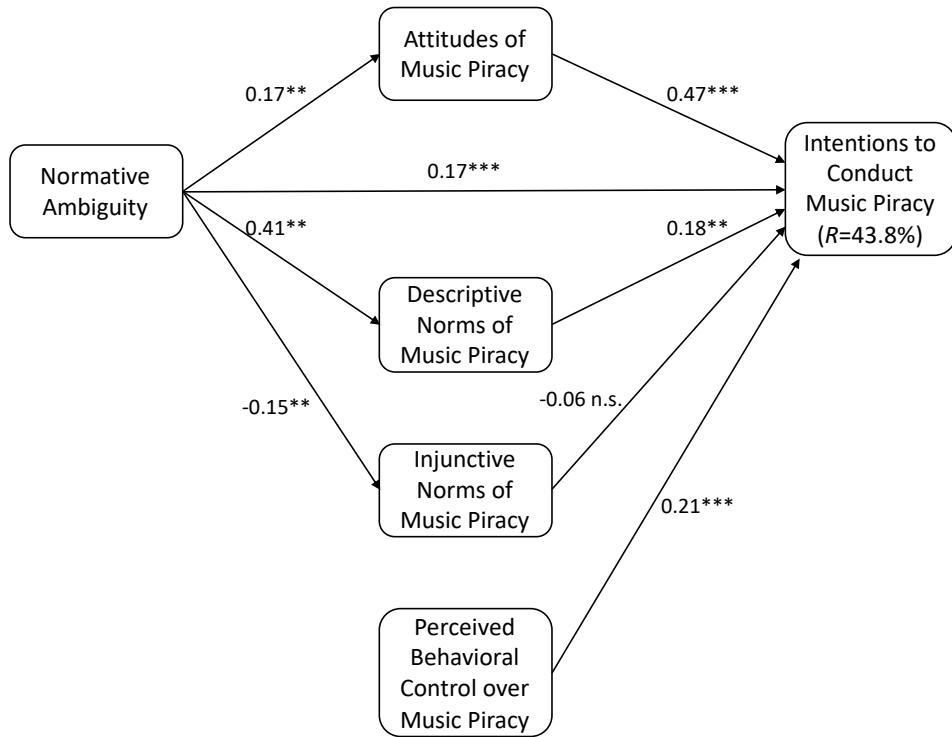


Figure 16 PLS-SEM Result ($***p<0.001$; $**p<0.05$)

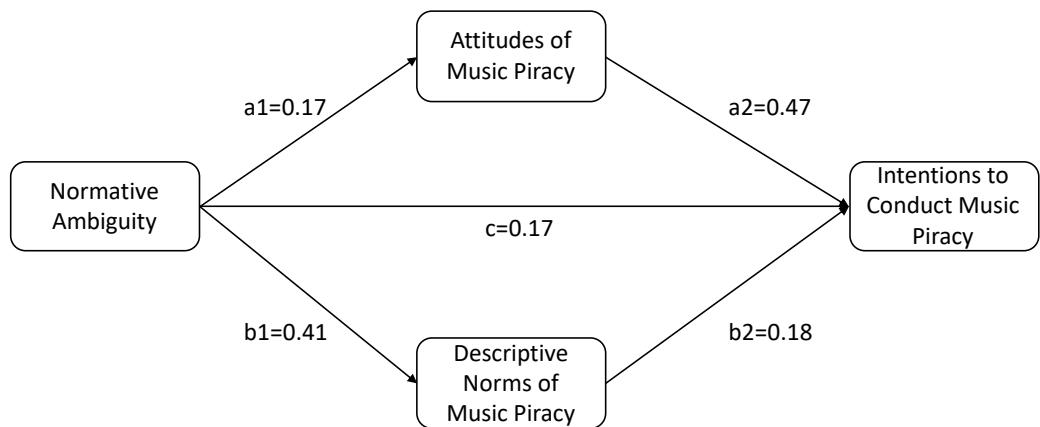


Figure 17 Direct and Indirect Effects of Normative Ambiguity on Behavioural Intention

5.6 Discussion

The aim of this study is to identify the impact on consumers' digital piracy intentions imposed by normative ambiguity, which is defined as the degree to which an individual feels ambiguity about whether his/her chosen referents approve the focal behaviour or not. PLS-SEM was performed with online survey data collected from Chinese music consumers ($N=343$). We argued that normative ambiguity, which may be generated by Chinese music consumers' long-term free use of music products and their lack of awareness towards music copyright protection, would impose a significant positive impact on music consumers' attitudes and subjective norms towards music piracy. As attitudes and subjective norms are determinants of an individual's behavioural intentions, we further argued that normative ambiguity would have a significant positive impact on music consumers' piracy intentions partially mediated through consumer attitudes and subjective norms. Our results partially supported this argument in the sense that this complementary partial mediating effect through attitudes and subjective norms imposed by normative ambiguity was only observed with descriptive norms (i.e., what others do). Data analysis indicated that there is no such effect observed with injunctive norms (i.e., what others approve). Hence, music consumers who have a higher degree of normative ambiguity would perceive higher legitimacy and possess more favourable feelings toward music piracy behaviours, which in turn positively influence their piracy intention.

The study contributes to the piracy literature by identifying a significant positive effect from consumers' normative ambiguity to their behavioural intentions. Furthermore, by using partial least squares structural equation modelling, the complementary partial mediating effect through consumers' attitudes and subjective descriptive norms has been identified. This goes to some extent to explain the mechanism of how normative ambiguity significantly impacts behavioural intentions. This result has shed new light on combating digital piracy issues, especially in developing markets, where the awareness of copyright protection is not strong enough. To reduce

piracy behaviours, music services/products marketers and regulatory bodies should design and implement marketing campaigns or educational campaigns to reduce the normative ambiguity among music consumers.

5.6.1 From Normative Ambiguity to Behavioural Intentions

This study makes a unique contribution to the literature by identifying and quantifying the effect of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions. Previous research on piracy issues would also consider variables such as moral obligations to take into consideration an individual's moral beliefs (Yoon, 2011). These studies, however, did not examine the piracy intentions from an ambiguity perspective. Considering the different development path of Western music markets and music market in less-developed economies including China, this normative ambiguity is widely observed as suggested by a previous qualitative study. Chinese music consumers have long been enjoying free music services. Perhaps because of this, their perceived legitimacy of conducting music piracy behaviours might be higher since they might observe that most of their friends or family members are downloading illegal music files. Considering the fact that only descriptive norms have a significant positive impact on piracy intentions, constructing descriptive norms against music piracy would, therefore, reduce music consumers' piracy intentions. This could be done, for example, by music services providers asking celebrities to talk about the negative impact of music piracy imposed on the sustainable development of the music industry as a whole, as this could be seen as a form of descriptive normative message from these public figures.

In line with Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4, we found supporting empirical evidence that consumers' attitudes, descriptive norms, and perceived behavioural control towards music piracy behaviour have significant positive effects on music consumers' piracy intentions (see also Chiou, Huang, and Lee 2005; Cho, Chung, and Filippova 2015; Cronan and Al-Rafee 2008; Goles et al. 2008; Yoon 2011). However, data analysis with partial least squares structural equation modelling suggested that Hypothesis 3 is not supported. This finding is also found in research investigating

adoption intentions of pro-environmental products among high school students, that injunctive norms did not have a significant impact on adoption intentions (de Leeuw et al., 2015). This study replies to the call for research and contributes to the literature in terms of a better understanding on subjective norms considering its significant effect on various norm-based behavioural interventions (Miller & Prentice, 2016; Smith, 2015).

5.6.2 Different Roles of Injunctive and Descriptive Norms

Another contribution of the current study is to provide empirical evidence in the different roles of injunctive norms and descriptive norms in shaping behavioural intentions regarding risky or socially responsible consumer behaviours. Regarding the effect of injunctive norms on the formation of an individual's behaviour, previous research into risky behaviours such as alcohol use has indicated that injunctive norms have a strong correlation with an individual's attitude formation towards the focal behaviour. Descriptive norms, however, only predict behaviour but not attitudes (Ferrer, Dillard, & Klein, 2012; Lac & Donaldson, 2018). The results of extant studies on the role of injunctive and descriptive norms reveal the fact that risky behaviours (i.e., alcohol use in college) could be predicted by descriptive norms rather than injunctive norms (Ferrer et al., 2012).

The findings of the current study confirmed this predictive power of descriptive norms on behaviour intentions, and that injunctive norms fail to predict behavioural intentions. Injunctive norms, which are defined as the perception of whether significant others and other referents approve the focal behaviour or not, have the predictive power on an individual's attitudes rather than actual behaviour (Lac & Donaldson, 2018). Recent research on risky behaviours indicates that the role of descriptive norms and injunctive norms varies across different kinds of behaviours and social referents (Barman-Adhikari, Craddock, Bowen, Das, & Rice, 2018). Considering the fact that injunctive norms capture the social pressure imposed by various referents (Mollen et al., 2013), and an individual's perceived risk towards different behaviours varies, we argue that the predictive power of injunctive norms varies across different types of behaviours which involve

different level of perceived risks. In addition, the predictive power of injunctive norms might be stronger if the focal behaviour is perceived by the individual to be associated with higher risks. This finding does not provide supporting evidence for the argument that injunctive norms are stronger predictors of behavioural intention than descriptive norms as injunctive norms are more likely to affect an individual's behavioural intention across different situations (Cialdini et al., 1990). Future studies could draw on this point and try to provide more empirical evidence on the relationship between the perceived risks of the focal behaviour and the corresponding relationship between injunctive norms and behavioural intentions.

5.6.3 The Two-Dimensional Approach in Assessing the Impact of Social Norms

One crucial insight brought by the research into normative ambiguity is to provide a two-dimensional approach (Strength and Clarity dimensions) in assessing the impact of social norms on behavioural intentions, or the perceived social pressure on consumers. Previous studies mainly focused on the strength dimension of social norms, as reflected by the fact that only the strength of the social norms was assessed in the survey items (see Kim et al. 2016; Mital et al. 2017; Wang and McClung 2012; Yoon 2011). Although studies have revealed the formation of social norms through egocentric social projection and social learning via communication exposure (Cho et al., 2015), little attention has been attached to the consideration into the degree of consensus towards social norms. Normative ambiguity could be functioning as a construct to capture the situation where an individual is not fully aware of the injunctive norms, which may be more suitable for research into piracy issues in the markets where the significance of copyright protection is not well understood or appreciated. Future studies could further develop this point, for example, by using normative ambiguity as one of the two dimensions employed to assess the clarity of social norms in various situations (see Figure 18 below).

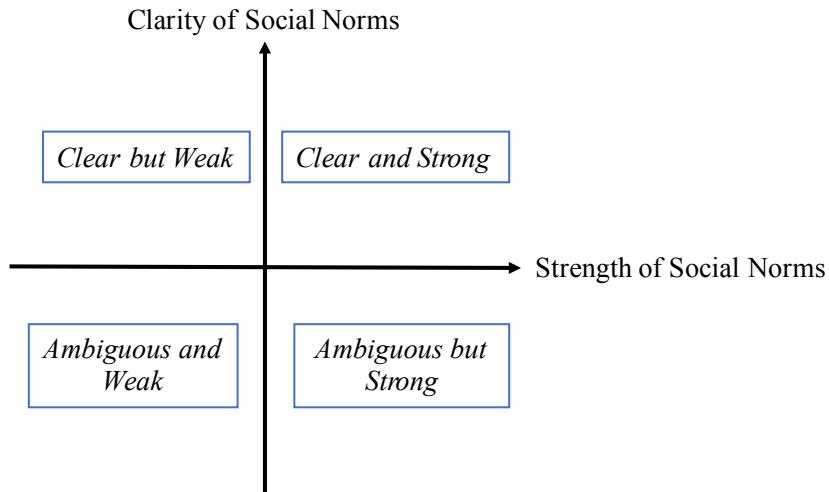


Figure 18 The Two-Dimensional Approach to Assess the Impact of Social Norms

5.7 Limitations and Future Research

The study did not investigate the impact of cultural differences and individuals' personalities on music piracy intentions. Research has indicated that the predictive power of subjective norms could be affected by cultural characteristics (Smith, 2015). In the era of technology-facilitated social change, and with the widespread adoption of digitized social networks, there is the possibility that consumers from collective cultures (i.e., China, Japan, etc.) may be more willing to express themselves and attach more significance to their own goals rather than collective goals. This change in technology-driven psychological trait of Chinese consumers (i.e. the rising individualism) may also affect the formation of their attitudes and subjective norms towards music piracy behaviours. Future research could try to identify this, and in addition, quantify the impact of this change on various consumer behaviours. Also, our study did not measure actual behaviour but rather behavioural intentions. To further enhance the reliability of future studies, scholars may consider measuring actual behaviour where possible. In addition, there may exist the impact of technology-driven psychological change of consumers on the formation of attitudes and subjective norms, which in turn, affect the formation of behavioural intentions. Hence, another research direction might be to examine the existence, and if so, the mechanism of how this change affects consumers' behavioural intentions.

The finding that only descriptive norms predict behavioural intentions might be associated with the presence of normative ambiguity as the data analysis revealed a significant association between normative ambiguity and injunctive norms ($\beta = -0.134, p = 0.066$, see Table 8). Previous research indicated that when injunctive norms and descriptive norms are inconsistent (i.e., the referents say that music piracy is bad, but still do it), people would comply with the most salient norms (Cialdini et al., 1990). In this study context of music piracy, the most salient norms might be the descriptive norms, as music consumers in China may think that others are pirating, so there is no issue with it. This, in turn, might result in higher behavioural intentions to conduct music piracy. Future research could further develop this point, to see if normative ambiguity leads to insignificant correlation between injunctive norms and behavioural intentions.

Chapter 6

Overall Discussion

6.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter 4 and 5 have presented the empirical studies designed and implemented for the current thesis to explore the antecedents of Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions under the new technological context where music streaming services are emerging and maturing. In this chapter, the research findings of the qualitative and quantitative studies are first summarised separately. In Section 6.4 of the current chapter, the qualitative findings and the quantitative findings are integrated to provide the general discussion of the current thesis from a mixed methods perspective. Based on the overall discussion of both the qualitative and quantitative studies, the contributions to the theory and methods as well as the implications to the management practices are discussed. The overview of the Chapter is demonstrated in the Figure 19 below.

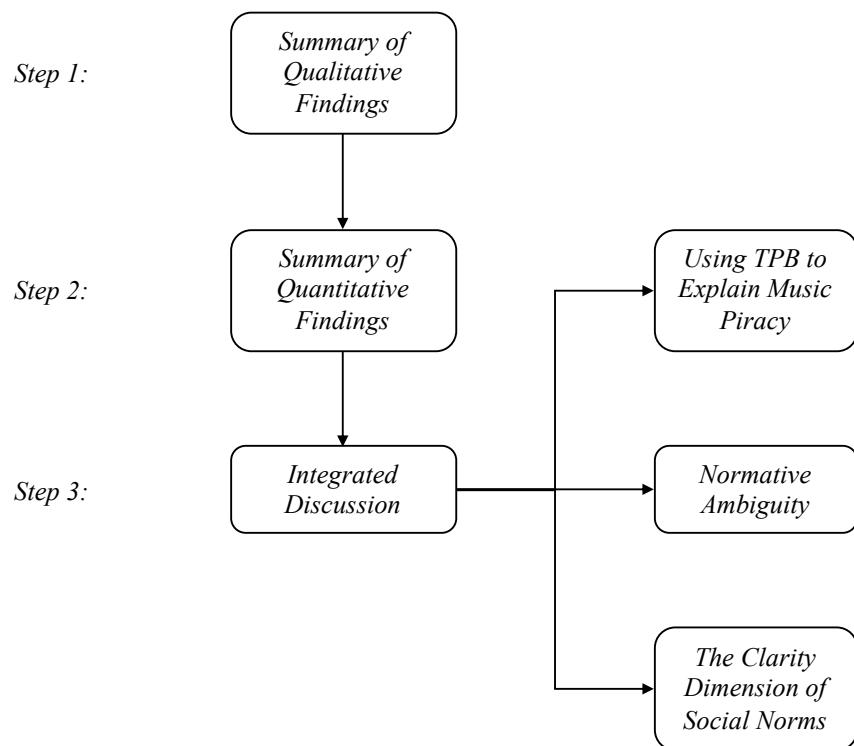


Figure 19 Overview of Discussion

The thesis is an exploratory study into the antecedents of Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. To explore this overarching research question, the thesis adopts an exploratory sequential mixed methods design where a qualitative study is conducted first and followed by a quantitative study. The aim of the qualitative study is to identify the potential driving factors of

the music piracy behaviours in China, while the aim of the quantitative study is to check the generalisability of the findings from the qualitative study.

In the first, qualitative study, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of Chinese music consumers for qualitative data collection. Then, the qualitative data was analysed using a thematic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006) with the help of qualitative data analysis software NVivo. The first order concepts, second order themes and the broader dimensions were categorised through the analysis of the data. Propositions based on the interview analysis were concluded as the basis of the proposed theoretical framework for explaining music piracy behavioural intentions in China. In addition to the proposed theoretical framework, an emerging theme was then developed into a new variable, namely normative ambiguity. This was identified as a new antecedent of music piracy behaviours in China. The details of the statements and the quotes from the qualitative research participants were used in the process of scale development for this emerging variable.

As for the second, quantitative study, a questionnaire was designed based on the existing literature and the qualitative insights from the first study. Specifically, the measurement scale for the emerging variable (i.e. normative ambiguity) was developed from the qualitative quotes of the music consumers. The main aim for the quantitative study was to test the proposed theoretical model with a large and diversified sample of music consumers. The quantitative study complements the qualitative study as it is able to check the generalisability of the qualitative findings using a quantitative approach.

The survey of the second study was administered in an online form in order to reach a diversified sample of music consumers in China. 343 valid responses were collected for further analysis from the quantitative study. The reliability and validity of all measurement scales were tested in the quantitative study as was assessment of the model fit. In the quantitative data analysis process, PLS-SEM technique (Jörg Henseler et al., 2014) was employed to gain insight from the survey data. The quantitative findings confirmed the generalisability of the qualitative findings, which

complemented the qualitative exploration and the holistic understanding on music piracy behaviours in China. The details of the quantitative and qualitative findings are discussed in the following sections.

6.2 Summary of Study 1: Qualitative Findings

Chapter 4 (Study 1) employs a qualitative approach in exploring the potential antecedents of the music piracy behaviours in China. As emerging music markets entering the new era of providing streaming services, the in-depth analysis toward music consumers' different choices in terms of digital product acquisition is needed to understand the impact of the development of new technologies on consumers' intentions to violate intellectual property rights (IPR) by conducting piracy behaviours. The current study has targeted at a largely ignored group of music consumers in the previous piracy-related research, the mixed tape music consumers (i.e., music consumers who are pirates and streamers at the same time). 36 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted. Investigations into this group of music consumers revealed new insights enabling academics and practitioners to advance their understandings of IPR violating behaviours from a social-psychological perspective.

Specifically, the formation of consumers attitudes toward digital piracy, how their decisions in acquiring information goods are influenced by their social referents as well as their perceived behavioural control over digital piracy are identified under the guidance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour. *Normative ambiguity* is identified as a facilitating factor of digital piracy behaviours from the normative perspective, and a two-dimensional approach in categorizing an individual's perceived social norms is proposed. Theoretical contributions, as well as practical implications for marketers and policymakers of the relevant findings on dealing with IPR-related issues such as music piracy in emerging markets, are discussed.

According to the qualitative data analysis, Chinese music consumers' positive and negative attitudes toward music piracy behaviours consist of their affective, behavioural and cognitive evaluations of the behaviour. For instance, in terms of Chinese music consumers' behavioural

evaluations, music piracy is regarded as a convenient way of acquiring music products. In addition to convenience, music piracy is also thought to help music consumers save money, gain access to otherwise unavailable content and therefore provide a sampling effect before purchasing legal products. However, in terms of the negative behavioural evaluations of music piracy, Chinese music consumers are generally not satisfied with the quality of pirated music files. Chinese music consumers demonstrate distinctive affective evaluations of music piracy behaviours. Positive affective evaluations include that conducting this behaviour gives them a sense of accomplishment. While for some research participants, music piracy behaviour is associated with a sense of guilt. The cognitive evaluations of Chinese music consumers in terms of music piracy behaviours are mainly negative evaluations. They regard music piracy as an activity that would hinder the sustainable development of China's music market and discourage music artists to produce more creative musical work.

Music consumers' descriptive norms of music piracy behaviours are their observations on others' behaviour related to music piracy. Through the analysis of the qualitative interview data, we identified three main observations of music consumers. Chinese music consumers' observations on others' intellectual property rights (IPR) violating behaviours as well as their observations on others' lack of IPR protection awareness are facilitating their own music piracy behaviours. However, their observations of others' anti-piracy behaviours might be crucial in discouraging their own music piracy behaviours. One interesting finding from the analysis of interview data is that we noticed the absence of injunctive subjective norms (i.e. what others approve in terms of the focal behaviour) among Chinese music consumers regarding music piracy behaviours. This might be induced by the normative ambiguity perceived by the music consumers in terms of music piracy. Normative ambiguity is an emerging theme identified from the interview data. It is conceptualised as the degree to which the individual is unclear about whether his or her social referents approve the music piracy behaviour or not. In addition, Study 1 also identified possible antecedents of normative ambiguity. The lack of focused social interaction, lack of information on referents' attitudes toward music piracy and referents' insensibility of copyright protection might contribute to this.

Music consumers' perceived behavioural control are the beliefs regarding the facilitating and impeding factors of conducting music piracy behaviours. In terms of the facilitating factors, Chinese music consumers frequently found that music piracy is easy because of the high availability of illegal information resources such as public online forums and the search engines. However, impeding factors do exist in terms of music piracy. When conducting or planning to conduct music piracy, Chinese music consumers are often concerned about the quality of pirated music, as the pirate music files are always of low quality in comparison to those retrieved from legal resources. In addition to the quality of music files, another concern of music consumers is the information security issue that would bring by conducting music piracy. The pirated music files could sometimes contain computer viruses which may cause damage to software or hardware.

In sum, the qualitative study conducted in Study 1 revealed important information on Chinese music consumers' attitudes toward music piracy, their subjective norms (i.e. descriptive norms, injunctive norms), normative ambiguity as well as perceived behavioural control over music piracy. Based on the thematic analysis of the interview data, different propositions are made, and a refined theoretical framework based on the theory of planned behaviour is proposed to explain the music piracy behaviours in China under the new technological context.

6.3 Summary of Study 2: Quantitative Findings

The subsequent chapter (Chapter 5) is a quantitative study based on the findings of the qualitative study (Chapter 4), in that the proposed theoretical model and the qualitative insights including the quotes and statements of the research participants are employed in the research process. Illegal file sharing and downloading or the problematic uses of digital content retrieved from the Internet is regarded as a major threat for the digital entertainment industry. However, previous investigations of consumers' perceived social norms around these socially responsible online consumer behaviours are controversial. Through the lens of consumers from an emerging economy in the transition period of developing and legitimizing a new digital entertainment

market, the study aims to identify the impact of normative ambiguity, which is defined as the degree to which an individual is unclear about whether his or her referents approve the focal behaviour or not, on consumers' digital piracy intentions. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling was employed to analyse the survey data collected from Chinese consumers with digital piracy experiences ($N=343$).

According to the data analysis results, we found significant relationships between theory of planned behaviour constructs and the behavioural intentions to conduct music piracy among Chinese music consumers. Specifically, Chinese music consumers' attitudes towards music piracy, their perceived descriptive norms and their perceived behavioural control are significant predictors of their music piracy intentions. In other words, Chinese music consumers with more favourable feelings toward music piracy behavioural and who perceive higher commonness of the behaviour are more likely to engage in music piracy. In addition, Chinese music consumers are more likely to conduct music piracy if they are more confident in successfully conducting the behaviour and when they are not sure whether their social referents approve the behaviour or not. Interestingly, we have also found that their perceived injunctive norms do not predict their music piracy intentions.

In addition, the overall findings of Study 2 confirmed the significant and positive impact on behavioural intentions imposed by normative ambiguity. Data analysis results have revealed the complementary partial mediating role of attitudes and descriptive norms in the association between normative ambiguity and digital piracy intentions. The findings of this study shed new lights on understanding digital piracy behaviours and more broadly, the mechanism of how the socially responsible online behaviours are influenced by others through social norms. The quantitative study in Study 2 complements the qualitative study in Study 1, and the integrated interpretations of both the qualitative and quantitative results will be discussed in the following sections.

6.4 Discussion on Empirical Findings

6.4.1 Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour in Explaining Music Piracy Behaviours in China

In this thesis, the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) was employed as the guiding theory in exploring the antecedents of music piracy behaviours in China. According to the theory, attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are the three main antecedents of a certain behaviour. Music consumers, especially those mixed tape music consumers, hold both positive and negative attitudes toward music piracy behaviours. Their attitudes toward music piracy behaviours mainly consist of their behavioural evaluations, affective evaluations and cognitive evaluations of the behaviour (Breckler, 1984). Attitudes toward the behaviour have been widely confirmed by scholars as crucial antecedents of music piracy (see Cesareo & Pastore, 2014; Chiou et al., 2005; Redondo & Charron, 2013), and the research findings from Study 1 regarding the decompositions of consumers' attitudes toward music piracy behaviour complement understanding of this behaviour from a qualitative perspective.

One interesting research finding from Study 1 relates to the perceived social norms of Chinese music consumers in terms of conducting music piracy behaviours. Although descriptive subjective norms facilitating music piracy behaviours are widely observed by the research participants, their perception of the injunctive norms on music piracy behaviour is somehow ambiguous. This finding has important implications on our understanding of the music piracy behaviours and other unethical consumer behaviours within the digital domain. Descriptive norms are argued to have the informational value to support the individual's decision-making process (i.e. Barman-Adhikari et al., 2018; Birau & Faure, 2018; de Leeuw et al., 2015; White & Simpson, 2013; Yoon, 2018). With only descriptive norms, music consumers could only refer to their observations of others' music acquisition behaviours when making their own decisions in whether or not to conduct music piracy. In China, where the music market has long been dominated by illegal music downloading, music piracy could be widely observed as the descriptive norm regarding music piracy. Although injunctive norms could also affect an individual's decision-making process, they work from a different motivational source, as

injunctive norms are argued to involve an explicit request from social referents (Cialdini et al., 1990).

However, according to the analysis of the interview data in Study 1, injunctive norms do not play an important role in predicting Chinese music consumers' music piracy behaviours. As discussed in the literature review of Chapter 2 and those in previous studies (see Armitage & Conner, 2001; Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008), contradictory research findings exist in terms of the relationship between injunctive subjective norms and behavioural intentions. The possible reasons that injunctive subjective norms fail to predict behavioural intentions remain largely unexplored. The meta-analysis conducted by Fleming et al (2017) provides similar conclusions regarding digital piracy. The results indicate that injunctive subjective norms could not predict piracy behaviours. However, this thesis provides an alternative explanation to the issue from a normative perspective (Yoon, 2018).

In their analysis, Fleming et al (2017) argued that due to the fact that consumers do not consider their social referents' approval or disapproval in terms of music piracy, subjective norms may not affect their piracy behaviours (Fleming et al., 2017). Their findings, however, lack qualitative explanation and does little to provide solid empirical foundation. Furthermore, their analysis does not differentiate subjective norms into descriptive and injunctive subjective norms. In addition, this "lack of attention" is only one form of expression of the normative ambiguity identified by the current study. The current thesis holds the opinion that the presence of normative ambiguity, which is the degree an individual is unclear about whether his or her social referents approve the focal behaviour or not, is the key to fail injunctive subjective norms in predicting behavioural intentions. Injunctive norms and descriptive norms have different motivational sources in affecting a certain human behaviour, in terms of music piracy, descriptive norms are the observations of an individual on others' music piracy behaviours, while injunctive norms are the perceptions of an individual on others' approval on the behaviour. If a music consumer perceives a high level of normative ambiguity, meaning he or she has insufficient information on social

referents' approval on music piracy, then he or she might be more likely to engage in music piracy.

Perceived behavioural control over certain behaviours are a set of beliefs concerning the facilitating and the impeding factors of successfully conducting the behaviour (Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008). Perceived behavioural control is argued by numerous scholars to be a significant predictor of music consumers' digital piracy behaviours (i.e. Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008; Morton & Koufteros, 2008; Peace, Galletta, & Thong, 2003). The current thesis also identifies both facilitating and impeding factors of music piracy among Chinese music consumers. Mixed tape music consumers' perceived behavioural control over music piracy behaviours could be decomposed into two categories, namely perceived control over information resources (i.e. high availability of illegal music information resources and low quality of pirated music files) and perceived control over information security (i.e. computer viruses embedded in pirated music files). For music consumers in China, information resources regarding illegal music files seem to be a crucial factor for them to successfully conduct music piracy behaviours.

Music consumers may find it easier to conduct music piracy with the help of search engine services and other such contents (i.e. illegal music files) on the Internet. Thus, controlling online content regarding music files might be crucial to decreasing music consumers' perceived control over successfully conducting music piracy behaviours. The high availability of illegal resources could then be regarded as a facilitating factor that would lead to this behaviour. However, apart from the facilitating factor leading to music piracy behaviours, we also identified impeding factors of music consumers' perceived control over music piracy. According to the analysis of the interview data, music consumers might consider information security while conducting music piracy behaviours, as they regard music piracy, or the pirated music files, might be harmful in terms of information security. In addition to music consumers' concern over information security while conducting music piracy, Chinese music consumers may also show concern over the quality of pirated music files. This was also discussed in previous studies (Weijters et al., 2014).

Low audio quality provided by the pirated music files might encourage music consumers to adopt legal services where high-quality music files could be retrieved.

In Study 2, the relationships between the theory of planned behaviour antecedents and music piracy intentions are examined quantitatively. In line with the qualitative findings in Study 1, attitudes, descriptive norms and perceived behavioural control are confirmed as the significant predictors of music piracy behaviours in China. Meanwhile, according to the analysis of the quantitative data, injunctive norms do not significantly predict music piracy intentions, and this also confirms our propositions based on the qualitative findings regarding the predictive power of injunctive norms in terms of music piracy intentions. Considering both the qualitative and quantitative results, the theory of planned behaviour still provides a robust theoretical framework to the understanding of the music piracy behaviours in China. However, the effectiveness of injunctive norms seems to have a boundary condition as it fails to predict music piracy behaviours in China in the quantitative study (Study 2).

6.4.2 Normative Ambiguity of Music Piracy Behaviours

In Study 1, normative ambiguity is conceptualised to capture the degree to which an individual is unclear about whether his or her social referents approve the focal behaviour or not. Normative ambiguity was identified when considering the qualitative interview data regarding Chinese music consumers' perceived social pressure regarding music piracy. According to the analysis of the interview data in Study 1, this normative ambiguity might be the result of the lack of focused social interactions between music consumers and their social referents in addition to music consumers' observations on their social referents' insensitivity of intellectual property rights protection. The research into normative ambiguity is rather limited. The concept of normative ambiguity has largely only thus far been discussed in sociology studies. In the work of Horowitz & Schwartz (1974) regarding gang violence, for example, normative ambiguity was defined as the "absence of higher-order rules for reconciling contradictions between conflicting codes for conduct..." Horowitz & Schwartz (1974, p.242). However, the concept has not been employed

in the study of other human behaviours in consumer research or marketing despite its potential impact on human behavioural intentions. In the current thesis, normative ambiguity has been given a different meaning to help in explaining music piracy behaviours in China.

In addition to identifying the existence of normative ambiguity, Study 1 also reveals important insights into the mechanism of how normative ambiguity affect music consumers' music piracy decisions. In addition to the direct impact of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions, it is proposed that normative ambiguity of music consumers in terms of music piracy would affect their music piracy intentions through affecting their attitudes toward music piracy and their perceived descriptive norms of music piracy. Normative ambiguity emerged during the qualitative data analysis process, and its impact on music piracy intentions in addition to the theory of planned behaviour constructs need to be further examined through a quantitative study to check the generalisability of relevant findings.

The impact of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions and its mechanisms have been quantitatively examined in Study 2. Specifically, data analysis results revealed the fact that normative ambiguity has a direct and significant impact on Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. Music consumers with a higher level of normative ambiguity of music piracy are more likely to engage in music piracy behaviours. The structural model in Study 2 also examined the relationships between normative ambiguity and the theory of planned behaviour construct. Significant relationships between normative ambiguity and music consumers' attitudes and descriptive norms of music piracy have also been found. This revealed important insights on how normative ambiguity affect Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions.

Distinct from the direct relationship between normative ambiguity and Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions, one part of the impact of normative ambiguity is also mediated through music consumers' attitudes and their perceived descriptive norms. This result demonstrated the fact that Chinese music consumers with a higher level of normative ambiguity (i.e. whether they were unclear about social referents approval of their music piracy behaviours) tend to have more

favourable feelings (i.e. attitudes) towards music piracy and regard music piracy as a common way of music acquisition (i.e. descriptive norms). The mechanism of how normative ambiguity affects music consumers' piracy intentions is demonstrated in Figure 20 below where all paths in the figure demonstrate a positive relationship between constructs.

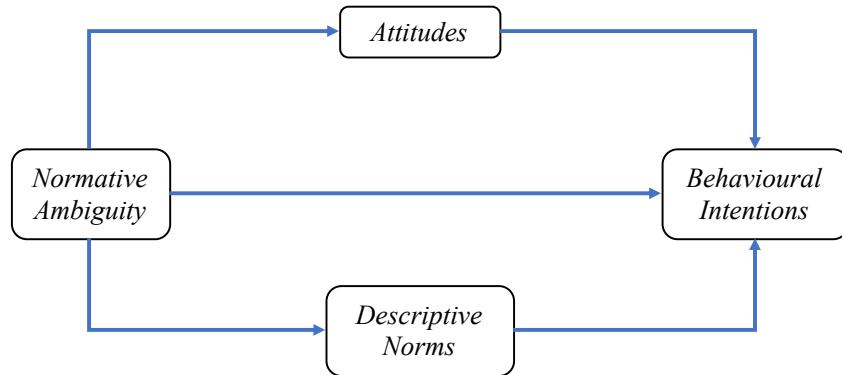


Figure 20 Normative Ambiguity and Music Piracy Intentions

Together with theory of planned behavioural constructs including attitudes, descriptive norms and perceived behavioural control, the augmented model based on the theory of planned behaviour with the addition of normative ambiguity could explain around 44% of the variance in Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. The theoretical framework to explain Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions is illustrated in the Figure 21 below where all paths in the figure are demonstrating a positive relationship between constructs.

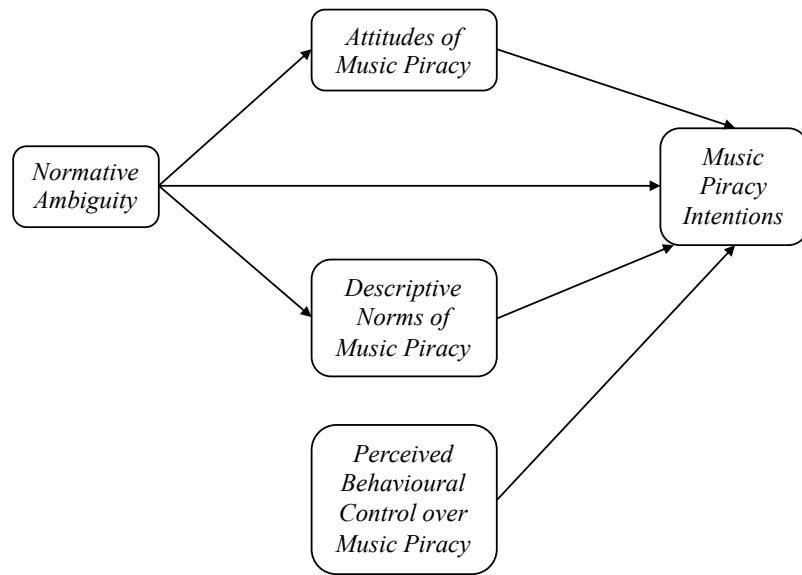


Figure 21 The Theoretical Framework for Explaining Music Piracy Behaviours

6.4.3 The Clarity Dimension of Social Norms

From the research findings on normative ambiguity toward music piracy in this thesis, it is indicated that a social norm could be perceived by the individual from two dimensions; the clarity and strength dimensions. In the theoretical framework illustrated in Figure 21, the descriptive norm is the construct which captures the impact of the strength of social norms on behavioural intentions. Normative ambiguity illustrates the impact of the clarity of social norms on behavioural intentions. When examining the impact of social norms on behavioural intentions, it is therefore imperative to consider both the strength and the clarity dimensions of the social norms regarding the behaviour of interest, this classification of social norms could be demonstrated using the matrix in Figure 22 below.

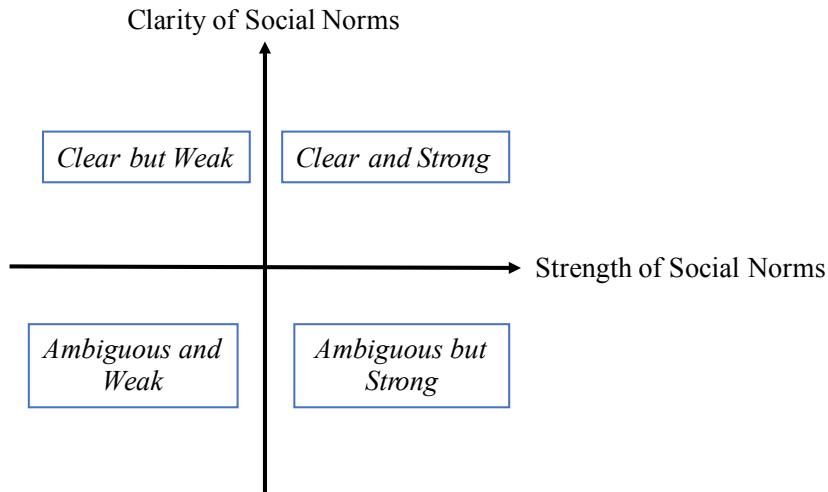


Figure 22 Classification of Social Norms

Strong and clear social norms, for example, result in a consumer regarding music piracy as negative. Social referents may not approve music piracy, and therefore the consumer might be less likely to conduct the behaviour. However, if the social norm is **strong but ambiguous**, a music consumer may regard music piracy as negative but he or she is unaware of the approval or disapproval of social referents. In this case then, he or she might be likely to engage in music piracy as nobody is imposing pressure on his or her music piracy behaviour. This might be the case in China or other less-developed music markets where although music consumers' awareness of copyright protection is rising as seen in the adoption of legal streaming music services in China, but there is not enough social pressure in place to discourage their music piracy behaviours.

When a social norm is **weak but clear**, a music consumer might regard music piracy as negative. S/he may also realise that his or her social referents do not approve music piracy, and therefore, engaging in music piracy is less likely. When the social norm is **weak and ambiguous**, the music consumer regards music piracy as negative. S/he may have no idea that their social referents do not approve their behaviour, and therefore might be more likely to engage in music piracy. Therefore, when considering the impact of social norms on a certain behaviour, in addition to the

strength dimension of social norms, the clarity dimension of social norms should also be taken into consideration.

From this two-dimensional approach, it is easy to understand why most of the music pirates in our study still conduct music piracy behaviours given the fact that they are aware of the negative effects that would bring by their piracy behaviours. For a music consumer in China, with the help of new business models (i.e. streaming) and the regulations imposed by the government regarding illegal music files, their awareness of music copyright protection is increasing. This can be confirmed by our qualitative analysis regarding music consumers' negative attitudes toward music piracy. However, although the "music piracy is bad" norm might be strong for some music consumers, it is not clear enough to motivate them to comply to this norm, as the clarity of a social norm might be affected by their perceived injunctive norms, which may inform them on the appropriateness of the behaviour from the social referents' perspective.

From the quantitative study in Study 2, the path analysis reveals the significant relationship between normative ambiguity and the two types of subjective norms. Specifically, an increase in normative ambiguity may lead to an increase in perceived descriptive norms but a decrease in perceived injunctive norms. This indicates the interplay between normative ambiguity and different types of social norms. The negative and significant relationship between normative ambiguity and perceived injunctive norms is clear: if an individual is unclear about whether his social referents would approve the behaviour or not (i.e. there is a higher degree of normative ambiguity), then s/he would perceive less approval from the social referents regarding conducting the focal behaviour (i.e. a decreased level of injunctive norms).

From another point of view, there is another positive and significant relationship between normative ambiguity and an individual's perceived injunctive norms. According to previous studies on the antecedents of injunctive and descriptive norms from the communications studies perspective, communication exposure is positively related to the descriptive and injunctive norms surrounding digital piracy (Cho et al., 2015). People would refer to the information retrieved

from various communication sources (i.e. social referents, the Internet, newspapers, etc.) to “estimate consensus of opinion or prevalence of behaviour pertaining to various topics.” (Cho et al., 2015; Gunther & Christen, 2002) A lack of focused interaction with social referents on the topic of music piracy leads to decreased communication exposure, which in turn causes an increase in the level of normative ambiguity. A decrease in communication exposure often leads to decreased injunctive norms perceived by the individual (Cho et al., 2015). Therefore, an increase in the level of normative ambiguity, which is induced by the decrease in the communication exposure, may lead to a decrease in an individual’s perceived injunctive norms. Normative ambiguity could be seen as the mediator of the impact of communication exposure to injunctive norms.

The quantitative data analysis results also indicate that when an individual’s level of normative ambiguity increases due to the lack of focused social interactions with their social referents, their perceived commonness of the behaviour (i.e. descriptive norms) is likely to increase. An increase in communication exposure to music piracy related information may lead to a decrease in the descriptive norms of music piracy. This research finding deviates from the existing studies in which increases in communication exposure are found to induce an increase in descriptive norms (Cho et al., 2015). Therefore, considering this deviation from previous research, it is possible that the relationship between communication exposure and an individual’s level of perceived descriptive norms of a behaviour might depend on *the content to which the individual is exposed*. For example, if the individual reads in the media that the government is banning music piracy and at the same time, a large number of music consumers are using legal services, then s/he might perceive a decreased level of commonness of music piracy behaviour. If the individual reads from the media or learns from a friend that a large number of music consumers are receiving music files from illegal resources, then his/ her perceived commonness of music piracy behaviour might be higher.

6.7 Chapter Review

This chapter has discussed the empirical findings from both the qualitative and the quantitative study of the current thesis. The main aim of the chapter is to answer the main research questions outlined at the beginning of the thesis. The research findings of the qualitative study (Study 1) and those of the quantitative study (Study 2) are first discussed separately, and the relevant research findings are discussed and related to existing studies on music piracy.

After separately discussing the qualitative and quantitative study, the research findings of both studies are then integrated to provide a general discussion of the whole thesis. This part of the discussion explains how the qualitative study in Study 1 provides the basis of the quantitative investigation (Study 2) and how the quantitative study (Study 2) complements the qualitative exploration in Study 1. Specifically, by taking a qualitative approach, Study 1 proposes a theoretical framework based on the theory of planned behaviour when explaining music piracy behaviours of Chinese consumers. This theoretical framework needs to be examined in terms of its generalisability by conducting a quantitative study.

In addition, the quotations and statements of the research participants of Study 1 provides the basis of the scale development of normative ambiguity. This is an emerging variable with a potential impact on Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. In Study 2, the scale of this emerging variable is assessed and validated through the quantitative analysis, and important insights have been revealed regarding the mechanism of how normative ambiguity affects Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. Therefore, apart from examining the generalisability of the theoretical framework proposed in Study 1, Study 2 also helps in the scaled development process of normative ambiguity that is identified in Study 1. Together with the identification and analysis of normative ambiguity, the research findings from the two studies have called for further examination on the clarity dimension of social norms when considering the impact of different social norms on human behavioural intentions.

Based on the analysis of both the qualitative and quantitative data, it could be concluded that Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions are affected by their attitudes toward the

behaviour, their descriptive subjective norms regarding music piracy, their perceived behavioural control over music piracy and their perceived normative ambiguity of the behaviour. In other words, the generalisability of the theoretical framework proposed in Study 1 is confirmed by Study 2 where the quantitative data is collected and analysed from a large and random sample of Chinese music consumers. In the next chapter (Chapter 7), the contributions and limitations of the current thesis would be discussed as well as the managerial implications of relevant research findings and the recommended future research directions.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

7.1 Chapter Overview

In the previous chapter, the findings of the current thesis were discussed in detail. By conducting two empirical studies, this thesis explores the antecedents of Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions using an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach where a qualitative study is conducted first and is followed by a quantitative study to enhance the generalisability of the findings. The analysis of the qualitative and quantitative findings and the integrated discussion of the findings have revealed important insights on music piracy behaviours in China. A more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the behaviour is reached by the current thesis.

In this final chapter of the thesis, the overall conclusion of the thesis will be discussed first, and the main research questions of the research will be examined. In addition, the theoretical, methodological and managerial contributions of the current thesis will be presented to address the overall significance and implications of the relevant research findings. The chapter will also discuss the limitations of the current thesis and possible future research directions recommended by the researcher.

7.2 General Conclusion of the Thesis

The main purpose of the current thesis is to explore the antecedents of Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. As the main research question is exploratory in nature, the thesis adopts an exploratory sequential mixed methods design for the research process. Generally speaking, the current thesis is intended to seek the answers for three research questions. The aim of the first research question is to explore the potential antecedents of music piracy behaviours in China, as the existing studies on music piracy mainly focus on the Western world, and the research into Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions is rather limited. This research question, which is exploratory in nature, needs to be answered by conducting a qualitative study where emerging ideas are allowed to be identified. By conducting the qualitative study (Study 1), the detailed insights on the formation of Chinese music consumers' attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control can also be examined.

The second research question extends the exploration of the first. Through the qualitative study in Study 1, an emerging theme; *normative ambiguity*, is identified by the qualitative data analysis. Normative ambiguity was identified when discussing with research participants how their music piracy behaviours are affected by their social referents. It can be defined as the degree to which an individual is unclear about whether his or her social referents approve the focal behaviour. Normative ambiguity of Chinese music consumers might be caused by the distinctive feature of the Chinese music market that its consumers' awareness of music intellectual property rights protection is far from sufficient. This insufficient awareness of copyright protection might affect their music piracy intentions, and therefore it is imperative to gain a deeper insight into this issue. The relevant research findings on normative ambiguity might be important not only for China, but also for other less-developed music markets due to their consumers' insufficient awareness of music copyright protection.

The first two research questions could be answered by the qualitative study (Study 1), while the third research question needs to be answered through conducting a quantitative study. The third research question concerns the generalisability of the qualitative research findings. Based on the qualitative research findings in Study 1, an augmented theoretical framework for explaining music piracy behaviours in China is proposed, and the details of each theoretical construct are identified. However, qualitative research alone could not be convincing enough as the research findings are retrieved from a small and representative sample of music consumers. Therefore, the main purpose for Study 2 is to check the generalisability of the qualitative research findings. Firstly, this helps validate the proposed theoretical framework for explaining music piracy behaviours in China. Secondly, it provides evidence of the reliability and validity of the measurement of the emerging variable (i.e. normative ambiguity) identified by Study 1. The quantitative study conducted in Study 2 complements the qualitative study in Study 1, and the two studies together provide a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of music piracy behaviours in China.

7.2.1 RQ1: What are the factors influencing Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions? How are Chinese music consumers' piracy decisions affected by their social referents?

According to the research findings from the qualitative research (Study 1), several variables are identified as the antecedents of Chinese music consumers' music piracy behaviours. Based on the theory of planned behaviour proposed by Ajzen (1991), an individual's behavioural intentions are jointly determined by his or her attitudes toward the behaviours of interest, the perceived subjective norms of the behaviour and of his or her perceived behavioural control over the behaviour of interest. With this guideline, Study 1 identified Chinese music consumers' attitudes toward music piracy, their descriptive subjective norms of music piracy and their perceived behavioural control over music piracy.

Interestingly, the study did not capture a significant amount of information on the perceived injunctive norms of music piracy. Instead, when discussing the perceived social pressure on conducting music piracy behaviours with the research participants, most of them are unclear about whether their social referents approve the behaviour or not. Therefore, based on their ambiguous perception of the perceived social pressure on conducting music piracy behaviours, an emerging variable is identified and named normative ambiguity. As normative ambiguity also captures the effects of social norms on social behaviours, it is also argued that the presence of normative ambiguity, which is observed among Chinese music consumers, could affect their intentions in conducting music piracy behaviours.

Therefore, based on the qualitative findings, it could be concluded that Chinese music consumers' *attitudes toward music piracy*, their *perceived descriptive norms* of music piracy behaviours, their *perceived behavioural control* over music piracy and their *normative ambiguity* of music piracy behaviours are the potential impactors of their music piracy intentions.

Chinese music consumers' *attitudes* toward music piracy are their favourable or unfavourable feelings of music piracy behaviours, and their attitudes are formed by their affective, behavioural

and cognitive evaluations over music piracy behaviours. Among these various evaluations on music piracy behaviours, some are in favour of the behaviour and others are discouraging the behaviour. For example, an individual might think that conducting music piracy could be used as a way of sampling the music where the quality of the music could be assessed prior to the purchase of legal versions. At the same time, other music consumers would have a sense of accomplishment when they used illegal channels (i.e. through piracy) to find music. However, some respondents reported that they would have a sense of guilt when they conducted music piracy as they acknowledged the adverse effect their piracy behaviours would have.

In addition, their *perceived descriptive norms* are their observations on others' music piracy behaviours, and this could also be regarded as their perceived commonness of the behaviour. If they observe that a large number of their social referents are retrieving music files through piracy rather than from legal channels, they might perceive a greater commonness of music piracy behaviours among their social referents. According to the analysis of the qualitative interview data, the descriptive norms of Chinese music consumers on music piracy behaviours are their observations on others' intellectual property rights violating behaviours (i.e. music piracy). They also observed others' lack of awareness in terms of music copyright protection. These observations might encourage music consumers in China to engage in music piracy behaviours. However, aside from observations in favour of music piracy that might lead to a higher level of perceived commonness of music piracy behaviours, some respondents also observed others' anti-piracy behaviours, and these observations might have the potential to discourage music piracy behaviours of the individual as they might lead to a lower level of perceived commonness of music piracy among his or her social referents.

Chinese music consumers' *perceived behavioural control* over music piracy are their perceived confidence in successfully conducting the behaviour. This is formed by a set of beliefs on either facilitating or impeding behavioural factors. In Study 1, the details of both the facilitating and impeding factors are identified. For instance, music consumers often regard music piracy as an easy task because of the assistance given by the website where the illegal music files are uploaded

and the search engine used. Some respondents reported factors impeding music piracy behaviours. For example, it is sometimes difficult to download the music files that are of high quality. In addition, music files from illegal resources might be affected with computer viruses which could lead to information security issues such as software and hardware failure.

The generalisability of these qualitative findings is confirmed by the quantitative study in Study 2, where the proposed theoretical framework proposed by Study 1 was examined through a quantitative approach with a large and random sample. Therefore, based on the above discussion on the general research findings, it could be concluded that music consumers' attitudes, descriptive norms, perceived behavioural control are significant predictors of their music piracy intentions. The impact of *normative ambiguity* is also confirmed by the quantitative study. This will be discussed in the following section with regards to the second research question.

7.2.2 RQ2: How does normative ambiguity induced by the insufficient awareness toward intellectual property rights protection affect music consumers' intentions?

As discussed above, normative ambiguity, which is identified through the analysis of the qualitative data, could contribute to Chinese music consumers' insufficient awareness toward intellectual property rights protection. The quantitative research conducted in Study 2 gave important insights on the mechanism of how this normative ambiguity affects Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions.

Specifically, normative ambiguity would have a direct impact on Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions. Normative ambiguity is defined as the degree to which an individual is unclear about his or her social referents' approval of the focal behaviour. Therefore, if a music consumer is with a higher level of normative ambiguity in terms of conducting music piracy behaviours, then he or she is more likely to engage in music piracy behaviours as the individual is having a lower chance of receiving injunctive norm messages that stem from their social referents against music piracy behaviour. With fewer injunctive norm messages against music piracy, a music consumer might have less social pressure on conducting music piracy behaviours.

Apart from this direct impact of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions, Chinese music consumers' normative ambiguity could also impact their music piracy intentions through affecting their attitudes and descriptive norms of music piracy. If a music consumer is high in normative ambiguity regarding music piracy, then he or she is more likely to have favourable feelings of music piracy. This more favourable feeling would result in more favourable attitudes of music piracy, which in turn would lead to higher intentions in engaging in music piracy behaviours. A music consumer with a higher level of normative ambiguity would also report a higher level of perceived descriptive norms, which in turn would lead to higher music piracy intentions.

7.2.3 RQ3: Could the findings from the qualitative phase of research generalise to a larger population?

To answer this research question, the research findings from both the qualitative and quantitative studies should be considered as a whole. The main purpose of Study 2 of the current thesis is to examine the generalisability of the qualitative findings from Study 1. One drawback of conducting research with a qualitative approach is that the research findings are generated through the interaction with a small and purposeful sample. It is therefore difficult to know whether the relevant findings could be applied to other individuals or organisations. Both the qualitative study and the quantitative study play a vital role in the overall exploratory sequential mixed methods design.

Considering that the quantitative research in Study 2 confirms the significance of the theoretical framework proposed in Study 1, it could thus be concluded that the research findings of the qualitative study could be generalised to a larger population (i.e. other Chinese music consumers). In addition to the examination of the theoretical framework, the quantitative study (Study 2) also confirms the validity and reliability of the measurement of normative ambiguity.

Having discussed the general conclusion of the current thesis with regards to the three main research questions, the next section of the chapter discusses the theoretical contributions of these research findings from several perspectives.

7.3 Theoretical Contributions

By conducting an exploratory mixed methods sequential study into Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions, the current thesis has made a unique contribution to the literature from several perspectives:

- First, it advances our understanding of the theory of planned behaviour by checking its effectiveness in explaining an unethical consumer behaviour in the digital domain (i.e. music piracy) with a sample that is rarely studied;
- Secondly, from a social psychological perspective, the thesis advances our knowledge on the decision-making process of music consumers in China and how their choices are affected by their social referents;
- In addition, the thesis has proposed a new ambiguity perspective in looking into digital piracy behaviours.

The Effectiveness of the Theory of Planned Behaviour in Explaining Unethical Consumer Behaviours in the Digital Domain. The first theoretical contribution of the current thesis derives from the examination of the effectiveness of the theory of planned behaviour in terms of explaining unethical consumer behaviours in the digital domain. In the current thesis, the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) was employed as the guiding theory at the beginning of the research process. The reason for choosing the theory as the guiding theory of the thesis is that after a careful and comprehensive review of the existing literature on music piracy, the theory of planned behaviour is identified as the most comprehensive theory in explaining the behaviour. Under the guidance of the theory of planned behaviour, a comprehensive set of factors leading to music piracy behaviours among Chinese music consumers is expected to be identified.

According to the theory of planned behaviour, music consumers' attitudes, subjective norms and behavioural control are frequently identified as the antecedents of music piracy behaviours (Chiou et al., 2005; Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008; Fleming et al., 2017; Kwong & Park, 2008; Wang & McClung, 2012; Yoon, 2011). However, most of this research has been conducted in a Western setting where the respondents are recruited from Western countries. A number of the theoretical constructs of the theory of planned behaviour need to be investigated with the consideration of the impact of culture, as their mechanisms of impacting behavioural intentions could vary among different cultures (Smith, 2015). Therefore, the details of the formation of Chinese music consumers' attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control need to be further examined.

Thus, the current thesis contributes to the literature by conducting an in-depth investigation into Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions under the guidance of the theory of planned behaviour. Through the qualitative study of the thesis (Study 1), the detailed information concerning Chinese music consumers' attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are identified. The statements from the research participants and the thematic analysis of these qualitative data provide the basis of understanding how the theory of planned behaviour construct work in explaining music piracy behaviours in China, a country where the music market has distinctive differences from those of Western countries in terms of the technological development, regulations and their consumers' awareness of music copyright protection.

The effectiveness of the theory of planned behaviour in explaining music piracy behaviour in China has been assessed through the quantitative examination of the theoretical framework proposed based on the qualitative research findings. Overall, the theory of planned behaviour has shown satisfactory explanatory power of the music piracy behaviour in China, and this is supported by the significant relationship between most of the theory of planned behaviour constructs and Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. Specifically, according to the quantitative data analysis results in Study 2, Chinese music consumers' attitudes toward music

piracy, their perceived descriptive norms of music piracy and their perceived behavioural control are all significant predictors of their music piracy intentions.

However, it is not possible that the theory of planned behaviour provides a comprehensive view of music piracy in China, as the current thesis did not find a significant relationship between Chinese music consumers' injunctive subjective norms and their music piracy intentions. A new factor called normative ambiguity was identified by the qualitative study, and it was quantitatively confirmed to have unique impact on Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions. This finding calls for further consideration of Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions are affected by their social referents. This then acts as the second theoretical contribution of the current thesis as discussed in the next section.

Expansion on the Impact of Social Norms on Music Piracy Behaviours. By employing the theory of planned behaviour in music piracy research, previous literature has examined the impact of subjective norms on music consumers' piracy intentions. Subjective norms, according to Ajzen (1991), are the individual's perceptions of others' approval of conducting a behaviour. Based on this definition, it is argued that an individual is more likely to engage in conducting a specific behaviour with a higher level of subjective norms. Subjective norm is the theoretical construct in the theory of planned behaviour that captures the impact of the social context on human social behaviours (Myers, 2014). However, as discussed in the previous literature review chapter (Chapter 2), previous research findings on the impact of subjective norms of music piracy music piracy behaviours are contradictory with some studies confirmed the significant and positive relationship between subjective norms and music piracy behaviours and other studies did not find this relationship. In terms of music piracy studies, some studies have confirmed the predictive power of subjective norms on music piracy (Morton & Koufteros, 2008; Yoon, 2011), while some studies reported no such relationship between subjective norms and piracy intentions (Cronan & Al-Rafee, 2008).

Based on the need to gain further insight into how human behaviours are affected by various social norms, Cialdini (1990) has proposed the categorisation of social norms into descriptive and injunctive norms. Descriptive norms are the individual's perceptions on others' behaviour, while injunctive norms are the perceptions of others' approval of the behaviour of interest. Based on a careful review of the existing studies that have examined the relationship between subjective norms and music piracy intentions, only the impact of injunctive norms have been assessed. Further to this, the impact of descriptive norms on music piracy intentions were not examined. However, music consumers' descriptive norms of piracy behaviours could also impact their piracy intentions. Based on the current thesis, descriptive norm is confirmed as the significant predictor of music piracy intention in China. Specifically, with a higher level of descriptive norms, the music consumer is more likely to engage in music piracy behaviours, as the music consumer might perceive music piracy as a common way of music acquisition. This kind of observations of others' music piracy behaviours would give music consumers in China the informational value on what the common Behaviour is in terms of music piracy among their social referents. In addition, descriptive norms give music consumers in China a decisional shortcut while making their own decision on whether or not to conduct music piracy by looking at others' behaviours.

Interestingly, the current thesis has failed to find a significant relationship between music consumers' perceived injunctive norms and their music piracy intentions, while previous research has identified this relationship when studying samples of Western music consumers. This result could be regarded as resulting from the impact of cultural differences in terms of the music industries of Chinese and Western music markets. In Western music markets, music consumers are better aware of the music copyright protection as there are numerous anti-piracy laws which would lead to severe legal and financial sanctions if they conduct music piracy (Brander et al., 2017). In China however, music consumers are not fully aware of the need in protecting music copyrights or other forms of intellectual property rights. This generally insufficient awareness towards intellectual property rights protection would lower the likelihood of Chinese music consumers to receive injunctive norms against music piracy behaviours from their social referents.

Another reason that might lead to the failure of injunctive norms in predicting music piracy behaviours in China is the presence of normative ambiguity that is observed from the qualitative study and confirmed by the quantitative study. Normative ambiguity, as discussed in the previous chapter, captures the extent to which an individual is unclear about his social referents' approval of music piracy behaviours. With a higher level of normative ambiguity, it is challenging for Chinese music consumers to receive injunctive norm messages either in favour of or against music piracy behaviours. Therefore, based on the current research, it is imperative to look at both descriptive and injunctive norms when studying music piracy behaviours or other forms of unethical consumer behaviours within the digital domain (i.e. movie piracy). This identification of normative ambiguity is then concluded as the third theoretical contribution of the current thesis which will be discussed in the next section.

Understanding Digital Piracy from the Normative Ambiguity Perspective. Another important theoretical contribution of the current thesis is the normative perspective in consideration of the antecedents of unethical consumer behaviours within the digital domain. In the current thesis, normative ambiguity was first identified by the qualitative data analysis. It was argued to have its unique impact on music consumers' piracy intentions. This was confirmed by the quantitative data analysis results in Study 2. These results found a significant relationship between normative ambiguity and Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions.

Quantitative research (see Hashim, Kannan, Maximiano, & Ulmer, 2014; Redondo & Charron, 2013; Sinclair & Green, 2016b; Yang et al., 2015a) has revealed important insights into how normative ambiguity affects music consumers' music piracy intentions: Apart from its direct impact on music piracy intentions, attitudes toward music piracy and descriptive norms were found to function as the mediators of the impact of normative ambiguity. The quantitative confirmation of the impact of normative ambiguity enhances the generalisability of the research findings. This research finding provides a novel perspective when examining the antecedents of unethical consumer behaviours within the digital domain. When examining the consumers' intentions in conducting various unethical consumer behaviours, it is imperative to consider

whether the consumers are clear about their social referents' approval relating to the behaviour of interest.

This research finding on normative ambiguity might be important in understanding consumer behaviours in music markets of other less-developed countries or regions where copyright protection is not maximally enforced. It is also expected that this impact of normative ambiguity can be found in the consumption of other information goods or other consumer behaviours that involve the moral judgements of the consumers (i.e. green behaviours or socially responsible consumer behaviours). With the help of normative ambiguity, it is expected that academics and practitioners could gain a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of these behaviours, and these thorough understandings of those consumer behaviours could in turn offer new directions in designing and implementing marketing campaigns or other consumer interventions aimed at discouraging the occurrence of unethical consumer behaviours.

7.4 Methodological Contributions

The current research adopts an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach in studying the antecedents of music piracy behaviours in China. The successful identification of normative ambiguity in addition to the proposal of an augmented theoretical framework in explaining music piracy behaviours in China has confirmed the effectiveness of this approach in relevant consumer research. Therefore, the novel approach adopted by the current thesis made its unique contributions to the methodology of conducting consumer research. Specifically, the methodological contributions of the current thesis are within the following aspects:

- The use of mixed methods designs in consumer research;
- The abductive approach of qualitative data analysis;
- The embedded scale development process in mixed methods studies.

7.4.1 The Use of Mixed Methods Designs in Consumer Research

As discussed in the introduction and in the methodology chapter of the current thesis, the main research question of the thesis is exploratory in nature. The main aim of the current project is to identify the potential antecedents of music piracy in China, as current existing theoretical framework in addition to the measurements of theoretical constructs are development based on the studies of Western music consumers. Therefore, a qualitative study is deemed as an appropriate starting point for the current thesis. However, considering the major drawbacks of qualitative research approach; mainly that relevant research findings lack generalisability (Bergman, 2008; Creswell & Clark, 2018; Gavin, 2008), the quantitative study (Study 2) in the current thesis complements the qualitative research in Study 1.

The successful implementation of an exploratory sequential mixed methods study on music piracy revealed important insights that have been previously ignored by the existing studies of music piracy using a quantitative approach. Specifically, the current research project successfully identified a new potential influencing factor relating to music piracy, and this emerging variable is named normative ambiguity. This captures the degree to which an individual is unclear about his or her social referents' approval on music piracy behaviours. The qualitative and quantitative research findings have confirmed the significant impact of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions. With the addition of normative ambiguity into the theory of planned behaviour framework (Ajzen, 1991), a more comprehensive theoretical framework explaining music piracy behaviour is reached as discussed in Chapter 6.

Similarly, the exploratory sequential mixed methods approach could also be applied to consumer research of other topics. As this approach is more exploratory, it is then suitable for researching topics that are exploratory in nature. Creswell and Clark (2018) for example, have argued that the exploratory sequential mixed methods design is suitable for exploring a phenomenon, and it is particularly compatible when the aim of research is:

- to develop measurements of a theoretical construct, design a research instrument (i.e. a whole set of survey questions) or to design an effective experiment stimulus in experimental studies;
- to explore the unknown variable that might have a significant impact on the dependent variable;
- to answer the research question when there is no theoretical framework could be used in guiding the research;
- to adjust the existing quantitative measurements of theoretical constructs or variables to be compatible with the culture or the targeted research participants.

7.4.2 The Abductive Approach in Qualitative Data Analysis

In analysing the qualitative data in Study 1, an abductive approach has been adopted for two purposes. The first purpose of the qualitative research is to identify emerging variables that are previously ignored by the existing studies using quantitative approach in music piracy research. Therefore, an inductive approach is applied in the analysis of qualitative data, as this approach could help the researchers to identify new variables that are presented in the form of new themes or aggregate dimensions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This was achieved by using open coding technique in the process of analysing qualitative data. Researchers could employ this technique to identify the main concepts embedded in the qualitative data and categorise them into different themes and dimensions (Saldana, 2016).

The second purpose of conducting the qualitative research in the current thesis is to identify the nuanced details of what forms music consumers' attitudes and subjective norms and contributes to the perceived behavioural control of music piracy behaviours. Therefore, to fulfil this research purpose, a deductive approach in analysing qualitative research data is adopted in Study 1. By adopting the deductive approach in analysing qualitative data, the details of Chinese music consumers' attitudes toward music piracy, their subjective norms of music piracy behaviours and their perceived behavioural control over music piracy are examined in detail. For example, the

research findings in Study 1 have found that music consumers' attitudes are formed through their affective, behavioural and cognitive evaluations on the behaviour. In addition, the formation of their subjective norms, and the beliefs concerning the facilitating and impeding factor of music piracy behaviour that are used in forming their perceived behavioural control over music piracy, are identified through the deductive qualitative data analysis approach by using a thematic analysis technique (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Therefore, in analysing qualitative data, both the inductive and deductive approach could be employed concurrently, and the choice of qualitative data analysis approach should be compatible with the aim of the research project. If the aim of the research is to identify new variables, then an inductive approach should be adopted by the researcher; and if the aim is to explore the details of the existing variable, the deductive approach is then more appropriate. In the current thesis, the two approaches are employed at the same time as the research seeks to achieve both purposes. In an exploratory sequential mixed methods study, the adoption of an abductive qualitative data analysis approach could also enhance the reliability and validity of the quantitative measurements that would be used in the later stage of the research. In the current thesis, the research findings of the deductive approach (i.e. thematic analysis) are used in refining the measurements of consumers' attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control based on the existing and tested measurements from previous studies.

7.4.3 The Embedded Scale Development Process in an Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Studies

The third methodological contribution demonstrated by the current thesis is the embedded scale development in the exploratory sequential mixed methods design. Through the qualitative research in Study 1, an emerging variable (i.e. normative ambiguity) is identified. The impact of normative ambiguity is then needed to be tested and investigated in the quantitative research in Study 2. Therefore, the measurement for normative ambiguity is needed. However, to develop a reliable measurement of normative ambiguity would require a rigorous process which includes the process of expert review, the exploratory factor analysis and the confirmatory factor analysis

(D'Astous & Legendre, 2009; DeVellis, 2016). Marketing measurement researchers (Churchill, 1979; Peter & Churchill, 1986) have also recommended the sequential approach in developing more reliable and valid measures for marketing research, which is similar to the exploratory sequential mixed methods design in that a qualitative study is conducted first as the initial step in developing more reliable and valid measures for marketing research.

By employing an exploratory sequential mixed methods study, the scale development process could be embedded in the whole research design. In the current thesis, to develop the measurement scale for normative ambiguity, both the research findings of the qualitative and quantitative study were employed. Specifically, the statements and quotations of the research participants of the qualitative study (Study 1) formed the basis of scale development. These statements are then used in the expert review process. To further purify the scale for normative ambiguity, a pilot study is conducted within Study 2 prior to the massive data collection. In addition, in the Structural Equation Modelling analysis, the data analysis results evaluating the reliability and validity of the measurement model confirms the overall suitability of the normative ambiguity measurements.

Therefore, the current thesis has demonstrated the benefit of conducting an exploratory sequential mixed methods study in terms of developing valid and reliable measurement scales for the emerging variables in the research process (Creswell & Clark, 2018; Creswell & Clark, 2017; Fetters et al., 2013). The scale development process which is embedded in the current exploratory sequential mixed methods study is illustrated in Figure 9 in Chapter 3.

7.5 Managerial Contributions

Besides the theoretical and methodological contributions made by the current thesis, there are also important implications for marketing. Based on the research findings of the current project, a more holistic understanding of the music piracy behaviours in China is reached, as an augmented theoretical framework in explaining music piracy behaviours is proposed and quantitatively tested. Market participants of the music markets in China and other less-developed

areas where the music consumer suffers from insufficient awareness of music copyright protection and normative ambiguity could design and implement corresponding marketing campaign. The specific wordings of the educational marketing messages encouraging music consumers to adopt legal music services are especially important, as descriptive norm-based messages and injunctive norm-based messages could impose different impact on behavioural intentions. Relevant research findings could also be applied to management. Through this, the occurrence of other unethical consumer behaviours, especially those within the digital domain could be discouraged through managerial decisions.

7.5.1 Effective Measures to Combat Digital Piracy

Based on the theoretical framework for explaining music piracy behaviours in China, effective measures could be designed and implemented to combat digital piracy behaviours including music piracy. According to the model proposed and tested in the current thesis, music consumers' attitudes, descriptive norms and perceived behavioural control are the three main antecedents of their music piracy intentions, while injunctive norms do not seem to significantly predict music piracy intentions. Therefore, anti-piracy measures could be designed from those three perspectives.

To change music consumers' attitudes toward music piracy, market regulators and various other music market participants including record labels, online music platforms and artists could deliver messages through a variety of different mediums on the negative effects that would be caused by music consumers' piracy behaviours. However, when delivering educational messages, it is better to deliver descriptive norm-based messages, as descriptive norms significantly predict their music piracy intentions. If the educational messages are injunctive norm-based messages, the effects of those messages might be reduced as injunctive norms do not seem to significantly predict Chinese music consumers' music piracy intentions. In addition, to discourage Chinese music consumers from conducting music piracy behaviours, another approach is to enhance the technological barrier of music piracy. An example might be for regulators to strictly control the distribution and upload of music files onto the Internet. Search engine companies such as Baidu,

search results that contain illegal music files should be screened and removed. Thus, it would not be possible to locate illegal music files on the Internet. Potentially, this could lead to a lower level of perceived behavioural control over music piracy, which would in turn lead, perhaps to decreased intentions of music piracy. Strategies to design and implement educational marketing campaigns could also be delivered to control other digital piracy behaviours including movie piracy and illegal retrieval of publication resources.

7.5.2 Encouraging the Adoption of Paid Legal Music Services

In addition to discouraging music piracy and other forms of digital piracy, relevant research findings could also be employed to encourage the adoption of paid legal services among music consumers in China. As discussed in the introduction and literature review, music piracy is still an issue in global music markets as a large number of music consumers still retrieve music files from illegal channels. In addition, most users still use illegal services in China with only 3% paying the subscription fees (IFPI, 2018). However, this number for Western countries could reach about 40% to indicate a much higher willingness-to-pay for the paid streaming music services (IFPI, 2018). Subscription fees are becoming an important source of revenue of online music platforms and record labels (Weijters & Goedertier, 2016). Therefore, music market participants, particularly online music platforms, could consider using marketing messages based on descriptive norms to encourage the adoption of paid streaming music services in China.

7.6 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Although the current research has its unique theoretical, methodological and managerial implications for academics and business practitioners, it is not without limitations. In this section, the limitations of the current thesis are discussed, and future research directions will be suggested based on these limitations.

7.6.1 The Potential Limitation of PLS-SEM Technique

PLS-SEM technique is said to have its own merits in latent variable research including the relatively loose requirements on the sample size and the normality of the data (Hair et al., 2011). In addition, the PLS-SEM technique is also more appropriate when the research is aimed at building a theory rather than to test a theory where the research hypotheses are derived with sound theoretical and empirical background. However, this technique should be implemented with caution as the issues including the inappropriate sample size and the non-normality of data could lead to severe bias in terms of the path coefficients regarding the structural model (Marcoulides & Saunders, 2006). Therefore, it is imperative for the researchers who intend to use PLS-SEM as the technique in analysing the latent variable models to fully consider numerous factors that determine the appropriate sample size of the study.

According to Marcoulides & Saunders (2006), the determination of the sample size when PLS-SEM is employed is affected simultaneously by the psychometric properties of the variable, the expected strength of relationships between variables, the distributional characteristics of the variable, and the complexity of the structural model. When the variables in the model have established and reliable measurement items, the required sample size is smaller. A much larger sample size is required if the relationships between variables are relatively weak, or the data suffers from severe non-normality issue, and when the structural model itself is complex in nature.

Due to the use of PLS-SEM technique in analysing the survey data with more than 200 data entries in the current thesis, it is possible that the significance level of the path coefficients in the structural model might be overestimated (Garson, 2016). In future research, in order to prevent this overestimation of the significance level when employing PLS-SEM technique in the data analysis process, researchers could control the sample size to an appropriate level (i.e. less than 200 while considering other factors in determining the appropriate sample size).

Besides the sample size issue, the researchers should also be aware of the other limitations of the PLS-SEM technique. For example, it is relatively difficult for researchers to compare the

effectiveness of several models when PLS-SEM is implemented, as there is no universal goodness-of-fit index for the PLS method. Although the goodness-of-fit of the structural model could be assessed through the values of R^2 and Q^2 in terms of the variance explained and the predictive relevance, the traditional covariance-based SEM technique provides more reliable goodness-of-fit indices that allow researchers to compare among different models (Hair et al., 2012; Henseler et al., 2014). Therefore, it is recommended that the researchers choose the corresponding SEM technique based on their research purposes and questions (Hair et al., 2011).

7.6.2 The Explicit Impact of Culture on Digital Piracy

In the current thesis, the impact of culture is captured by the identification of an emerging variable called normative ambiguity. It is argued that this normative ambiguity is developed through the distinctive feature of the Chinese music market that its consumers lack music copyright protection awareness, and that this insufficient music copyright protection awareness might be generated by the different development trajectory of relevant technologies. Although the impact of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions, as confirmed by the quantitative study, could be seen as the result of a cultural difference in terms of music market development, the relationship between cultural characteristics and normative ambiguity needs further exploration.

Therefore, in future research endeavours, researchers could try to identify the explicit relationship between one or more cultural characteristics and normative ambiguity. For example, it is argued that China is regarded as a country dominated by collectivism where people care more about the collective goals than the personal goals by previous studies (see Steele & Lynch, 2012; Wei & Yu, 2012). Therefore, in a collectivist culture such as China, the Chinese might be more likely to be influenced by others surrounding them. If this is the case, Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions should be more likely to be impacted by both descriptive and injunctive norms that capture the impact of social referents or social context. However, the findings of the current study did not find a significant relationship between injunctive norms and music piracy behaviours. In future research, researchers could explore why injunctive norms fail to predict Chinese music consumers' piracy intentions. If this is the case, do the research findings of the current thesis

indicate a shift in Chinese consumers on the individualism-collectivism dimension of cultural characteristics? Is the technology-led consumer behavioural change related to this shift?

7.6.3 The Antecedents of Normative Ambiguity

Although the current research has identified normative ambiguity through the qualitative study (Study 1) and confirmed its impact on music piracy intentions through the quantitative study (Study 2), the research did not reveal the insights on the antecedents of normative ambiguity. Through the analysis of qualitative analysis, it is argued that the potential antecedents of normative ambiguity could be the lack of focus social interactions between the music consumer and his or her social referents on the topic of music acquisition, and this lack of social interactions can lead to the fact that the music consumer is not able to capture his social referents' attitudes of music piracy behaviours.

In future research, researchers could further explore the antecedents of normative ambiguity. This could be done, for instance, through another exploratory sequential mixed methods study. In the qualitative stage of research, qualitative data concerning the normative ambiguity could be retrieved and analysed, which could then be analysed through the quantitative study in a later stage. Gaining insights on the antecedents of normative ambiguity could have important theoretical and managerial implications as it could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how normative ambiguity is formed. It could also focus on how to reduce normative ambiguity that would lead to digital piracy behaviours.

7.6.4 The Further Generalisability of the Research Findings

In the current thesis, the research findings of the qualitative study are tested by the quantitative study. However, the theoretical framework could also be employed in research projects concerning other types of digital piracy behaviours including movie piracy and software piracy. The generalisability could be further enhanced if the theoretical framework proposed by the current study could be used to explain a wide range of unethical consumer behaviours. Therefore,

for future research, researchers could quantitatively examine the generalisability of the theoretical framework proposed by the current study into other topics including movie piracy and software piracy behaviours.

In addition to testing the generalisability of the theoretical framework using data retrieved from another research topic, future research should employ different samples to test the theoretical framework. In the quantitative study of the research (Study 2), the research participants were recruited through online forums. Although the demographical characteristics of the respondents for Study 2 is diverse in that they were drawn from two different online forums which indicates that they might have similar tastes on music. To overcome this potential sampling bias, future research could use a sample that consists of music consumers with different musical tastes to further test the generalisability of the research findings.

In future investigations into the impact of normative ambiguity on music piracy intentions or the intentions to conduct other types of digital piracy, cross-cultural research could be designed and implemented by recruiting samples from both Western and Oriental countries. In these cross-cultural studies, the explanatory sequential mixed methods design could be employed to first collect and analyse quantitative data. The research findings of the thesis would be enhanced if the data analysis results are consistent in both samples of different cultures. When the discrepancies emerge in the data analysis results, the researchers could conduct a further qualitative study aimed at finding the underlying reasons for the inconsistencies.

7.7 Concluding Remarks

The current research has made its unique contributions to the literature from the theoretical, methodological and managerial perspectives by employing an exploratory sequential mixed methods study into music piracy behaviours in China. By employing the theory of planned behaviour as the guiding theory, the thesis enriched our understanding of the music piracy behaviours in a less-developed music market from a social psychological perspective. In addition,

with a unique focus on the perceived social influence of the Chinese music consumer, the thesis identified a new influencing factor of music piracy behaviours; normative ambiguity. The impact of normative ambiguity has been quantitatively examined and the augmented theoretical framework in explaining music piracy intention. Meanwhile, the research findings of the current thesis could be used in facilitating further discussions on consumers' perceived social influence and consumer decision-making processes.

From a methodological perspective, the successful design and implementation of an exploratory sequential mixed methods study demonstrated the effectiveness of this research approach in addressing under-researched topics and developing specific measurement scales for emerging variables. Instead of using quantitative approach alone from the postpositivist philosophical stance, researchers could try to explore more consumer-related topics from a pragmatic stance by employing mixed methods design in their research.

Relevant research findings would shed new lights on combatting music piracy. Specific marketing strategies could be designed and implemented in order to reduce the occurrence of the piracy behaviours. Considering the limitations of the current thesis, future research could expand the research from several perspectives including the exploration of the antecedents of normative ambiguity, the assessment of further generalisability of the theoretical framework, and the identification of the impact of cultural characteristics on consumers' music acquisition behaviours.

Appendices

Appendix A: Initial Semi-Structured Interview Protocol for Study 1

Interview Guide

(This is the initial interview guide for Study 1, the actual interview guide used in the interviews are continuously developing based on the previous interview results and notes taken by the interviewer)

Introduction

Briefly introduce the purpose of the current research project to the research participants;

Explain the procedures of how the research participants' confidentiality is guaranteed, how will the data be used for research purposes;

Assist the research participants to fill in the consent form.

Ice-breaking

Hobbies, favourite singers/bands?

What online music service platform(s) do you use?

How frequently do you listen to music?

Attitudes toward music piracy

What do you think of music piracy? Why?

What do you think of your previous music piracy behaviours? Why is that?

Is music piracy illegal or unethical? Why?

What kind of benefits would music piracy bring to you? Why? Examples?

What kind of threats would music piracy bring to you? Why? Examples?

Did you pirate a lot of illegal music files? Why?

Did you conduct music piracy in the past month?

What kind of benefits would music piracy bring to you? Why? Examples?

What kind of threats would music piracy bring to you? Why? Examples?

Subjective norms toward music piracy

Do your friends approve your music piracy behaviours? Why?

Do your family members approve your music piracy behaviours? Why?

Do you think there are a lot of people who are conducting music piracy in China?

Do you care your friends or family members' opinions in terms of music piracy? Why?

Perceived Behavioural Control over Music Piracy

What kind of skills do you think you would need if you want to download illegal music?

What do you think is the most difficult part in conducting music piracy?

Are you confident enough to perform music piracy? Why?

What do you think of the legal music service platforms? Are they easy to use? Why?

Do you think it is different to use legal services rather than piracy? Why?

Other Questions

Do you care about music industry and why?

How much money would you like to pay for the paid subscription music streaming services?

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