

A Study of the Status and Countermeasure of Chinese College Students' Online Shopping

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Abstract—The purpose of the paper is to study the status of Chinese college students and propose the countermeasures accordingly. College students, as the main force of online shopping, shop more than other groups, so it is of practical and academic significance to study their online shopping behaviors. On the basis of study of Chinese college students' shopping psychology, consisted of impulsive consumption psychology, pursuing cheap consumption psychology, following the masses consumption psychology, comparative consumption psychology, this paper summarizes the status of Chinese college students' online shopping from their online shopping characters, the influencing factors of online shopping and the problems existing in online shopping. Meanwhile, countermeasures are given in three aspects: ideological education, practice guidance and economic intervention accordingly.

Keywords—college students' online shopping; online shopping psychology; the character of online shopping; influencing factors

I. INTRODUCTION

College students are a special group. Compared with other groups, college students' online shopping has the following characteristics: strong desire to buy, limited disposable income, sensitive to new things on the Internet and strong acceptance ability, liking pursuing fashion and following the social trend [1]. According to the annual consumption report of Chinese college students in 2018, there are about 30.18 million college students in China in 2017. The average monthly cost is about ¥1,400, the necessary expenditure is about ¥800, and the amount of autonomous control is about ¥600. The average annual consumption of Chinese college students in online shopping is about ¥1,100, and the average express delivery is about 6.2 per capita, indicating that the amount and quantity of consumption are huge. With the increase of the enrollment of college entrance examination in 2018 and 2019 and the improvement of people's life in China, the number of college students and online shopping consumption of Chinese college students may have increased. Therefore, there is a strong practical and academic significance for the study of online shopping of Chinese college students.

II. ONLINE SHOPPING PSYCHOLOGY OF CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS

According to the difference of consumers' online shopping psychology, we can divide consumers' online shopping psychology into four categories. The classification is also applicable to Chinese college students' online psychology,

which are impulsive consumption psychology, pursuing cheap consumption psychology, following the masses consumption psychology and comparative consumption psychology, whose contents are shown as follows [2].

A. Impulsive Consumption Psychology

Impulsive consumption behavior refers to the consumer's temporary consumption behavior caused by some factors without planning for this consumption before. From different motives of consumer behavior, we can divide consumer's behavior into pure impulse consumption, heuristic impulse consumption and planned impulse consumption. Pure impulsive consumption is the most primitive type of impulsive consumption. Before the emergence of purchasing behavior, no consideration was given to the need for goods and the performance of goods, and the consumers are satisfied with the desire to buy at present suddenly, which mostly occurs among young groups such as Chinese college students. The motivation of heuristic impulse consumption is commodities or promotional activities, which prompt consumers to realize that they lack such commodities at present or have future demand for such commodities, thus resulting in impulse buying behavior. Planned impulse consumption refers to the purchase behavior of consumers who plan to buy or not buy products in the future, but buys the products that they are seeing [3].

B. Pursuing Cheap Consumption Psychology

Due to the limited disposable amount of money available to Chinese college students, the monthly amount available to Chinese college students nationwide in 2017 is about ¥600, and a considerable proportion of them have even fewer disposable amounts, so most college students will have different degrees of greed for pursuing cheap consumption psychology when they shop online. They often spend more time on different networks when they shop online. Purchasing platform, different stores, similar models of products or other some relative attributes have been repeatedly compared to obtain products and services that they need. There are two main reasons for this kind of psychology:

- The amount of disposable money of Chinese college students is limited.
- Chinese college students have more disposable time, and they have time and ability to compare similar or the same products many times.

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C. Following the Masses Consumption Psychology

College students are social creatures and universities are small societies, so they have considerable social attributes. With the public's psychology or behavior, it has the following functions. On one hand, it is easy to obtain group identity and help college students integrate into the group. On the other hand, it can effectively save time, increase purchasing efficiency and improve shopping experience. Driven by the above functions, a considerable number of Chinese college students will have online shopping behavior because of following the masses consumption psychology.

D. Comparative Consumption Psychology

College students are a specific group, some of whom have strong self-comparison, which is also reflected in online shopping somehow. Of course, this kind of psychology not only exists among college students' online shopping. This kind of psychology and behavior is only a reflection of students in many behaviors.

III. THE STATUS OF CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' ONLINE SHOPPING

For Chinese college students, family living expenses are the main source of income. The information search function of the internet greatly reduces the search cost and information cost for Chinese college students, and further promotes their online shopping behavior. Chinese college students' online shopping behavior is the result of comprehensive factors, which is affected by both internal factors and external factors. Overall, Chinese college students have a good reflection of online shopping. About half of the students express their willingness to sell goods online in the future, including opening online stores and selling second-hand goods. At the same time, college students also have some concerns about the problems of online shopping.

A. The Characters of Chinese College Students' Online Shopping

The paper discusses the characters of college students' online shopping from four aspects, such as the frequency of college students' online shopping, shopping place, disposable capital allocation and other characters, which are shown as follows.

• The frequency of online shopping

All Chinese college students have online shopping experience every year, and their data are presented as follows. About 6.8% of Chinese college students shop online every six months, nearly 31.8% of Chinese college students shop every month, about 41% of Chinese college students shop every month, and nearly 20.4% of Chinese college students shop every three days. Overall, compared with other age groups in China, Chinese college students have a higher frequency of online shopping.

• The place of online shopping

Chinese college students use e-commerce platforms that they are familiar with, or those recommended by their classmates or friends. The main platforms are TAOBAO, TIANMAO, JD.COM, VIP SHOP, YIHAODIAN, JIUJI NETWORK, and official websites of various brands. Among them, TAOBAO, TIANMAO and JD.COM are the most popular among Chinese college students.

• Disposable capital allocation

For Chinese college students, family support is the main source of living expenses. Some students would increase their living expenses by doing part-time jobs. When the living expenses are insufficient, some students adopt installment payment [4]. According to the annual consumption report of college students in China in 2018, the annual consumption of Chinese college students in online shopping is ¥1,100, which accounts for 8.73% of their annual living expenses in terms of their nine-month school stay.

• Others

If Chinese college students buy unsatisfactory products during online shopping, about 65.12% of them will choose to return the goods, which shows that the inclusiveness of Chinese college students is far greater than that of the whole society. On the premise that the shopkeepers do not give out freight insurance, 52.5% of the Chinese college students will choose to buy Freight insurance, which shows that more than half of the students have risk awareness. Almost all Chinese college students are disgusted with the advertisements appearing in the process of online shopping [4]. In terms of gender, the main products of online shopping for girls are cosmetics, clothing, shoes and hats. For boys, electronic equipment and sports goods are mainly purchased. There is little gender difference in daily necessities, snack drinks, secretaries and other products. In addition, about 59.46% of Chinese college students are not satisfied with the current protection of consumer privacy online shopping [5].

B. Influencing Factors of Online Shopping

• Internal factors

Internal factors refer to the factors determined by the attributes of consumers themselves, which do not change with the changes of the external environment. This paper discusses them from the perspectives of gender, age and disposable income.

For gender, both male and female Chinese college students have strong commonalities and tendencies in purchasing goods. Cosmetics, clothing, shoes and hats, electronic equipment, sports goods, daily necessities, food and beverages, books and other products are often purchased by college students. Firstly, there is a big difference between boys and girls in the purchase of cosmetics, clothing, shoes and hats, electronic

equipment and sports goods. Girls tend to buy many cosmetics and clothing, shoes and hats, and a small amount of electronic equipment and sports goods. Whereas, boys would like to mainly buy sports goods and electronic equipment, and a small number of cosmetics and clothing, shoes and hats. Secondly, there was no significant difference in online shopping of daily necessities, diet and beverages, books and other products among female students [5].

For age, Chinese college students have obvious characters compared with other social groups, just as follows [1]: 1) Chinese college students have strong desire to buy goods; 2) limited living expenses & lack of funds; 3) sensitive to new things on the internet & strong acceptance ability; 4) liking to pursue fashion and follow the social trend.

For disposable income, Chinese college students' income mainly comes from their families. Some students will increase their disposable income through part-time jobs. When disposable income does not meet their consumption desire, some students will reduce their purchasing behavior. Others will still shop online by borrowing money from others, installment payments or even online loans to satisfy their consumption desire. Therefore, if Chinese college students' consumption desire is not effectively controlled, it may cause adverse social problems.

- External factors

Except for internal factors, the rest are external factors. External factors cannot be changed by Chinese college students, so they can only make reasonable consumption decisions according to external factors. This paper mainly discusses the reference function, frequency of going out, length of going out, security of network payment, speediness, convenience of returning and exchanging goods, diversification of commodities, buyer evaluation, promotion, commodity description, transaction record, seller's reputation, price and so on.

Early studies by Merton and Rossi found that consumers' choices of products and brands are influenced by referring groups in the process of purchasing decisions [6]. Escalas and Bettman's research found that consumers' spiritual self-identity is greatly influenced by the brand of goods used by the reference group, and they used the same brand to create self-concept [7]. Zhang J. Y. and their team members believe that the essential attribute of the reference group is its influence. The stronger the dependence of consumers on the referring group in shopping, the greater the influence of the latter [8]. Therefore, for Chinese college students in the process of online shopping, the influence of people around them is enormous; especially their friends and classmates will have a significant impact on Chinese college students' online shopping decision-making [9].

The construction and operation of business circles around universities or colleges is also an obvious external factor, because it will affect the frequency and length of college students' going out. The consumption ability of college students is almost fixed. If the consumption of offline increases, online shopping behavior will inevitably decrease [10].

E-commerce platform is a decisive external factor of whether college students buy online and how much they consume. It mainly includes the security of online payment, the quick opening of web pages, the convenience of returning and exchanging goods, the diversification of commodities, buyer evaluation, promotion, commodity description, transaction record, seller's reputation, price and so on. All these factors affect consumers. The experience decides whether Chinese college students are willing to buy online or even buy repeatedly [1].

C. Current Problems and Risks

Online shopping greatly facilitates college students' life. However, in the process of online shopping, for some reasons, Chinese college students will have problems and risks somehow. The paper discusses online shopping addiction [11], transaction risk, commodity risk and after-sales risk [2].

- Online shopping addiction

Online shopping is very common among Chinese college students. Some Chinese college students rely on online shopping because of their weak self-control, and even become addicted to online shopping. Online shopping addiction make different impacts to different students. First of all, for all Chinese college students, online shopping addiction will make them spend too much time on online shopping, thus reducing students' time in learning, sports, communication and so on. Secondly, for students who are from wealthy families, online shopping addiction does not have much influence except the above effects. However, for students from ordinary families or even poor families, online shopping addiction will make Chinese college students' economic condition insufficient to satisfy their consumption desire, which may cause some bad effects, such as borrowing money excessively from the people around them, payment, campus loans and some other bad behavior, even causing some severe social problem.

- Transaction risk

In the process of online shopping, some students are weak in risk awareness. They do not buy through official e-commerce or pay through official payment channels, which makes the transaction risk appear in the process of online shopping, such as information leakage, funds being cheated, etc. Few problems in the process of trading can be solved perfectly. Chinese college students often suffer from the above awkward problems without any solution.

- Commodity risk

Quite a number of college students are purchasing online with a desire for cheapness, so there will inevitably be some goods that cannot meet the expectations of the buyers, or even a huge difference between the real goods and their promotions. In addition, for high-priced products, some products are excellent in brand, quality and service, but may not necessarily be suitable for purchase, such as clothes, shoes, handicrafts, small animals and so on.

- After-sales risk

Online shopping experience cannot be perfect, some online shopping inevitably exists problems, thus college students may need to return exchange and adopt other ways to solve the problem. On the one hand, Chinese college students may be subjected to verbal violence from shopkeepers in the process of returning and exchanging goods. On the other hand, after Chinese college students give poor comments for online shopping experience or commodities, some shopkeepers will continue to send short messages, make phone calls to harass, or even make bad language attacks, which will affect the mood and life of Chinese college students.

IV. COUNTERMEASURES

In order to solve the problems of Chinese college students in the process of online shopping, this paper gives countermeasures from three aspects: ideological education, practice guidance and economic intervention.

First of all, the most fundamental is the need for ideological education for college students. Through education, Chinese college students can establish a correct and scientific concept of online shopping, so that they could realize that online shopping can bring great convenience to their lives, but if they cannot effectively control it, it will bring problems to their daily life. Therefore, college tutors and relative social organization members should pay attention to the ideological education and take action by organized and unorganized lectures, social practice activities, and so on.

Secondly, to guide Chinese college students to actively participate in practical activities, so that they could experience real happiness in the process of practice, and concede their online shopping time to practice in the real world. By doing this, they could feel the reality of their lives, rather than wasting their precious time on online shopping addiction.

Finally, if the above two measures couldn't work, we can try to communicate with students' families, and cooperate with their parents with appropriate economic intervention for students. If they don't have enough money on online shopping,

they might focus on something else that might be very significant for their lives.

V. SUMMARY

This paper studies the status of Chinese college students and put out the countermeasures accordingly. Firstly, the paper studies Chinese college students' shopping psychology, which is consisted of impulsive consumption psychology, pursuing cheap consumption psychology, following the masses consumption psychology, comparative consumption psychology. Secondly, based on the analysis of Chinese college students' online shopping psychology, this paper summarizes the status of Chinese college students' online shopping from their online shopping characters, the influencing factors of online shopping and the problems existing in online shopping. Finally, countermeasures are given in three aspects: ideological education, practice guidance and economic intervention.

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