

Research on Women-friendly City Construction under She-economics Background

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ABSTRACT

She-economics, known as women's economics or womenomics, rise due to the improvement of women's socioeconomic status, the increasing number of the female labor force, and the rising level of education. The female economy includes many aspects, such as female labor, women's financial management, and women's consumption. The rise of "she-economics" is an opportunity for urban economic development. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to find how cities can seize the "she-economics" to develop their economy. Through the literature research method, this research analyzed the reasons and characteristics of she-economics, and provided proposals that could help cities develop economy using she-economics. To summarize, there are four potential useful suggestions to cities: to create female-friendly and characteristic city brands, innovate marketing strategies, enrich the supply of women's consumption, and develop the female consumer market in rural areas.

Keywords: *She-economics, Female consumption, Urban development, Women-friendly city*

1. INTRODUCTION

She-economics, also known as women's economics or womenomics, is first introduced in Abe's planned structural reforms which aims to increase the rate of women's participation in the workplace [1]. It refers to a unique economic phenomenon that demonstrates women's growing influence in the consumer sector due to the improvement of women's economic and social status. The female economy includes many aspects, such as female labor, women's financial management, and women's consumption. The research on women's consumption has been around for a long time. Silverstein and Sayre (2009) argue that the female consumer market is expected to dominate the market in the world [2]. Moreover, Wittenberg-Cox and Maitland (2009) claim that in the 20th century, a large number of women entering the workplace was a far-reaching economic revolution, which is helpful to economic recovery and growth [3]. According to Quinlan and VanderBrug (2016), they believe that women play an important role in economic development, and they conclude ten measurable developments that explain and describe the rising economic influence of women [4]. Thus, it is obvious that womenomics would bring boundless opportunities. However, most research just focuses on how companies can take advantage of the "she-

economics" to rise. The purpose of this research is to find how cities can seize the "she-economics" to develop their economy. Furthermore, this research will analyze the reasons for she-economics rise and put forward the proposals for women-friendly cities. Through exploring the reasons and proposals, this paper provides important clues to strengthen women's power and economic development.

2. REASONS FOR TAKING ADVANTAGE OF "SHE-ECONOMICS"

First and foremost, the female labor force has increased in recent decades. As shown in figure 1, the female labor force participation rate has slightly increased recently in many countries. Oumlil and Erdem (1997) also illustrate that the ratio of the female labor force rose by a sixth between 1960 and 1986 in the United States [5]. Since more and more women have entered the labor market, they have become richer than before. They can afford more what they want. Then these women's roles changed from housemakers to dual roles: carer and worker [6]. Furthermore, a high rate of female labor has drawn people's attention on female consumption and their socioeconomic status [7]. Secondly, the enormous female consumer market is one of the important factors for taking advantage of "she-economics". According to

Brennan (2009), women have promoted 80% of the expenditure in the United States, and China has nearly 400 million female consumers aged 20-69 that might form the world's third largest economy.[8] Thus, the female consumer market would be extremely worth exploring. Thirdly, enterprises could aim at gender to provide better services and goods. SAVASKAN and Kahraman (2021) claim that gender could exert a

powerful influence on the consumer behavior. They suggest that understanding the difference of gender-specific consumption behavior is helpful for businesses to improve their products and marketing strategies [9]. Fourthly, she-economics would be more individual than the traditional economy model. Here is an example of the female labor force's level of education.

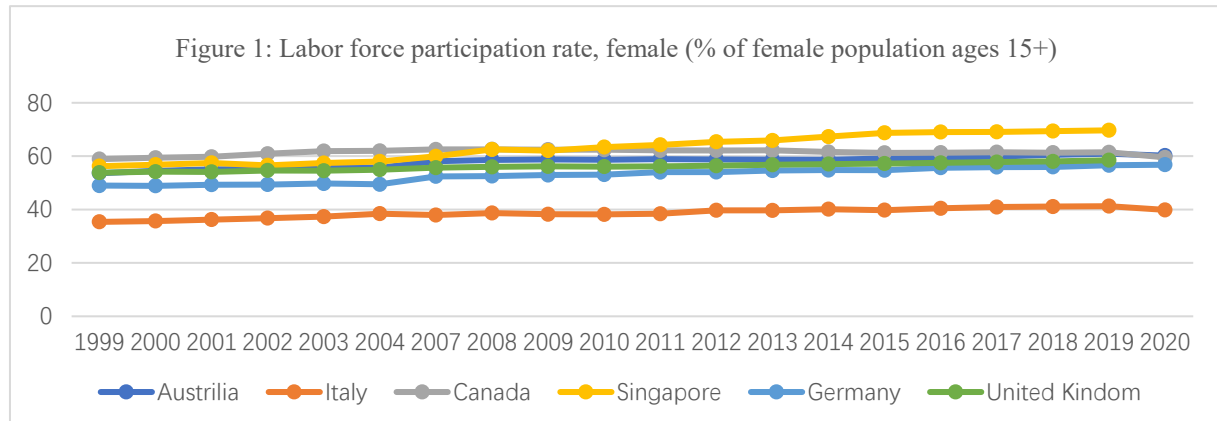


Figure 1 Labor force participation rate for female in different countries (% of female population ages 15+) [15].

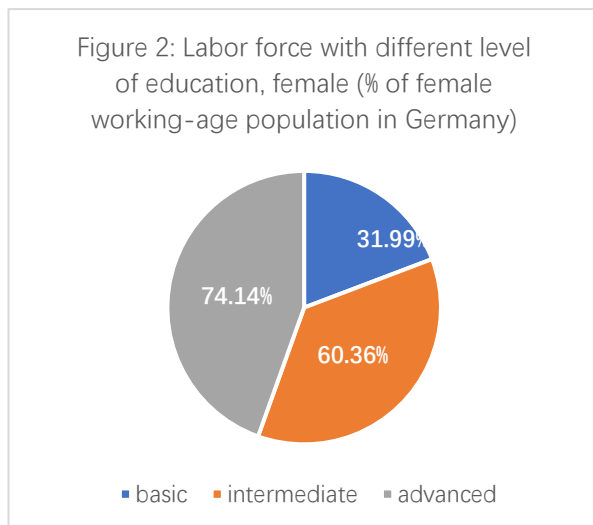


Figure 2 Labor force with different level of education, female (% of female working-age population in Germany) [15].

Figure 2 demonstrates that 74.14% female labor force in Germany have advanced education, following by 60.36% of female workers who have intermediate education. Only 31.99% female workforce receive basic education. This conclusion implies that with the increase in the level of education, women have become more and more independent, and they pursue to break away from the traditional housewife image. High-level-educated women see themselves as dual creators of wealth and value in today's and tomorrow's societies [10]. Therefore, their consumption modes are different from traditional family-oriented consumption mode. For one thing, as

professionals, they will use their own wisdom, talents and professional knowledge to create shared wealth for society. Then they might prefer the consumption on individual improvement. Such as skills training and fashion consumption. For another, female consumers, with their unique foresight and sensitivity, are constantly creating new demand and supply, and their new demands could not only create brand-new and dazzling products and consumption forms, but also change the industrial ecology of women and even the world.

Moreover, because of the higher education women receive, they have become the backbone of the investment industry. Xinwei (2017) believes that women might be more sensitive and be better at investing regularly because they would pay more attention to ROI (Return On Investment) and safety [11]. Conversely, she-economics could also boost the investment industry because of the enormous demand. Finally, the development of the internet could contribute to the boom of she-economics. Businesses could provide an online platform to attract female consumers, and improve the communication with consumers to meet their needs, forming an echo chamber function, which means that some commercial websites provide similar information based on the search result records, and then the information of preference could be reinforced. [12]. Furthermore, if a women-friendly city could be constructed, the city would be more recognizable depending on the promising she-economics.

3. PROPOSALS

3.1 Create female-friendly and characteristic city brands

The government could encourage local long-established enterprises or well-known enterprises to choose the platform websites with high female attention to launch shop and entertainment programs that aim at women with regional characteristics. These services or products should provide women with convenience and save their time. Because women's dual role of both a worker and a carer would produce higher pressure and less time for them [6]. To be specific, businesses could introduce services such as women's employment training, domestic childcare, and women's health science screening. Working women would attach importance to convenience, education, and leisure activities [5]. Furthermore, enterprises could regularly publish the women's top sellers list, and regularly hold various special activities to meet the needs of female consumers such as shopping, social networking, and sharing.

Moreover, businesses should pay attention to improving the quality of service during shopping. Specifically, if the company chooses online sales, the website needs to be designed to provide more detailed information which would stimulate women to explore. [13]. If the firm chooses offline sales, the salesclerk should identify female consumers' demand, and provide differentiated and friendly services on demand. As SAVASKAN and Kahraman (2021) examined in their research, women would prefer to ask for help during shopping [9].

3.2 Innovate marketing strategies

It is necessary to set up diversified marketing channels. There are a variety of channels for female consumers to obtain information. Based on the study, Chiang and Yu (2010) discover that the most widely used information source in Taiwan is the television, followed by the Direct Message advertisement. The rests are newspapers and magazines [14]. However, different from the expression of the traditional media, the marketing behavior of women's economic brands in the context of the Internet era is based on new media and even self-media platforms. The traditional media expressions are more suitable for a small number of categories with higher value of individual products, higher marketing costs, and wide coverage of multi-channel [12].

Therefore, businesses could create theme consumption venues and focus on female consumption scenarios. That means large-scale supermarkets, characteristic blocks, scenic spots, hotels, hospitals, etc. can highlight women's aesthetic characteristics in terms of decoration design, business settings, cultural context, commodity display, lighting design, etc.. Additionally,

they can as well set up women's theme floors (special areas), and open women-only fitness centers, cultural classrooms, or experience exchange places. Moreover, the government could support to create several women-themed films and television dramas in the city. Then these works might become the most important symbols of a female-friendly city. It can not only increase the identity of the city, but also can promote the development of related entertainment industries.

Furthermore, businesses could also set some shopping festivals related to women. The project is not only about attracting customers with discounts, but also about promoting a culture related to women, and creating a more suitable development atmosphere for she-economics. Yet undeniably, discounts are extremely attractive to women. According to the study, SAVASKAN and Kahraman (2021) find that women prefer discounts more than men [9]. As a result, reasonable discounts are profitable for all merchants, consumers, and governments.

3.3 Enrich the supply of women's consumption

To enrich the supply of women's consumption, the government can support the city's local clothing, home, cultural, and creative brand enterprises to create a series of products with feminine characteristics. Efforts could also be made by developing trendy toys, women's mobile games, women's online text platforms, and other derivative products that have the city's logo and reflect female-friendliness. Chiang and Yu (2010) support the view that with the expansion of the market, women's lifestyle and the design for women have become diverse [14]. Xinwei (2017) argues that women's evolving consumption aesthetics consists of the product and the person. The object aesthetics mainly embodies in the enjoyment of products and the shopping environment [12]. Thus, producers should pay more attention to the design of the products. One thing that is important to note is that the design and marketing need to focus on the fun of the products and the women's independence. Promotion campaigns should be wise to avoid showing the traditional stereotype that the female should be submissive since the female consumers think they have been obedient for a long time [5].

Moreover, it is beneficial to guide non-female consumers as the mainstream enterprises to deeply cultivate the female market, such as automobiles, food, and other industries relying on the existing industry chain. It is also important to support enterprises to carry out the product research and development, and require the patent declaration based on women's needs and women's aesthetics. For example, in August 2021, a car show with the theme of a pink party was held in Chengdu, China. The booths of each brand were decorated in pink. Cars built around women's aesthetics are first reflected in color and design. This line of thinking was intensively

displayed at the Chengdu Motor Show. At present, the common choice is to increase the embodiment of feminine elements in the appearance and interior, and pink becomes the unified choice. But to see pink as the standard for women's car buying is an overly thin interpretation. This means that the exploration of female consumption should be deeper.

3.4 Develop the female consumer market in rural areas

The demand of female consumers in rural areas should also be satisfied. The reason is that although their level of revenue is average, the large population base makes them become the main force in the entire Internet consumer group. Women from rural areas are easy to be attracted by the trend and keep up with it [12]. Therefore, it is required to develop the rural e-commerce, and "sink" the enterprises into the rural market. It is also necessary to improve the infrastructure and facilities of the rural "Internet +" and "intelligent consumption". Besides, it is important to improve the sales outlets, smooth the logistics channels, and enhance the consumption and supply capacity of the rural market.

4. CONCLUSION

With the development of feminism and the growth of the female labor force, women's socioeconomic status and the level of education have rapidly increased. The influence of female consumption could not be neglected. Therefore, "she-economics" is an investment that is enough to stimulate the social economy, and bring its own added value. Moreover, it is said that "she-economics" is a potential stock with unlimited room for social appreciation [10]. This means that the rise of "she-economics" is an opportunity for urban economic development, and it is necessary to deepen the "she" field, analyze the needs of "she", construct a female-friendly city, create a unique city image, and then promote the rapid development of the urban economy. The target of this research is to analyze how to promote the economic growth of the city combined with she-economics. Yet the limitation of the research is the lack of quantitative models that examine the utility of the proposals. Future research on the influence of women's consumption could be deepened and systematized by searching the composition, constraints, and main areas of women's consumption influence. Further studies could also focus on conducting the quantitative research or building research models of women's influence, so as to expand the research horizon in women's marketing.

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