

Analysis of the reasons for the excessive consumption of students influenced by the development of e-commerce and short video live-streaming platforms, along with recommendations

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Abstract. This article starts from the context of post-pandemic consumer overheating in the domestic market and explores the impact of e-commerce and short video live-streaming platforms on the consumption habits of student groups. Based on the theoretical perspective of behavioral economics, it conducts a psychological study of students' consumption characteristics. As a result, it concludes that the influence of e-commerce and short video live-streaming platforms on student consumption habits is primarily negative. Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to and educate students on cultivating their consumer attitudes and improving their understanding of consumption.

1. Introduction

"Chop-Hand Party," "Moonlight Clan," and "Exquisite Poverty" have swiftly become buzzwords in the online sphere, encapsulating the alarming trend of income imbalance fueled by irrational consumption. These terms not only highlight the prevalence of this phenomenon but also underscore the emergence of a distinctive consumer mentality. The roots of this trend delve into the persuasive marketing strategies employed by the internet e-commerce industry and the culture fostered by short video platforms, creating a perfect storm of excessive consumption.

The allure of discounts, coupons, and celebrity endorsements orchestrated by the online retail sector significantly impacts individuals' psychological states, nudging them towards irrational consumption patterns. In the aftermath of the pandemic, the encouragement of increased consumption has been palpable, with e-commerce and short video platforms playing pivotal roles in driving economic activity. While these platforms contribute to economic growth, certain aggressive marketing techniques have inadvertently distorted individuals' perceptions of their consumption capacity, resulting in overconsumption and the cultivation of unhealthy attitudes toward consumption.

The consequences of such trends extend beyond the immediate economic impact. Erroneous perceptions of one's consumption capabilities, spurred by these excessive marketing methods, have the potential to sow the seeds of long-term societal issues. The development of unhealthy consumption attitudes not only strains individual financial

situations but can also contribute to a broader cultural shift where material excess takes precedence over financial prudence. This shift could lead to a societal landscape where the pursuit of consumerism overshadows the importance of sustainable and responsible economic practices.

In this context, it becomes imperative to critically examine and regulate the marketing tactics employed by these digital platforms. Balancing the economic benefits of increased consumption with the necessity of fostering a culture of responsible and mindful spending is key to averting the potential detrimental effects on society. By promoting transparent marketing practices and consumer education, we can aspire to build a future where economic growth is harmonized with individual well-being and societal values, mitigating the risks associated with irrational consumption trends encapsulated by buzzwords like "Chop-Hand Party," "Moonlight Clan," and "Exquisite Poverty."

2. Literature review

Currently, most research on the development of the Internet economy and e-commerce platforms focuses mainly on macro-level studies centered around enterprises and regions. Such studies are conducted from the perspective of producers and often provide recommendations for business development or analyze the macro impact on certain regions. For instance, Yang Wenjie's research in "Comparative Study of Online and Offline Retail Distribution Models" analyzed the impact

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of the e-commerce industry on the retail sector and suggested future directions for retail development.[4]

Simultaneously, there have been many excellent achievements in studying the effects of the Internet and digital economy development on consumers. In terms of research subjects, previous articles typically focused on broad groups and didn't differentiate between different consumer groups based on distinct consumption characteristics. For example, Wu Xiaohan's research approached the push effect of digital payments on household consumption from the perspective of mental accounting, but only provided preliminary differentiation of consumer groups based on self-control abilities.[3]

Furthermore, in terms of studying consumer-side businesses for promoting consumption, most research mainly targets e-commerce and short video live-streaming platforms, outlining the pros and cons of this marketing approach without effectively integrating fundamental theories from psychology or behavioral economics. For example, Zhang Shou'ang's research on "Innovation of the 'Short Video + E-commerce Livestreaming' Marketing Model" highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of this model and offered suggestions for industry development.[5]

Up to now, research from the consumer's perspective exploring their consumption patterns and psychological motivations is relatively lacking. Individual consumer studies are crucial for the overall economy. In the case of China, for example, there is a prevalent issue of excessive consumption leading to extravagance and waste among domestic consumers. This economic overheating is detrimental to development. By researching consumer patterns and psychological activities, the reasons behind such phenomena can be uncovered, subsequently aiding in curbing excessive and irrational consumption.

Inspired by the research, this paper primarily focuses on the student demographic—a group characterized by distinctive consumption habits and less mature consumer concepts. The impact of the Internet and digital economy on their consumption habits is more pronounced, thereby better reflecting the influence of rapid internet development on consumer perspectives. Building upon this foundation, this paper will integrate fundamental theories from behavioral economics to analyze consumer decision-making more effectively from a psychological standpoint.

3. Factor analysis and policy recommendation

3.1 Social factor

Short video live-streaming platforms have emerged as influential social spaces where students frequently encounter glimpses of their idols' or friends' lives and consumption habits. This exposure significantly shapes the consumption decisions of students, leading to a phenomenon known as imitative consumption, a concept deeply rooted in behavioral economics' psychological model of reference dependence. Here, the perceived value of goods becomes unnaturally inflated as students draw

comparisons with their peers or idols, deviating from rational consumption concepts.[6]

Furthermore, the pervasive influence of social circles, characterized by a sense of belonging and peer pressure, plays a pivotal role in molding students' consumption choices. The spectacle of idols or friends engaging in high-consumption behaviors on these platforms can evoke potent emotions of envy and jealousy, potentially propelling students towards unnecessary spending. Additionally, concerns about social image contribute to the development of a culture where students engage in excessive consumption to project a specific status and prowess within their social circles.

Moreover, social factors extend their impact to shape the very perspectives and values that govern students' consumption behaviors. Witnessing idols or friends indulging in high-consumption behaviors on short video live-streaming platforms can lead students to perceive these actions as trendy or fashionable. This fosters a mindset that encourages the pursuit of trends and fashion, directly influencing consumption perspectives and values and leading to superfluous spending. The portrayal of consumption and lifestyles as synonymous with success and happiness on these platforms cultivates a notion that "consumption equals happiness," shaping students' attitudes and behaviors toward consumption and potentially fostering a predisposition towards overconsumption.

The enduring impact of social factors on students' consumption behaviors and decisions becomes apparent when considering the long-term consequences. Under the continuous influence of social factors on short video live-streaming platforms, students may develop enduring and unfavorable consumption habits and behavioral patterns. These patterns can persist and evolve as students mature, significantly impacting their future consumption decisions.[7] For instance, exposure to content showcasing luxury consumption that surpasses their economic capacity may drive some students to pursue such consumption, even if impractical or unaffordable, resulting in future financial pressures and psychological burdens.

To mitigate these challenges, a multifaceted approach is recommended. First and foremost, there is a need to bolster students' self-awareness and rational thinking abilities.[3] This can be achieved through a unified educational effort in schools and proactive parental guidance. Equipping students with the tools to resist the sway of social factors and fostering habits of rational consumption becomes crucial in navigating the digital landscape.

Additionally, governmental and societal interventions are vital to address the broader impact of social factors on students' consumption decisions. Strengthening the supervision and guidance of short video live-streaming platforms from various angles, including content moderation and ethical standards, is essential. These efforts aim to reduce the undue influence of social factors, safeguarding students' rights to reasonable consumption, and fostering a digital environment that promotes responsible and mindful engagement.[8]

In short, the pervasive influence of social factors on short video live-streaming platforms shapes students' consumption behaviors, influencing everything from immediate spending decisions to long-term habits. To effectively address this issue, a concerted effort is required, encompassing educational initiatives, parental guidance, and societal and governmental interventions. By empowering students with self-awareness and critical thinking skills and simultaneously regulating the digital platforms that influence them, it is possible to create an environment that promotes a healthy balance between social engagement and responsible consumption.

3.2 Psychological factor

During their formative years, students often grapple with psychological challenges, prominently including anxiety and low self-esteem. These issues, if left unaddressed, can propel students towards engaging in excessive consumption as a coping mechanism to alleviate inner turmoil. In moments of anxiety and unease, students may resort to purchasing items like trivial trinkets, clothing, or cosmetics, seeking a transient escape and a semblance of control over their emotional state.[2] While this purchasing behavior may provide immediate relief, its consequences can extend far beyond the moment, potentially impacting both the financial stability and mental well-being of the individual.

Moreover, the aftermath of excessive consumption introduces a complex psychological rebound effect. Post-indulgence, students often grapple with feelings of guilt and regret, recognizing the transient pleasure derived from their impulsive purchases. This emotional turmoil becomes a pivotal factor shaping future consumption decisions, as individuals find themselves entangled in a cyclical pattern of consumption and guilt. This cycle not only perpetuates a detrimental impact on their financial situation but also poses a significant threat to their mental health, creating a nuanced interplay between psychological well-being and consumer behavior.

Behavioral economics sheds light on the profound influence of psychological factors on students' consumption decisions, underscoring the critical importance of mental well-being in shaping financial behaviors. To mitigate the negative consequences of this intricate relationship, students must actively cultivate self-awareness and refine their emotional management skills. Instead of relying solely on excessive consumption for momentary satisfaction, they should seek alternative, healthier avenues to relieve stress and unease.

Simultaneously, educational institutions and families play a pivotal role in shaping the mental health landscape of students. Bolstering mental health education and awareness becomes imperative, providing students with the tools and support systems needed to effectively address psychological issues. By fostering a culture that prioritizes emotional well-being and equipping individuals with coping mechanisms beyond consumerism, educational institutions and families contribute significantly to breaking the cycle of

overconsumption and safeguarding the mental health of the younger generation.

3.3 Marketing Strategical Factor

Marketing strategies wield substantial influence over the patterns of excessive consumption observed among students, especially within the realms of e-commerce and short video livestreaming platforms. These platforms strategically deploy an array of promotional tactics, such as discounts, flash sales, and buy-one-get-one offers, with the intent of not only attracting users but also fostering a culture of continuous consumption. While these strategies undeniably provide students with perceived value for their purchases, they simultaneously create an environment conducive to overconsumption.

From the perspective of behavioral economics, the allure of marketing strategies lies in their adept manipulation of emotional factors. Discounts and flash sales, for instance, trigger a psychological response, inducing a desire to shop as individuals perceive that they are securing a good deal.[1] The element of scarcity further exacerbates this impulse, creating a sense of urgency that convinces individuals that they must act swiftly to seize a rare opportunity. This urgency-driven mentality can propel students into making impulsive purchases, ultimately contributing to a cycle of overconsumption.

Moreover, the evolving landscape of marketing on digital platforms introduces additional elements that shape students' consumption decisions. Influencer recommendations and community marketing, emerging as powerful tools within the e-commerce and livestreaming domains, wield significant sway over students. Recommendations from influencers or friends can prompt purchases, while peer pressure within social circles may further contribute to overconsumption as students strive to align with perceived societal norms.

Considering these complexities, it becomes evident that marketing strategies are pivotal contributors to the issue of excessive consumption among students. To counteract the sway of these tactics, students must be equipped with a heightened level of consumer awareness and honed decision-making skills. Empowering students to discern between genuine benefits and false promotions is imperative, encouraging them to engage in consumption with a rational mindset.

Simultaneously, the responsibility extends beyond the individual level to encompass broader regulatory measures. Governments and regulatory bodies play a vital role in establishing and enforcing laws and regulations that standardize marketing activities. Such measures are essential to safeguarding consumers' interests, ensuring transparent practices, and preventing exploitative marketing tactics that could contribute to overconsumption.

In essence, addressing the influence of marketing strategies on excessive consumption among students demands a multifaceted approach. Cultivating consumer awareness and decision-making skills at the individual level, coupled with the implementation of robust

regulatory frameworks, is essential for mitigating the adverse impacts of marketing tactics. This comprehensive strategy aims not only to protect consumers but also to foster a culture of responsible consumption that aligns with the well-being of students and the broader societal interests.

4. Conclusion

In overview, the swift evolution of e-commerce platforms and short video live-streaming platforms has wielded a considerable impact on the consumption behavior of students, often yielding negative consequences. A behavioral economics perspective highlights the intricate web of factors influencing students' decisions, encompassing social dynamics, psychological intricacies, and sophisticated marketing strategies. In addressing the challenge of excessive consumption among students, a holistic approach is imperative, extending beyond the individual to encompass societal and institutional dimensions.

Recognizing that students' consumption decisions are molded by a complex interplay of factors, interventions need to transcend the individual level. An essential aspect of curbing overconsumption involves fortifying the regulation and standardization of e-commerce and short video live-streaming platforms. This necessitates proactive measures to ensure responsible content creation, ethical marketing practices, and a safeguarding of consumers' interests. By establishing and enforcing stringent regulations, these platforms can be directed towards promoting a culture of mindful consumption.

Simultaneously, there is a pressing need to enhance consumer education and guidance for students. Elevating their awareness and competency in consumption involves imparting critical thinking skills, fostering a discerning approach to marketing tactics, and encouraging a nuanced understanding of the societal and psychological influences on their choices. Through targeted educational initiatives, students can be empowered to navigate the digital landscape with a sense of responsibility and restraint.

Only through the implementation of these comprehensive measures can we safeguard the healthy development of students while ensuring the sustainable growth of the e-commerce industry and short video live-streaming platforms. By fostering an environment that prioritizes responsible consumption and equipping students with the tools to make informed choices, we lay the groundwork for a future where digital platforms coexist harmoniously with individual well-being and societal values. This concerted effort is pivotal not only for the benefit of students but also for the cultivation of a balanced and sustainable digital ecosystem that meets the needs of both consumers and industry stakeholders.

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