

# Design and Application of Experimental Teaching in Consumer Behavior Courses

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**Abstract:** This article mainly elaborates on the design and application of experimental teaching in the teaching of consumer behavior. To study consumer behavior, it is necessary to understand their information collection activities before acquiring goods and services, as well as the evaluation and selection of goods, services, or brands. It is also important to pay attention to how they handle products and activities based on their satisfaction after purchasing products or services. In addition, through inquiry experiments, the learning effects of students can be improved, thereby highlighting the significance of inquiry experiments.

**Keywords:** Consumer behavior; Experimental teaching; Instructional design

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## 1. Introduction

Nowadays, consumer behavior is ubiquitous, and in teaching, consumer behavior has been incorporated into other fields like e-commerce and marketing, becoming a necessary skill for students. The significance of public policy and related theories can be understood through studying consumer behavior<sup>[1]</sup>. In addition, it is clearly pointed out that “it is necessary to comprehensively promote innovation, implement experimental content, constantly update the educational content, enhance students’ hands-on ability, and ensure that students can actively solve, analyze, and identify problems” in the new era. Experimental teaching focuses on the guidance of knowledge, which can make students think and explore new ideas more actively and focus on the construction of knowledge. In this way, the students’ knowledge will be more comprehensive. Through the study of consumer behavior, students can form a correct understanding of consumers and improve their practical ability<sup>[2]</sup>.

## 2. The significance of experiment teaching in consumer behavior

Consumer behavior is a compulsory course for marketing and e-commerce majors. In this course, there is comprehensive integration of theoretical and practical knowledge, with more emphasis on application and comprehensiveness. Consumer behavior courses cover both psychology and sociology. If these are taught separately, the students will have a limited understanding of the subject. Experimental teaching can make up for the shortcomings of routine lessons, thereby comprehensively improving the students’ learning abilities, and realizing knowledge reproduction. Therefore, experimental teaching can be included in the

lessons, with special emphasis on the dominant position of students in learning, improving their learning abilities, ensuring the formation of autonomy and initiative, finding the connection between different things, and deepening their understanding of knowledge <sup>[3]</sup>. In the early days, Dewey believed that the goal of education development was not only to deepen students' mastery of knowledge, but also to study and master the process and methods of knowledge learning.

In consumer behavior courses, teachers can create diverse experiments according to the teaching objectives and content, thereby allowing students to master the course content through experiments <sup>[4]</sup>. In addition, the experiments created should be based on the students' needs and abilities, which are determined through observations and analysis. This will enable students to master professional knowledge and develop innovation skills.

### **3. Analysis of consumer behavior in the market**

The importance of consumer behavior in marketing is undeniable. However, based on my experience in industries like fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), e-commerce, and tourism, consumer behavior knowledge is relatively fragmented and experiential. After reading some articles, I would like to share my understanding of the underlying logic consumer behavior <sup>[5]</sup>. Consumer behavior of different consumer goods and consumers are complex and diverse, which can be divided into three types.

#### **(1) Immediate consumption**

In many cases, physiological needs is the most dominant factor in consumer behavior, followed by price sensitivity. High brand exposure and high distribution are required. Physiological demands such as hunger, thirst, and illness will lead to the need for immediate consumption. In these situations, brands can make their products more accessible by distributing them further. Besides, companies can also increase the awareness of consumers towards their brands through constantly exposing the consumers to their brands, thereby stimulating psychological effects during instant consumption. Typical examples of brands that adopt this strategy are Coca-Cola, Nongfu Mountain Spring, and many more.

#### **(2) Planned consumption**

Price sensitivity and cost performance are the key factors in consumer behavior for consumer goods such as shower gel, skin care products, facial cleansers, and other beauty products <sup>[6]</sup>. In these cases, time is not the most crucial aspect, so consumers are more inclined to make consumption plans. Therefore, consumers will be more concerned about price, and they will find the best cost-effective option through comparing different brands and different platforms. Therefore, the product research and development for planned consumption should not only be limited to meeting physiological needs, but also increasing product value and reducing production costs to improve cost performance. Besides, it is necessary to strengthen consumers' trust in the brand when they make comparisons through social media (such as "grass planting" by key opinion leaders (KOL), which means that the products are marketed through KOLs). This is also the main competitive position of beauty and personal care products <sup>[7]</sup>.

#### **(3) Impulsive consumption**

Impulsive consumption is triggered by emotion, which is not planned and has low price sensitivity. Typical products that are involved in impulsive consumption are snacks and fast food, such as McDonald's, potato chips, and so on. However, with the development of "interest e-commerce" (such as DJ e-commerce) for both immediate and planned consumption categories, brand owners are now devoting themselves to guiding consumers towards impulsive consumption.

### **4. Strategies in implementing experimental teaching in consumer behavior courses**

In the experimental teaching in junior colleges, it is necessary to develop teaching suitable methods to cultivate skilled talents, which is also an important basis for the educational system in professional schools.

The experimental teaching of consumer behavior can simplify the theoretical knowledge learned, thereby enabling students to pay more attention to the analysis of the knowledge learned and promote the integration of various subjects in teaching <sup>[8]</sup>.

#### **4.1. Creating consumer behavior scenarios and implementing experimental teaching**

In consumer behavior, the main external environment is the context, and its impact is crucial. According to different stages of consumption, it belongs to the “purchase” phase, which is crucial for both consumers and marketers. Teachers can try to create multiple links in consumer situations through contextual features and related factors, such as in-store impact on consumers. During the first stage, teachers can make students write a report on situational issues from a consumer’s perspective, in full accordance with the theories learned, and from an independent perspective. In the second stage, students can be grouped according to the selected shopping mall <sup>[9]</sup>. Teachers can then summarize, organize, and collect the reports from each group and provide feedback for each report using the Delphi method. The students can then make amendments to their reports upon receiving their feedback and hand them in again. In the third stage, experimental teaching can be carried out. Students can share their findings in the classroom, so that they can identify the differences between various shopping malls and understand the market positions and are able to analyze the situation of the shopping mall in the market, thus ensuring a more consistent, comprehensive, and coordinated development. After the research is carried out, teachers should encourage each group to share their research results in the classroom and provide corresponding suggestions. Teachers should then provide feedback to promote the integration of course teaching with the enterprise.

In this research, two methods were involved in the implementation of experimental teaching: the Delphi method and classroom teaching research. Students were asked to design a questionnaire on consumer attitude towards McDonald’s products and conduct a survey sampling. After the survey, students were then asked to come up with marketing strategies to change the consumers’ attitude towards McDonald’s. There are mainly the two reasons for using the Delphi method: (1) Ensure that students have a clear and specific work process, and the content of research is relevant to their future career, and they can apply what they and learned; (2) Prevent the experiments of different groups from interfering with each other, which might cause the negligence of important factors. Asking questions and speculating is a good way of improving the students’ mastery of knowledge. To achieve it, a positive learning environment should be provided, and further exploration of basic knowledge is needed. In the comparison of different shopping malls, different marketing teams can be guided to simulate their competitors, so that they can fully understand the existing problems. In the process of this practice, the completion of our group is still relatively ideal. Everyone expressed their views very well during labor arrangement, and they were quite satisfied with the task allocation by the team leader. During the experimental teaching, everyone worked very hard with passion and enthusiasm. Everyone was relatively united and completed their tasks on time. During the experiment, role changes can be made, so that students are able to have different perspectives, thus promoting a comprehensive understanding of the significance of teamwork and promoting student research <sup>[10]</sup>.

#### **4.2. Advertisement effect evaluation, guiding consumers to explore independently**

After that, experimental teaching can be carried out on consumer perception to ensure that students master consumer psychology. After understanding consumer behavior, comprehensive research should be conducted on the psychology of consumer behavior <sup>[11]</sup>. Therefore, teachers can use popular advertisements in teaching students how to identify marketing methods and create experimental scenarios for three types of platforms: the Internet, shopping malls, and television advertisements. Students are to choose their favorite content for research and outline their tasks for the research. Students are required to list down methods for measuring explicit and implicit motives and identify an advertisement that directly caters to

explicit motivation and indirectly caters to implicit motivation and explain how and why the two methods are used in the advertisement. Research was conducted with consumers who purchased cars to understand the buying motives of consumers and how to take advantage of those motives to attract more customers. During the classroom lessons, students can also recall the advertisements they came into contact with during the task. In terms of online advertisements, students can study the content of various websites, and then use this as an evaluation to enhance the effectiveness of communication, and then analyze and summarize various factors that affect consumer behavior, ensuring a comprehensive integration of theory and practice. Various factors should be considered in the design of an experimental teaching, at different levels. The first stage is the “experience” stage, where the students’ interests should be taken as the foundation, which should be the core of education, ensuring that students can participate in knowledge learning more easily, and simulate consumer behavior in real life during this period. The second stage is the experience stage. During this period, teachers should change their roles from consumers to researchers, specifically targeting information on consumption behaviors. The third stage is the analysis stage, which focuses on conducting knowledge learning research, brainstorming, and then exchanging knowledge to ensure that students’ role is highlighted during learning and ensure active learning. The final stage is the summarization stage. The students’ learning should always be the goal of teaching, from completing the learning and transformation of knowledge to gradually solving the problems existing during students’ knowledge learning and deepening their memory <sup>[12]</sup>.

## 5. Conclusion

In short, through experimental teaching, the students’ understanding of the course content can be deepened. Experimental teaching of consumer behavior enhances the perceptual understanding of consumer behavior, and students can master the basic methods of analyzing, designing, and applying consumer behavior. Besides, the ability of theory and practice can also be cultivated.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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