Research on Digital Consumption Behavior from the Perspective of Social Psychology

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Abstract: In the era of "Internet +", live streaming of goods, online group buying, and virtual game recharge have become a new trend of consumption, which is called "digital consumption." Digital consumption is a new consumption mode based on Internet technology, which reflects the characteristics of convenience, individuation, and community, embodies the hedonistic consumption concept in the new consumption era, and embodies the individual consumption values. Based on the perspective of social psychology, this paper analyzes the characteristics of consumer behavior, expounds the social psychological phenomena behind digital consumption behavior, explores the strategies to standardize digital consumption behavior, and proposes to standardize the live streaming industry, correct individual consumption values, correct the public's shopping psychology, and promote the healthy development of digital economy.

Keywords: Social psychology; Digital consumption; Behavior characteristics; Reason analysis; Guidance methods

1. Introduction

From the perspective of social psychology, digital consumption is more susceptible to the influence of external environment, such as consumer use evaluation, business advertising and group diffusion, which is more likely to stimulate consumers' desire to buy, but also stimulate consumers' desire to share, so that they can share their consumption experience with people around them. However, in the era of "Internet +", many consumers are affected by live streaming and online celebrity evaluation, and there is blind pursuit of high consumption, impulsive consumption, and other behaviors, and deformed consumer values, which not only increase their own economic burden, but also affect the consumption experience. How to regulate digital consumption behavior in the network environment has become a hot topic in society.

2. Analysis of the characteristics of consumer behavior based on social psychology

2.1. Create their own social identity

Social psychology suggests that interaction between individuals and others is grounded in the mutual acknowledgment of their identities. Additionally, a degree of agreement has been achieved regarding values and consumption philosophies, which facilitates the progression of social actions. From a social psychology standpoint, consumers tend to craft their social identity via brand products, utilizing them to emphasize their social standing and attract peers with similar interests, thereby broadening their social networks [1]. For instance, purchasing luxury brand items as symbols of status can help consumers showcase their social position and gratify their desire for recognition.

2.2. Reflect community behavior norms

Cultural and social elements, such as customs, ethics, and societal ambiance, subtly shape consumer behavior, reflecting the unique traits of various communities. For instance, enthusiasts of animation are significantly influenced by the "two Yuan" culture. This leads them to be more inclined to purchase merchandise related to animation characters and emulate the makeup styles of these characters, thereby adhering to the distinct norms within animation communities. Moreover, companies can analyze the consumption patterns of different groups and communities, designing products tailored for specific demographics. By aligning with the norms of these communities, businesses can not only affect purchasing decisions but also promote their brands through diverse consumer segments, ultimately enhancing brand recognition [2].

2.3. Express the sense of identity of a certain community

Social identity represents an emotional link between individuals and others, as well as a feeling of affiliation with a particular group, which significantly influences consumer behavior. From the standpoint of social psychology, when making a purchase, consumers take into account not only the price and practical utility of a product but also its cultural significance and the opinions of family and friends regarding the product. By choosing a specific brand or product, consumers can convey their connection to a certain community [3]. For example, in recent years, the popular circle of "rice powder" consumer groups, they are loyal fans of the domestic brand millet, through the fan group, social accounts to promote and buy millet mobile phones, speakers and other products, expressed the love of millet brand, but also expressed the "rice powder" community activities support.

2.4. Highlight the influence of consumption

Social psychology believes that consumer behavior is inevitably affected by social influencing factors, such as the consumption evaluation of surrounding people, media publicity, and corporate word of mouth, etc., to help consumers compare different products and brands, to choose the products or brands to buy [4]. For example, when consumers consume, they will consult the advice of family and friends, evaluate the product in all aspects, and analyze the product from the aspects of product quality, brand culture, after-sales service, etc., to make the right purchase decision and ensure the rationality of consumer behavior.

3. Analysis of social psychological causes of digital consumption

3.1. The convenience of online consumption conforms to the fast-paced life

In recent years, China has not only developed a robust logistics infrastructure but also broadened the reach of its networks while enhancing their quality. This has provided a solid foundation for the growth of cross-border

e-commerce and live-stream shopping, turning online shopping into a new trend in consumer behavior within China. Moreover, it has positioned China's digital consumption at a globally leading level [5]. The underlying reason lies in how digital consumption aligns seamlessly with the social psychology of the country. Over the past four decades of reform and opening up, the rapid expansion of the national economy and the steady improvement in living standards have fostered a culture where consumption is increasingly viewed as a source of enjoyment, personal identity, and stress relief. Digital consumption fulfills these needs, igniting nationwide enthusiasm for online shopping and making it increasingly popular, thereby reflecting China's distinctive social and psychological traits. Currently, the pace of both society and daily life continues to accelerate, and traditional consumption methods are becoming time-consuming and energy-intensive, failing to meet the demands of younger generations. In this context, an increasing number of young people are embracing digital consumption, purchasing goods via platforms like Taobao and Jingdong, and sharing their experiences to guide other consumers. This emerging form of digital consumption is particularly favored by white-collar workers. The convenience offered by digital consumption aligns well with the fast-paced lifestyle prevalent in contemporary China, satisfying both the consumption and social interaction needs of young people. Gradually, it is also being embraced by middle-aged and elderly individuals, further driving the advancement of China's digital economy [6].

3.2. Satisfying the pleasure of individual consumption

In the "Internet plus" era, digital consumption has embraced a new form of pleasure. This goes beyond merely seeking high-quality goods and services; it also emphasizes personalization, adventure, and social interaction. Such behavior highlights community identity, self-recognition, and adherence to certain behavioral norms, reflecting shifts in consumer psychology. From a social psychology standpoint, digital consumption places greater emphasis on sensory enjoyment and social satisfaction. For instance, when making purchases, consumers often rely on aesthetically pleasing images and engaging short videos to enhance visual satisfaction. They are more inclined to choose products with artistic and design appeal, aiming for a more enjoyable consumption experience. This allows them to showcase their unique style and cultural sophistication while illustrating the impact of social labeling within the context of social psychology [7]. Many consumers enjoy the social fun in the process of digital consumption, and are more willing to have virtual interaction with online shop owners, customer service and other consumers, as well as online interaction with other consumers, which can not only meet personal consumption needs, but also obtain social fun and further improve the sense of consumption experience. In addition, many consumers also enjoy the adventure fun brought by digital consumption, such as the recent popularity of "blind box" products, stimulate the adventure fun, enjoy guessing the contents of the blind box, collect the blind box series of products shopping fun, get emotional pleasure, and share the shopping experience in the blind box fan community, to get social and adventure fun.

3.3. Meeting the needs of individual identity and personalized consumption

In addition to practical value and exchange value, commodities also have a unique symbolic value, which is an important factor in attracting consumers and stimulating the desire to buy. From a social psychology standpoint, digital consumption represents a distinct form of symbolic consumption. Individuals display their identity, status, and preferences through the purchase of specific brand products. This allows them to establish a socially recognized self-image and thereby earn the respect of others, ultimately enhancing their social standing [8]. This demonstrates that symbolic digital consumption has progressively emerged, subtly steering individuals to enhance

their sense of social group identity via online purchasing. For instance, numerous consumers are enthusiastic about acquiring limited-edition and customized items, using these to emphasize their social standing and financial capability, thereby experiencing the excellence associated with high-level consumption. Additionally, through personalized products, they showcase their aesthetic preferences and economic power, fulfilling individual identity needs and enriching their consumption experiences. In the digital economy era, consumers tend to favor tailored goods and specialized services to underscore their distinctive taste and values, constructing their unique social identities, satisfying their personal requirements, and achieving spiritual fulfillment [9].

3.4. Meeting the need of individuals to relieve stress

As society advances at an increasingly rapid pace, young individuals are experiencing greater pressures in both their work and personal lives. Beyond seeking cost-effective items via online shopping platforms, they also aim to alleviate stress through digital consumption. This trend indicates that online consumption is evolving from merely fulfilling daily needs to incorporating elements of entertainment, showcasing the entertaining aspect of digital consumer behavior and aligning with the traits of social psychology. In the "Internet +" era, online shopping enables consumers to bypass the social constraints of traditional in-person shopping. They can enjoy personalized consultations and services online while accessing exclusive discounts, thus breaking away from conventional consumption patterns. This not only lessens the financial burden on consumers but also allows them to relieve stress through online activities [10]. For example, many consumers are keen on purchasing stress-reducing products on online shopping platforms or customized stress-reducing toys with exclusive patterns. They release the pressure of life and work by purchasing stress-reducing dolls and interesting ornaments, etc., and communicate online with users who have the same consumption needs to alleviate the embarrassment of "social terror" and improve the sense of digital consumption experience [11].

4. Digital consumption behavior guidance from the perspective of social psychology

4.1. Standardize live streaming and delivery platforms and standardize the e-commerce consumer market

In the age of the Internet, digital consumption is rapidly growing, leading to the emergence of new industries like live streaming and self-media marketing. While these innovations offer consumers greater convenience, they also introduce certain consumption pitfalls that can negatively affect the digital consumption experience. From a social psychology standpoint, there is an interactive relationship between individuals and society, where social norms, cultural factors, and group values all exert a subtle influence on individual psychological states [12]. Based on this, the government should regulate the live broadcast market, regulate the products of the live broadcast room, the live broadcast sales talk and the product review mechanism, and create a good online shopping environment, to stimulate consumers' desire to buy, help them choose high-quality and inexpensive goods, win their trust in online shopping platforms, and promote the development of digital economy.

4.2. Give full play to the guiding role of new media and correct individual consumption values

New media platforms such as Tiktok, Weibo, and XiaoHongshu are becoming new marketing platforms for merchants and new shopping platforms for consumers, which have played a role in promoting digital consumption. Based on this, Douyin, Weibo and XiaoHongshu should shoulder their social responsibilities, strengthen product

audit, crack down on false advertising and fake and shoddy products, advocate rational consumption, and call on consumers to buy products on demand, to correct consumers' consumption values and discourage them blindly following the crowd to buy goods [13]. In addition, major new media platforms should actively push short videos of positive energy, promote the traditional virtues of hard work and simplicity, self-reliance, diligence and simplicity of the Chinese nation, and call on teenagers and college students to establish correct values, discourage them blindly buying famous brands and luxury brands, so that they are far away from the psychology of "flaunting wealth", and correct the consumption values of teenagers and college students.

4.3. The use of community marketing technology to lead the new trend of consumption

Enterprises should pay attention to the digital consumption needs of different groups and use social platforms such as TikTok, WeChat, and Weibo to carry out social marketing, achieve accurate notification, meet mass consumer demand, and lead the new fashion of consumption. For instance, companies can launch products styled after the "national trend" on platforms like Weibo and Douyin. This showcases how elements of traditional culture and intangible cultural heritage are applied in clothing, electronic product design, and cultural innovation goods. By doing so, it encourages a deeper fusion between culture and commodities, conveys social values through these items, and sets a new trend in consumer behavior. In this way, more young consumers can gain an understanding of traditional culture while engaging in digital consumption. This strengthens their cultural identity and confidence, thereby demonstrating the value-guiding role of digital consumption behaviors [14].

4.4. Big data precision marketing to correct individual conformity psychology

Enterprises can leverage big data to examine college students' atypical spending patterns, focusing on their tendencies toward comparative, advanced, and premium consumption behaviors. By identifying these trends, businesses can better understand the herd mentality influencing digital consumption among college students. This understanding can assist in addressing disparities in individual financial capabilities, guiding students to optimize their spending habits, and preventing impulsive purchases driven by peer pressure. Encouraging students to steer clear of vanity-driven and premature consumption, as well as so-called luxury goods, can help reshape their consumption mindset and promote more standardized digital consumption practices [15]. In summary, during the Internet era, technologies such as big data and cloud computing not only enable precise marketing and broaden the reach of products but also play a role in regulating digital consumption behaviors across various demographics, thereby fostering the sustainable growth of the digital economy.

5. Conclusion

In short, digital consumption behavior reflects social psychology knowledge, reflects the interaction between individuals and groups in consumption behavior, reflects not only the new social consumption fashion, but also reflects individual consumption values and group identity. In the era of "Internet +", companies should standardize online shopping platforms and live delivery modes, use big data to accurately analyze the needs of different consumer groups, push products and provide personalized services according to their social psychology, standardize digital consumption behaviors, publicize rational consumption concepts, correct individual digital consumption attitudes, and standardize individual digital consumption behaviors to promote the high-quality development of China's digital economy.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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