

Online Health Care Consumerism of Shanghai College Students

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Abstract: With the rapid development of e-commerce, online consumption is increasingly popular as an emerging way of consumption. As the main group of online consumption, college students have become the most important part of Internet consumption, but the existing problems among them are also becoming increasingly prominent. This paper analyzes the problems in college students, especially physical and mental health, and proposes corresponding countermeasures. It mainly includes the analysis of the current situation of college students' online consumption, the existing problems and reasons, combined with e-commerce, marketing, psychology and other aspects of the content. Shanghai is one of the most developed cities in China, so the problems of college students in Shanghai in online shopping will be more representative and obvious, which will serve as a warning. Through the analysis of Shanghai college students' online consumption behavior and psychological performance, this paper understands individual differences and group characteristics, and puts forward corresponding countermeasures according to relevant theories, so as to guide college students to consume rationally and healthily.

Keywords: Online consumption; Health; College students.

1. Introduction

Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce which allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the Internet using a web browser or a mobile app. Consumers find a product of interest by visiting the website of the retailer directly or by searching among alternative vendors using a shopping search engine, which displays the same product's availability and pricing at different e-retailers. In other words, Ying [19] mentioned that online consumption behavior is a behavior process that consumers find, buy, use and evaluate relevant products or services through the Internet to meet their own needs. The object of network consumption appears in the virtual network platform, and its consumption process is a dynamic interaction between consumers and network resources, aiming to meet the unique needs of consumers as the ultimate purpose.

Shoppers can visit web stores from the comfort of the homes and shop by sitting in front of the computers. Consumer can buy a variety of items from online stores. People can purchase just about anything from companies that provide their products. Books, clothing, household appliances, toys, hardware, software and health insurance are just some of the products purchase through online. The largest of these online retailing corporations are Flipkart.com; Amazon.com, e.Bay.com etc. Even though online shopping is very convenient for the consumers, there are many problems faced by the respondents [1]. So the researcher tries to find out the problems faced by the respondents while shopping through online [13]. As a new consumption model, online consumption has developed rapidly in recent years, attracted wide attention from the society [6], and has had a far-reaching impact on various economic, political, cultural and other fields [7]. Online consumption has become a common way of consumption in people's life. While changing their living habits, it has also become a big magic weapon to save money. Its own special operation mode and concept are also changing people's traditional ideas. This invisible change, in promoting the continuous development of society, also has certain

disadvantages, must cause people's great attention to [21].

There are some problems existing in the online consumption of college students: 1. The consumption structure is unreasonable; 2. Blind consumption, lack of planning; 3. The phenomenon of conformity consumption and comparison consumption is serious; 4. Lack of consumption safety awareness, lack of protection of rights and interests [20]. While enjoying convenient online shopping, the problem of online shopping addiction has gradually become prominent, and has become an important problem that cannot be ignored in the mental health education of college students [14]. Online shopping addiction is such a state: individual with the help of the Internet for Internet shopping, because unique online shopping attraction (such as relieve mood, pressure, etc.) make individual repeat the behavior, eventually spend too much time or money, and damage to life function, if forced to terminate the behavior will lead to individual have negative emotional experience and will try to achieve online [18]. Günüç [5] mentioned that one of the various forms of technology used to make life easier is online shopping. Reasons for which one might prefer online shopping over real life shopping include such factors as ease of search, lower prices, a variety of goods, time saved, ease of use, entertainment, promotions, and impulsive behaviors in the shopper. A number of individuals have found themselves addicted to online shopping due to a lack of self-control. Simion [14] found out that the etiology of this addiction has not yet been accurately described, but predisposing factors such as the developmental and cultural environment, as well as neurobiological or genetic factors. Tao and Wang [16] found that although online shopping has gradually matured, there are still many problems, and the problems are worth discussing. Use Logistic regression method to analyze students' online shopping consumption. Combined with the status of students' online shopping, find out the differences of students' online shopping behaviors, analyze the psychological characteristics of online shopping consumption, in order to correctly guide students' consumption concepts. Then logistic regression analysis was used to find out the key

factors that influence students' online shopping frequency. Finally, based on the previous analysis conclusions, the school, e-commerce, and the government propose corresponding countermeasures. Cottier [3] mentioned that compulsive buying can disrupt more than your mental health, too. The financial consequences are self-evident, and many people have shopped themselves into debt. But as the behavior consumes more time and attention, it can just as easily spark conflicts with family and friends, or interfere with work, school and other social obligations [17]. In fact, an online shopping addict need not spend a single dollar for the habit to become problematic — the endless scrolling alone is often enough.

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 [22]. Why college students will be influenced most? Thac et al., [4] informed us that the younger generation is the largest Internet user group in China. They are the first generation to grow up with computers, the Internet, smartphones, online social media, and online shopping. The individuals that belong to this generational cohort have one thing in common—their online shopping behavior. In my opinion, nowadays too frequent usage of online shopping and social online activities, high neuroticism and low agreeableness significantly increased the chances of being addicted to the Internet. Physical and mental health refers to the physical and mental health of the two aspects, the physical and mental health of today's college students is really worrying, they generally exist in a variety of physical and psychological problems. The physical and mental health of college students affects the stability and development of society and the future and destiny of the country. Lei et al. [10] suggested that the internet platform should strengthen quality control and effective dissemination of new media, the government strengthens product quality supervision of e-commerce platforms and customer protection, the school pays attention to the correct consumption education of college students' online shopping, and parents guide children's correct consumption.

Online shopping brings obvious benefits to the social and economic development, and also brings convenience to everyone. People can stay at home and not be limited by time and space. They can compare the prices of many shops to purchase their favorite things more affordably. But more emphasis on our side is in the rapid development of online shopping boom brought some negative effects. Almost everyone can't avoid the pleasure and convenience brought by online shopping, but an expert recently claimed that online addiction is a mental disorder that can lead to depression and damage social relationships. The significance of this study is that some previous studies mostly reflect the advantages of online shopping and some problems of online shopping addiction, so the research is to make a more comprehensive analysis, focusing on the physical and mental health of Shanghai college students. Our study focuses on the problems existing in the Shanghai college students on online shopping such as the college students' time and energy, social activities, online shopping addiction psychological and living habits, etc., and analyze its reasons, including external environmental factors and consumer internal factors for a comprehensive analysis. We also wants to give some appropriate suggestions to the society, especially to college students.

2. Background: The Reasons for The Popularity of Online Consumption

2.1. Environmental Factor: Digital Consumption is Developing Rapidly

WARC Data's latest report finds that Amazon, TikTok, YouTube and Twitch are some of the main winners as brands pivot to reach the COVID consumer. No one doubts that the media disruption from COVID-19 was both rapid and severe, but data suggest that brands were largely able to adapt to the immediate shifts in consumer behaviour. There is a clear correlation between changes in user activity and advertising spend in 2020 [12]. E-commerce is top 1 developing industry during the covid-19 period in 2020, which is shown in Figure 1.

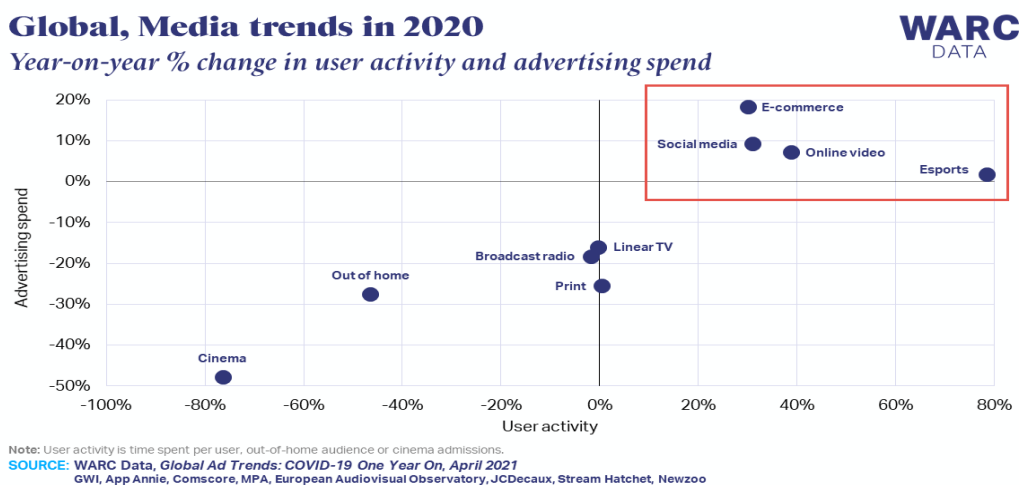


Figure 1. Global, Media Trends in 2020

Cheng [2] told us that the Covid-19 pandemic caused substantial changes, particularly concerning marketing, which led to high digital use. Social networking enables people to communicate easily with others and provides marketers with many ways to interact with consumers. As a

consequence of the lockdown, economic activity is declining dramatically. The response of policymakers, the government, and industry to resolving the harm caused by economic factors and how the marketer can react to changing consumer behavior.

Best estimates from DataReportal claim that 330 million people started using the internet in the 12 months leading to April 2021, bringing us to 4.72 billion internet users. There are an estimated 7.9 billion people in the world – we see that the impressive reach of digital is still not all-encompassing. Much of the future rollout will be down to internet infrastructure and the ability to access devices [9].

The growing popularity of the Internet, as well as the pandemic, has accelerated the growth of online shopping. From the perspective of consumers, online shopping will not only penetrate into a wider group in the future, but also change users' consumption habits and ideas. Online shopping will gradually evolve into a natural habit and become an important part of netizens' online life.

2.2. The Comparison Between Traditional Shopping and Online Shopping

Generally speaking, the difference between online

consumption and traditional consumption is in terms of the consumption mode, place and time. It is a process in which consumers make better use of resources to trade, and a new economic form.

The main difference between online shopping and traditional shopping is that online shopping is very convenient as you can shop anytime, anywhere while traditional shopping can be time-consuming, but allows you to actually see and touch the products you are buying [8]. The differences details are as shown in Table 1.

To some extent, traditional brick-and-mortar stores cannot compete with online shopping on the basis of price and convenience, but brick-and-mortar stores can do a better job than the Internet in satisfying emotional and connectivity needs. And although physical stores don't have as much traffic as online stores, but brick-and-mortar stores have much higher value of customer groups than the online stores. Offline shopping is also a pleasant family outing, which is a joy and satisfaction that online shopping cannot replace.

Table 1. Online Shopping VS Traditional Shopping

Online Shopping	Traditional Shopping
Online Shopping is the activity of purchasing goods and services over the internet	Traditional Shopping is the activity of visiting a shop and making purchases
Tends to be more convenient as you can shop anywhere, anytime	Time consuming and less convenient
Customers don't have the chance to physically see or touch the items they order	Time consuming and less convenient
There is risk of online frauds and online security issues	Comparatively safer
Allows customers to compare prices and find the cheapest products	Doesn't allow customers the chance to compare prices easily
There may be some complications in returning the products	It's relatively easy to return products

2.3. Personal Factor: Shopping Addiction

2.3.1. Shopping Addiction Characteristics

Shopping addiction is often referred to as 'compulsive buying' or, in more specific cases, 'online shopping addiction'. Sometimes called an 'impulse control disorder', it often occurs together with other disorders, including eating disorders, food and body image concerns, substance use disorders, and personality or mood disorders. In the most extreme cases, this can lead to self-harm and death: suicide rates for young people who have complex mental health needs, including addiction, are rising steadily.

Whilst shopping addiction or compulsive buying may affect people in multiple different ways, these are some common characteristics:

- Buying items that you do not need and are unlikely to use
- Buying or shopping items that you cannot afford

- 'Binge' shopping episodes, particularly when feeling sad, lonely, bored or distressed

- Intense cravings to shop or buy, which leave you feeling powerless

- Feeling guilty, ashamed or regretful after a shopping experience

- Concealing and hiding shopping or purchases from others

- Being unable to understand concerns expressed by others about your behaviour

- Describing 'retail therapy' as a means of coping with stress

- Feeling unable to stop shopping, even when you have planned to do so

- Trying, and failing, to cut down shopping episodes

- Regularly spending more than you intended

Feeling increasingly less satisfied with each shopping "trip", despite engaging in higher value/amounts of shopping [8]

2.3.2. Predictors of Addictive Behaviors

Given the limited understanding of the predictors of OSA, we propose that insights will be found in both existing theories of addictive/compulsive buying behaviour and by identifying specific features of the online retail medium which may encourage OSA. The model therefore incorporates recognized predictors of addictive behaviors in general: low self-esteem, low self-regulation, negative emotional state and female gender as well as predictors specific to the online retail medium: enjoyment, social anonymity and cognitive overload. Figure 2 below presents our conceptual model of OSA and we discuss the theoretical support for the hypothesized relationships between OSA and the 7 proposed predictors [15].

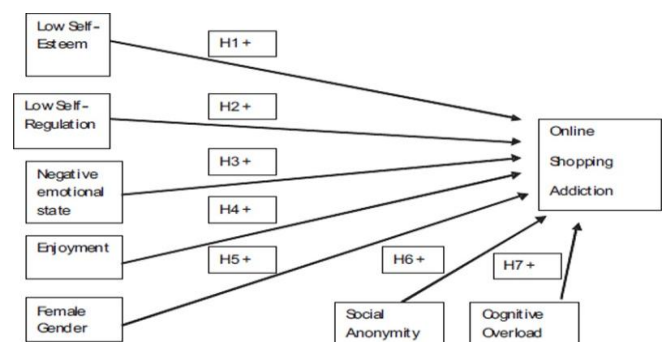


Figure 2. Predictors of addictive behaviors

2.4. Theoretical Framework

2.4.1. Utility Theory

Consumers are keen on the economic principle of online shopping: from the utility theory analysis, online shopping allows consumers to obtain more net utility.

For consumers, the cost C of consumers' online shopping consists of three parts: commodity cost C_1 , Internet cost C_2 , and marginal cost C_3 generated by the time spent online shopping. The cost C' of consumers' traditional shopping in the mall consists of three parts: the cost C'_1 of goods, the cost C'_2 generated by shopping in the mall, and the marginal cost C'_3 generated by the time spent shopping in the mall.

Generally speaking, the online price of goods is lower than that of shopping malls, that is, C_1 is less than C'_1 . The Internet installed in families is not only for the purpose of online shopping, but more for learning, games, making friends, reading news, etc. At present, the Internet has become quite popular among urban residents, and they have to spend Internet fees no matter whether they buy online or not. In addition, online shopping pursues fashion and is full of beautiful things. The process of online shopping is a visual enjoyment, physical and mental relaxation, entertainment and recreation, bringing people satisfaction, so C_2 can be ignored. Online shopping takes less time than shopping in the mall, so its marginal cost C_3 is also less than the marginal cost C'_3 of shopping in the mall.

It can be seen that the cost of online shopping C is less than that of traditional shopping malls. As consumers spend less on shopping, their net utility increases, so more and more people are keen on online shopping [7].

2.4.2. ACE Model

The ACE model was originally proposed to explain the mechanism of Internet addiction. A, C and E in the model are anonymity, convenience and escapism respectively, which means that the network can be satisfied. Three aspects of individual psychological needs. Anonymity means that individuals can use their real identities online activities. Convenience means that the rich functions of the network are enough to meet the needs of individuals in interpersonal communication, entertainment and other aspects, and they don't need to leave the house. Escapism means that the Internet can become a substitute for reality when the individual is frustrated in real life, so one can turn to the Internet for solace [23].

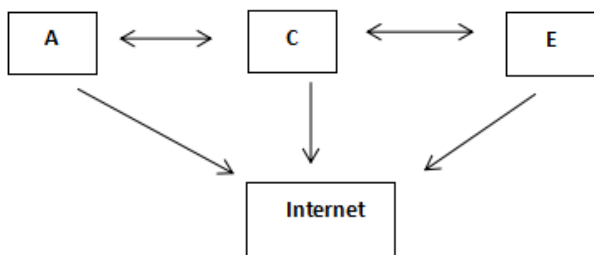


Figure 3. ACE model

2.4.3. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

In Maslow's theory, every action has its own motive. Knot in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, from bottom to top: ① Physiological needs; ② Safety requirements; ③ The need for belonging and love; ④ respect demand; ⑤ Cognitive, aesthetic and self-actualization needs. According to Maslow, all five of these needs, it is a natural and basic human need. The need to meet individual survival needs is a low-level need, also known as lack needs, such as physiological needs, safety

needs, belongingness and love needs; Not necessary for personal survival needs, but those that can promote the potential of human needs are advanced needs, also known as growth needs. At the level of demand, the lower level of demand is at least partially met, the next level of demand will germinate; or only when the lower level needs are met or partially met, the higher level need become the behavioral motivation and become the dominant.

A higher level of requirements co-ordination is required only after the primary needs have been met. In general, there are two consequences of satisfying a need: one is that the need no longer plays a positive role in determining the outcome; the other one is the new higher level appear. The satisfaction of needs has some additional consequences: ① Independent for old satisfactory items and object items, a certain degree of contempt for the old satisfactory items and object items and subordination to the new ones; ② Cognitive ability is changed and the individual has new interests and values; ③ New interests, new needs and satisfactions are higher; ④ The real satisfaction of needs contributes to the formation of character; ⑤ The satisfaction of a particular need has particular consequences [11].

(1) Research Question and Research methods

This study employs a quantitative research approach to comprehensively address the question:

"What are the key factors influencing online healthcare consumption behaviors among college students in Shanghai, and how do these behaviors impact their physical, mental, and social well-being?"

(2) Methodology

The study was conducted in Shanghai, focusing on college students' online health care consumerism. Shanghai was chosen due to its status as one of the most developed cities in China, which provides a representative setting for the research on online consumption behaviors among college students. The target population for this study includes college students from various universities in Shanghai who regularly engage in online health care consumerism.

This research adopted a quantitative research design. The study aimed to gather numerical data that will allow for statistical analysis to identify trends, behaviors, and correlations regarding the online health care consumerism of Shanghai college students. Specifically, this study focused on analyzing how factors such as individual consumer behavior, frequency of online health care purchases, and the impact of online shopping habits on physical and mental health influence online health care consumption patterns.

The population of this study consists of college students currently enrolled in universities across Shanghai. The study aimed to capture a diverse group of students who actively participate in online shopping for health care products. The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula for an infinite population, assuming a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. A simple random sampling technique will be employed to ensure that every student in the target population has an equal chance of being selected. The total sample is 280.

To collect the necessary data, a researcher-made survey questionnaire was developed and distributed online to students across various universities.

Data collection was carried out via an online survey platform, allowing the research team to reach a wide range of students across various universities in Shanghai. The survey link was distributed through university emails, student forums,

and social media platforms. The respondents were given two weeks to complete the questionnaire. After the survey period ended, the data was collected and stored securely for analysis. The collected data was processed and analyzed using statistical software (SPSS) to determine the relationships between online shopping behaviors, consumer attitudes, and the health outcomes of students.

3. Results & Discussion

The study utilized the quantitative Research design regarding the impact of online shopping to the health of Shanghai college students. For the quantitative part, a questionnaire survey was done on the extent of the amount of time Shanghai college students spend online shopping every day and the amount spent on online shopping each month

3.1. What is The Health Influence of Online Consumption to Shanghai College Students

The maintenance and promotion of health is achieved through different combination of physical, mental, and social well-being—a combination sometimes referred to as the "health triangle." The WHO's 1986 Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion further stated that health is not just a state, but also "a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities."

3.1.1. Physical Health

Table 1. Physical health

Questions	Mean	Verbal Description
Online shopping habits lead to a sedentary lifestyle that negatively impacts my physical health.	3.46	Agree
I have experienced eye strain or other vision problems due to prolonged online shopping sessions.	3.4	Agree
My posture and physical well-being are negatively affected by extended periods spent shopping online.	3.39	Agree
I find myself neglecting regular physical activity because I spend more time shopping online.	3.30	Agree
My sleeping habits have worsened due to late-night online shopping.	3.47	Agree

- 3.51 – 4.00 Strongly Agree
- 2.51 – 3.50 Agree
- 1.51 – 2.50 Disagree
- 1.00 – 1.50 Strongly Disagree

Table 1 presents the responses of Shanghai college students regarding the physical health effects of their online shopping behavior. The analysis is based on five statements rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where all mean scores fall within the range of 2.51 to 3.50, corresponding to the verbal description "Agree." This indicates a moderate but consistent perception among students that their physical health is negatively influenced by their online shopping habits.

The highest mean score is observed in the statement, "My sleeping habits have worsened due to late-night online shopping," with a value of 3.47. This suggests that many students experience disrupted sleep patterns as a result of engaging in online shopping activities at night, a behavior that can lead to fatigue, reduced academic performance, and long-

term health issues. Closely following this is the item, "Online shopping habits lead to a sedentary lifestyle that negatively impacts my physical health," which received a mean of 3.46. This highlights that prolonged periods of inactivity, often associated with browsing and purchasing items online, are becoming a common concern among students, contributing to sedentary lifestyles and potentially increasing the risk of obesity or cardiovascular issues.

Additionally, the students agreed that online shopping contributes to eye strain and vision problems (mean = 3.40) and has a negative effect on posture and physical well-being (mean = 3.39). These findings indicate the physical discomforts students experience from extended screen exposure and poor ergonomic practices during online shopping. Furthermore, the mean score of 3.30 for the statement, "I find myself neglecting regular physical activity because I spend more time shopping online," shows that online shopping may compete with time that could otherwise be spent on physical exercise, thus limiting students' opportunities for maintaining an active lifestyle.

Overall, the composite mean score of 3.40 supports the conclusion that online shopping has a moderately negative influence on the physical health of Shanghai college students. The key areas of concern include sleep disturbance, increased sedentary behavior, eye strain, poor posture, and reduced physical activity—all of which are critical components of overall health and well-being.

In response to these findings, several recommendations can be proposed to support healthier online consumption behaviors among college students. First, institutions should promote digital wellness education, focusing on the risks of late-night screen time and the importance of maintaining a consistent sleep schedule. Second, ergonomic awareness campaigns should be introduced to teach students how to maintain proper posture and prevent strain while using digital devices. Third, universities can encourage scheduled breaks and physical activity, perhaps by integrating movement reminders or step-tracking challenges into campus health programs. Lastly, health literacy sessions can be implemented to help students become more mindful of the impact of digital consumerism on their physical well-being.

3.1.2. Mental Health

Table 2. Mental health

Questions	Mean	Verbal Description
I feel stressed or anxious when managing my online shopping expenses.	3.31	Agree
Online shopping has led me to experience compulsive buying behaviors that affect my mental health.	3.49	Agree
I often feel guilty or regretful after making impulsive purchases online.	3.37	Agree
The convenience of online shopping has caused me to spend more than I can afford, leading to financial stress.	3.36	Agree
Online shopping provides temporary relief from stress or negative emotions, but leads to long-term mental fatigue.	3.29	Agree

- 3.51 – 4.00 Strongly Agree
- 2.51 – 3.50 Agree
- 1.51 – 2.50 Disagree
- 1.00 – 1.50 Strongly Disagree

Table 2 presents the perceptions of Shanghai college

students regarding the impact of online shopping on their mental health. The results show that all five items received mean scores within the “Agree” range (2.51–3.50), indicating that the respondents recognize a moderate negative influence of online consumption on their psychological well-being.

The highest mean score is 3.49 for the item “Online shopping has led me to experience compulsive buying behaviors that affect my mental health.” This suggests that students are aware of developing compulsive habits, such as impulsively purchasing health-related or non-essential products online, which may lead to emotional distress. Such behaviors reflect a lack of control over spending and a growing dependence on online shopping as a coping mechanism, potentially affecting students’ emotional stability.

Another closely related concern is post-purchase regret, with the statement “I often feel guilty or regretful after making impulsive purchases online” receiving a mean of 3.37. This reflects that emotional discomfort and internal conflict often follow unplanned spending, contributing to lowered self-esteem and psychological strain. Similarly, the item “The convenience of online shopping has caused me to spend more than I can afford, leading to financial stress” received a mean of 3.36, which suggests that many students experience financial anxiety due to overspending—an issue that can trigger chronic stress and affect overall mental health.

Additionally, the statement “I feel stressed or anxious when managing my online shopping expenses” had a mean score of 3.31, indicating that financial monitoring and budget management in the context of online shopping are sources of anxiety for many students. The lowest among the five but still within the “agree” range is the item “Online shopping provides temporary relief from stress or negative emotions, but leads to long-term mental fatigue,” with a mean of 3.29. This implies that although students may use online shopping as a form of emotional escape or stress relief, the temporary comfort is often replaced by longer-term psychological fatigue, guilt, or anxiety.

Taken together, these results point to a pattern where online shopping serves both as a coping mechanism and a source of mental distress for Shanghai college students. The moderate agreement across all five items suggests that while students benefit from the convenience and emotional satisfaction of online shopping, they are also aware of the underlying psychological and financial consequences.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made to address the mental health implications of online consumerism among college students. First, colleges can introduce financial literacy programs focused on budgeting, digital spending habits, and responsible consumer behavior. Second, mental health workshops should be made available to help students identify and manage compulsive behaviors and emotional triggers related to shopping. Third, counseling services can offer support for students dealing with anxiety, guilt, or regret associated with impulsive purchases. Finally, student campaigns can promote mindful consumption and raise awareness about the psychological risks of excessive online shopping.

3.1.3. Social Well-being

Table 3 presents the perceptions of Shanghai college students regarding the impact of online shopping habits on their social well-being. The results indicate that students generally perceive moderate to strong negative effects of online health care consumerism on their social relationships. Out of the five items, two received a mean score above 3.51,

indicating “Strongly Agree,” while the remaining three fall in the “Agree” category (2.51–3.50). These results highlight growing concerns about the displacement of real-world social interaction due to increased time and emotional investment in online shopping.

Table 3. Social well-being

Questions	Mean	Verbal Description
My online shopping habits have reduced the amount of time I spend interacting with friends and family.	3.53	Strongly Agree
I feel socially isolated because I prefer shopping online over going out with friends.	3.23	Agree
I experience difficulty balancing online shopping with maintaining meaningful social relationships.	3.23	Agree
My online shopping habits have caused conflicts or misunderstandings in my social life.	3.53	Strongly Agree
I rely on online shopping to feel connected to social trends, but it negatively impacts my real-world social interactions.	3.12	Agree

3.51 – 4.00 Strongly Agree

2.51 – 3.50 Agree

1.51 – 2.50 Disagree

1.00 – 1.50 Strongly Disagree

The items with the highest mean scores—3.53 each—are “My online shopping habits have reduced the amount of time I spend interacting with friends and family” and “My online shopping habits have caused conflicts or misunderstandings in my social life.” These responses reflect a strong agreement among students that online shopping not only limits time spent with important social circles but may also be contributing to interpersonal tension or conflict. This suggests that the excessive focus on virtual consumer experiences is intruding upon traditional face-to-face communication and weakening important social bonds.

Meanwhile, the statements “I feel socially isolated because I prefer shopping online over going out with friends” and “I experience difficulty balancing online shopping with maintaining meaningful social relationships” each received a mean of 3.23, which falls under the “Agree” category. These findings indicate that students are becoming increasingly aware of how online consumer behavior is shifting their preferences away from real-world social engagements. They may feel more comfortable engaging in digital consumer activities than maintaining physical presence in social settings, which can lead to long-term isolation and emotional disconnection.

The item “I rely on online shopping to feel connected to social trends, but it negatively impacts my real-world social interactions” had a slightly lower mean score of 3.12, still within the “Agree” category. This highlights a subtle yet important observation: while students may use online shopping to feel in touch with peer culture and trends, this behavior may be substituting rather than complementing genuine social interaction, thereby weakening relational depth.

Taken together, the responses in Table 3 demonstrate that online shopping is not just a private or financial activity—it is a social behavior that can alter interaction patterns,

communication habits, and emotional closeness with others. The displacement of real-life social interaction in favor of digital consumerism represents a significant issue in the holistic development of college students.

Based on these findings, several practical suggestions can be offered to improve students' social well-being in the context of online consumption. Colleges may implement peer interaction programs or student-led social events that encourage face-to-face engagement and reduce reliance on digital leisure activities. Workshops on digital wellness and time management could help students recognize and balance their online and offline activities. Furthermore, counseling services and group dialogue sessions could support students experiencing interpersonal strain due to overdependence on online consumption. Integrating mindfulness-based practices and social-emotional learning modules into the student affairs curriculum may also help promote healthy, intentional interaction and self-regulation in both digital and physical spaces.

3.2. The Suggestions for Colleges Students' Health When Online Shopping

3.2.1. Ideological Education

Table 4. Ideological education

Questions	Mean	Verbal Description
I believe that universities should offer courses or workshops on responsible online shopping to improve student awareness.	3.55	Strongly Agree
It is important for students to be educated on the mental and physical impacts of excessive online shopping.	3.66	Strongly Agree
Schools should promote financial literacy programs to help students manage their online shopping expenses effectively.	3.51	Strongly Agree
I would benefit from receiving guidance on how to balance online consumption with healthy lifestyle habits.	3.30	Agree
Learning about the psychological triggers behind compulsive buying would help me control my online shopping habits.	3.43	Agree

3.51 – 4.00 Strongly Agree

2.51 – 3.50 Agree

1.51 – 2.50 Disagree

1.00 – 1.50 Strongly Disagree

Table 4 presents the perceptions of Shanghai college students regarding the role of ideological education in promoting responsible online shopping behavior and overall health. The results show that students strongly support educational interventions related to online consumerism, as three out of five items received a “Strongly Agree” rating (mean scores above 3.51), while the remaining two received “Agree” ratings. This suggests a clear recognition among students of the need for structured, institutional guidance to help them navigate the health and behavioral implications of online shopping.

The highest-rated item, with a mean score of 3.66, is “It is important for students to be educated on the mental and physical impacts of excessive online shopping.” This indicates a strong consensus that awareness of the health

consequences—such as stress, compulsive buying, poor posture, and sleep disruption—should be part of the student learning experience. Similarly, the item “I believe that universities should offer courses or workshops on responsible online shopping to improve student awareness” received a high mean score of 3.55, highlighting students' openness to formal education on consumer behavior. These results affirm that students do not view online consumerism as purely a private matter, but one that can and should be addressed through academic support and ideological guidance.

The statement “Schools should promote financial literacy programs to help students manage their online shopping expenses effectively” was also strongly agreed upon, with a mean score of 3.51. This underscores students' recognition of the financial risks associated with unchecked online spending and their desire for tools and knowledge to make informed and disciplined choices. Financial literacy, as perceived by the students, is not only about budgeting but also about controlling emotional and impulsive spending tied to the online shopping environment.

The remaining two items fall into the “Agree” category. The statement “I would benefit from receiving guidance on how to balance online consumption with healthy lifestyle habits” received a mean of 3.30, suggesting that while not as urgent as ideological or financial education, students still see value in integrating online consumer behavior with wellness practices. Likewise, the item “Learning about the psychological triggers behind compulsive buying would help me control my online shopping habits” received a mean score of 3.43, which shows that students are aware of the psychological dimensions of their consumer behavior and are open to developing emotional intelligence and self-awareness through ideological education.

Overall, the data indicate that Shanghai college students are receptive to school-based interventions aimed at improving their understanding of responsible online consumption. They support not only awareness campaigns but also the formal integration of ideological education—including health literacy, psychological insight, and financial skills—into their academic environment.

In response to these findings, it is recommended that universities introduce interdisciplinary elective courses and workshops that cover topics such as digital consumer ethics, financial planning, health impacts of digital behavior, and psychological self-regulation. Student affairs offices can collaborate with departments of psychology, business, and health sciences to create interactive seminars, peer education programs, and resource centers that support students in making conscious, healthy online consumption choices. Moreover, integrating these themes into existing general education courses may foster a culture of responsible consumption, helping students align their online behaviors with long-term personal and academic goals.

3.2.2. Physical Exercise

Table 5 explores the perceptions of Shanghai college students regarding the role of physical exercise in mitigating the health effects of excessive online shopping. The data reflects a general consensus among students that regular physical activity plays an important role in addressing both the physical and psychological challenges associated with online consumer behavior. Four out of five items received a verbal description of “Agree,” while one item was rated as “Strongly Agree,” indicating a high level of awareness and openness toward exercise-based solutions.

Table 5. Physical exercise

Questions	Mean	Verbal Description
Regular physical exercise would help me manage the negative physical effects of excessive online shopping.	3.59	Strongly Agree
I believe that including physical activity breaks in my daily routine could help reduce the sedentary impact of online shopping.	3.41	Agree
Schools should encourage students to participate in physical activities to counterbalance the time spent shopping online.	3.48	Agree
Engaging in sports or other physical activities helps me manage the stress caused by online shopping habits.	3.43	Agree
I would participate in exercise programs specifically designed to improve health for students who spend a lot of time online shopping.	3.39	Agree

3.51 – 4.00 Strongly Agree

2.51 – 3.50 Agree

1.51 – 2.50 Disagree

1.00 – 1.50 Strongly Disagree

The highest-rated item, with a mean score of 3.59, is “Regular physical exercise would help me manage the negative physical effects of excessive online shopping.” This score falls within the “Strongly Agree” category, showing that students clearly acknowledge the importance of integrating physical activity into their lifestyle as a means of alleviating the sedentary consequences, such as poor posture, eye strain, and lack of movement, often linked to prolonged online shopping sessions.

Other items in the table received high “Agree” ratings, further reinforcing this perspective. For instance, “I believe that including physical activity breaks in my daily routine could help reduce the sedentary impact of online shopping” has a mean score of 3.41, reflecting students’ practical awareness that even brief, scheduled movement can counteract the health risks of extended screen time. Similarly, the item “Schools should encourage students to participate in physical activities to counterbalance the time spent shopping online” scored 3.48, indicating students’ support for institutional initiatives that promote exercise and reduce digital overexposure.

The recognition of exercise as a tool to manage stress caused by online shopping is also evident, as the statement “Engaging in sports or other physical activities helps me manage the stress caused by online shopping habits” received a mean score of 3.43. This finding is consistent with earlier data in the mental health domain, confirming that students view physical activity not only as a means to address physical strain but also as a coping strategy for managing emotional and psychological stress resulting from compulsive shopping or financial anxiety.

Lastly, the item “I would participate in exercise programs specifically designed to improve health for students who spend a lot of time online shopping” received a mean of 3.39, which still falls within the “Agree” range. This suggests a positive attitude toward targeted, health-oriented interventions, such as wellness programs tailored for students whose online shopping behavior has become excessive or unhealthy.

Taken together, the results from Table 5 indicate that

Shanghai college students are not only aware of the risks posed by excessive online consumerism but also express strong willingness to adopt physical activity as a solution. They recognize the role of both personal initiative and institutional support in mitigating those effects.

In light of these findings, colleges and universities are encouraged to implement structured exercise programs and awareness campaigns specifically aimed at students who spend extended hours on digital platforms. Initiatives could include scheduled physical activity breaks, mobile wellness apps, campus fitness challenges, or even cross-disciplinary programs that combine physical education with digital wellness education. Offering accessible and engaging exercise opportunities will not only enhance physical health but also contribute to reducing the stress and social isolation associated with compulsive online shopping.

3.2.3. Practical Activities

Table 6. Physical exercise

Questions	Mean	Verbal Description
Schools should organize practical activities, such as workshops or campaigns, to educate students about healthy online shopping behaviors.	3.51	Strongly Agree
Hands-on activities that encourage face-to-face interactions could reduce students’ reliance on online shopping for social fulfillment.	3.42	Agree
Participating in real-world social events helps me break the cycle of excessive online shopping.	3.54	Strongly Agree
Engaging in practical life skills training, such as budgeting or time management, would improve my approach to online shopping.	3.32	Agree
Schools should integrate community service or social involvement programs that help students focus on real-world experiences instead of online shopping.	3.55	Strongly Agree

3.51 – 4.00 Strongly Agree

2.51 – 3.50 Agree

1.51 – 2.50 Disagree

1.00 – 1.50 Strongly Disagree

Table 6 presents students’ perspectives on the value of practical, real-world interventions in addressing the negative effects of excessive online health care consumerism. The findings demonstrate strong support for school-initiated programs and activities that promote healthier behaviors and reduce dependency on online shopping. Three out of five items received a “Strongly Agree” rating, while the remaining two received “Agree,” reflecting a clear student preference for experiential learning and socially engaging alternatives to digital consumption.

The highest-rated item, with a mean score of 3.55, is “Schools should integrate community service or social involvement programs that help students focus on real-world experiences instead of online shopping.” This indicates that students see community engagement as an effective counterbalance to the isolating and often compulsive nature of online shopping. Likewise, the item “Participating in real-world social events helps me break the cycle of excessive online shopping” received a similarly high score of 3.54, suggesting that students value face-to-face interaction and recognize its role in reducing the emotional reliance on digital

consumerism for fulfillment.

The statement “Schools should organize practical activities, such as workshops or campaigns, to educate students about healthy online shopping behaviors” also scored within the “Strongly Agree” range, with a mean of 3.51. This highlights a clear demand for institution-led educational initiatives that go beyond theory and offer hands-on learning experiences about mindful consumption, digital wellness, and balanced lifestyle choices.

Meanwhile, the two items that received “Agree” ratings—“Hands-on activities that encourage face-to-face interactions could reduce students' reliance on online shopping for social fulfillment” (mean = 3.42) and “Engaging in practical life skills training, such as budgeting or time management, would improve my approach to online shopping” (mean = 3.32)—still reflect solid student endorsement. These responses show that students recognize the value of social and life skills training as preventive tools to address the root causes of unhealthy shopping habits, such as lack of real-world engagement, poor time use, or financial mismanagement.

Overall, the responses in Table 6 reflect a well-developed awareness among Shanghai college students that digital consumerism is not only an economic behavior but also a social and emotional habit, which can be managed through structured, real-life interventions. Students show a proactive attitude toward learning life skills and participating in activities that shift their attention from virtual to tangible, meaningful experiences.

Based on these insights, educational institutions are encouraged to implement a multi-pronged intervention strategy that includes: (1) on-campus workshops on digital mindfulness and responsible consumption; (2) student-led community service initiatives to promote social engagement; (3) budgeting and time management training as part of student development programs; and (4) collaborative events that foster face-to-face interaction and reduce social isolation. These programs can be co-organized by student affairs, health services, and academic departments to create an integrated support system that enhances student well-being.

4. Conclusion

Online shopping is the trend of the modern consumer, and will be more and more popular. However, it is a double-edged sword. College students, who are at the stage of excessive step into society, are not the source of economic main body, but have certain consumption ability and autonomous control ability. This study shows that online shopping has certain effect on their physical health, mental health and social well-being.

College students have a strong ability to accept new things and are easily affected by collective behaviors. Online shopping will be further expanded among college students. College students have relatively loose environment and more disposable time. Many college students are not fully mature psychologically and lack the corresponding self-control ability. Therefore, the number of college students addicted to online shopping will continue to rise, which will have a negative impact on college students themselves, the school and even the society. Therefore, the impact of online shopping on the physical and mental health of college students cannot be ignored. It is necessary for university, families and society to fully understand and cooperate with each other to effectively change this situation, so as to create a healthy living and learning environment, so that college students can

shoulder more social responsibilities as the future of the motherland, and become useful men.

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