

A Study on the Influence of Face Consciousness on Sichuan Wine Purchase Intention

-- Regulatory Effect of Reference Group Influence

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Abstract: This paper studies the influence of consumers' face awareness on their purchase intention of Sichuan wine, and analyzes the regulatory role of reference groups in face awareness and consumers' purchase intention of Sichuan wine. Through empirical research, it is found that the three dimensions of face awareness, namely consistency, difference and others' orientation, have a positive impact on Sichuan wine purchase intention, and the two dimensions of reference group impact, namely informational impact and normative impact, have a negative regulatory effect on face awareness and consumers' Sichuan wine purchase intention.

Keywords: Face awareness, Reference to group influence, Sichuan wine, Purchase intention.

1. Introduction

China has a history of five thousand years of liquor culture. For a long time, Baijiu industry has been an important source of tax revenue in China and has made great contributions to the increase of China's financial revenue. Sichuan is a famous Baijiu producing area in China, known as the "hometown of famous liquor". Its liquor production has become the pillar industry of Sichuan's food industry, promoting the development of Sichuan's economy, culture and social life in all aspects.

With the rapid development of the social market economy, the national economic income and material living standards have been greatly improved, and Chinese consumers have released strong consumption capacity. After solving the survival needs, consumers pay more and more attention to face problems. From the perspective of the proportion of consumers' daily consumption, the proportion of survival consumption is getting smaller and smaller, and the proportion of non survival consumption is getting higher and higher. As a unique public place consumption in China, Baijiu consumption is considered to be about face. The "Fourteenth Five Year Plan" period is the time of transformation and upgrading of China's liquor industry, and also the stage of increasing competition for Sichuan liquor. Under such a background, enterprises should follow the trend of consumption diversification, personalization and high-end, and grasp the trend of consumption upgrading. To understand the consumption upgrading of Baijiu more deeply, we must understand the needs and incentives of consumers, and study the influencing factors of consumers' purchase behavior of Sichuan liquor. This study takes Sichuan wine as the research object to explore the impact of face awareness on Sichuan wine purchase intention, and based on the reference group, deeply analyze its regulatory role on face awareness and Sichuan wine purchase intention.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Research on Face Consciousness

Face consciousness is derived from the concept of face. It is a personality variable with Chinese cultural characteristics. It was initially considered as a social self construction. The improvement of social status and the acquisition of good reputation are the ideal results of successful social self construction. Individual consumption concept and behavior will be affected by face awareness.

Su and Li (2007) defined face consciousness as a person's consciousness or desire to enhance, maintain and preserve face [1]. Bao (2003) defined face awareness as a desire to improve face, maintain face and avoid losing face when communicating with others [2]. He Youhui (2006) believed that face is a social construction in people's social interaction. Face problems do not arise from the private self-evaluation process, but from the process of social interaction [13]. Li Dongjin (2009) believed that face awareness was an individual's perception of face. He introduced the two variables of face awareness and group awareness in Chinese culture into the Fishbein Rational Behavior Model (TRA) and tested that the modified model had a higher degree of fit to China's consumer data than the original model [3]. Chan (2009) defined face awareness as a person's concern for the protection and promotion of face [11]. After a comparative study of consumers in Asia, Europe and the United States, it is found that the consequences of dissatisfaction of consumers in the East and the West in the face of service failure will be affected by the sense of face. Xue Haibo and Fu Guoqun (2014) believed that the psychology of individuals to save, maintain and enhance face in social activities is face awareness [4]. Guo Xiaolin and Lin Derong (2015) believed that face was a symbolic capital, representing dignity and status [12]. Lee (1991) believed that face awareness mainly includes three features, namely, enhancing face, maintaining face and saving face, and face consumption has three features: obligation, difference and others' guidance [5]. According to the three characteristics of face consumption, when consumers buy

products that are related to others, they will carefully judge the value of products and services to .2give gifts typically reflect the face consumption characteristics of others.

Bao et al. (2003) studied the impact of face awareness on consumer decision-making style, and found that face awareness has a positive role in promoting consumer brand awareness and a negative impact on price sensitivity, that is, face awareness affects consumer demand price elasticity [2]. Zheng Yuxiang et al. Yuan Shaofeng and others built a theoretical model of the relationship between face awareness, status consumption tendency and ostentatious consumption behavior: face awareness positively affects the four dimensions of ostentatious consumption, and is significantly positively correlated with status consumption tendency [7].

People with a stronger sense of face tend to self construct and social construct through consumption. Face awareness is usually regarded as one of the most influential cultural values on Chinese consumer behavior. To sum up, this study believes that face awareness has a greater impact on consumer purchase behavior and adopts three dimensions proposed by Lee (2007), namely consistency, difference and others' orientation. It is of great practical significance for enterprises to formulate development strategies and marketing programs by studying the role of face awareness in influencing factors of consumer behavior and grasping consumer psychology.

2.2. Relevant studies on the influence of reference groups

Under the influence of collectivism culture, consumers' purchase attitude and behavior will inevitably be affected by the reference group. Deutsch and Gerard (1955) proposed for the first time to subdivide reference group impact into informational impact and normative impact [15]. Informative impact refers to that individuals expect to obtain information from the reference group or compare themselves with the reference group, and regard the values and information of the reference group as potentially useful information to help them make decisions. The degree of impact depends on the similarity between the reference group and themselves. Normative impact refers to the impact on consumer behavior caused by the pressure of surrounding groups and their expectations for themselves. Li Dongjin (2002) found that the information consumers obtained from reference groups, especially those with authoritative information and influence,

would be regarded as a very important judgment basis [16]. Jia He (2008) believes that normative influence is reflected in two aspects: on the one hand, individuals hope to integrate into the reference group by keeping consistent with their actions; On the other hand, individuals hope to establish close contact with this group through maintaining consistent consumption attitudes and ways [17].

Hoonsopon (2016) demonstrated that the concept of self brand and the influence of reference group can positively regulate consumers' willingness to purchase new products with their innovation awareness [18]. Gong Xiushuang (2017) found that the informational and normative impact of the reference group would significantly enhance consumers' purchase intention [19]. Li Xianguo (2012) found through the scenario simulation experiment that the reference group has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention in the online shopping context [20].

Based on the above domestic and foreign research and analysis, in a country that advocates collectivism like China, we can find that reference group influence will inevitably have a special impact on the choice of individual behavior and attitude. Combined with social influence mode, both informational and normative influences are a psychological change based on individual comparison and others' expectations, which leads to the enhancement or weakening of specificity.

To sum up, Chinese society has been a country advocating collectivism since ancient times, and has a strong sense of face, which is a culture with Chinese characteristics. Therefore, for consumers with strong sense of face, they pay more attention to others' opinions on their purchases. Combined with the social impact theory, it can be seen that individual consumption choices are easily affected by reference groups. Based on the above theoretical analysis, this study constructs a theoretical model to explore the relationship between the three-dimensional degree of face awareness and Sichuan wine purchase intention, and focuses on how the reference group affects different dimensions to adjust the relationship between the two.

3. Research Design

3.1. Research models and assumptions

According to the questions raised, namely literature review, the model of this study is shown in Figure 1:

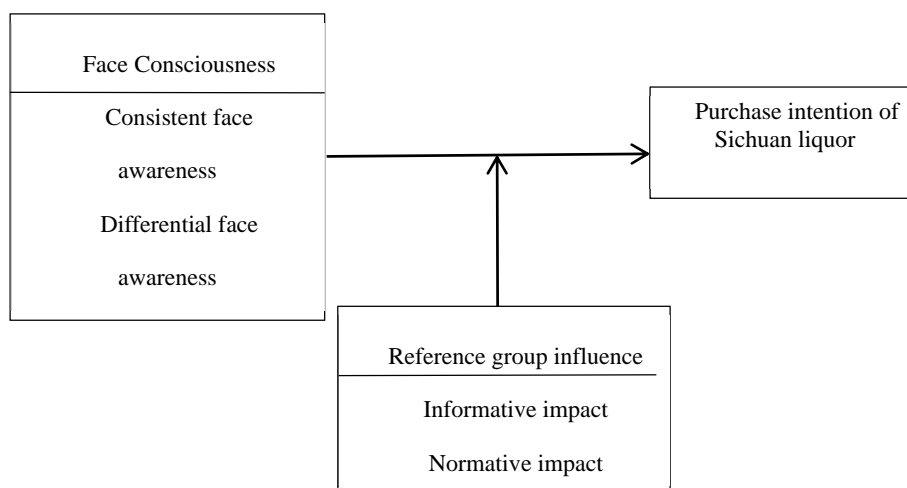


Figure 1. The role model of face awareness on Sichuan wine purchase intention

From the above literature review, the following assumptions are proposed:

H1: Consistent face awareness has a positive impact on Sichuan wine purchase intention.

H2: Differential face awareness has a positive impact on Sichuan wine purchase intention.

H3: Other oriented face awareness has a positive impact on Sichuan wine purchase intention.

H1a: The reference group's informational influence negatively regulates consistent face awareness and Sichuan wine purchase intention.

H2a: The reference group's informational influence negatively regulates the differential face awareness and Sichuan wine purchase intention.

H3a: The reference group's informational influence negatively regulates others' oriented face awareness and Sichuan wine purchase intention. H1b: Normative influence of reference group negatively regulates consistent face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan liquor.

H2b: The normative influence of the reference group negatively regulates the differential face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan liquor.

H3b: The normative influence of the reference group negatively regulates others' oriented face awareness and Sichuan wine purchase intention.

3.2. Questionnaire design

The measurement of variables in this study is mainly based on the mature scale in the previous literature, which adopts the Likert 5-point scale, that is, "1 means very disagree, 2 means disagree, 3 means indifferent, 4 means agree, 5 means very agree". The three dimensions of face consciousness adopted in this paper are divided from the perspective of face characteristics. We use the mature scale developed by J.J. Lee (2007) and others for reference in the measurement of its three-dimensional degree. At the same time, two other measurement items designed by Burnkrant (1975) are added to this study. As for the measurement of reference group influence dimension, this paper adopts the two-dimensional degree division method proposed by Deutsch and Gerard (1955), and on this basis, draws on the scale proposed by Gong Xiushuang (2017) and proved to have good reliability and validity; For the measurement of purchase intention, this paper adopts the purchase intention scale designed by Dodds, Monroe and Grewal (1991), Schiffman and Kanuk (2000) [21] [22];

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Data collection and sample status

In order to cover the survey population as comprehensively as possible, the survey mainly uses three ways to distribute questionnaires. The first is to collect the questionnaire after screening the subjects through the sample service of the online questionnaire; The second method is to collect questionnaires from customers through return visits from

merchants entrusted to operate and sell Sichuan liquor; The third way is to ask consumers to fill in questionnaires near Sichuan liquor sales sites through field research. In order to reduce the random filling of respondents, we try to ask consumers in advance "whether they have had experience of Sichuan wine consumption" for preliminary screening. A total of 405 questionnaires were distributed in this survey, and 389 questionnaires were recovered, with a recovery rate of 96.05%; After all the options are the same, missing items, and the screening questions are invalid, 350 valid questionnaires remain, with an effective rate of 89.97%. The ratio between the effective sample size of the formal survey and the measurement items obtained in this survey has exceeded 10:1, which meets the requirements for effective sample size.

In terms of sample description statistics, male accounts for 79.71%, and female accounts for 20.29%; In terms of age distribution, 25-35 accounts for 6.57%, 36-45 36.86%, 46-55 27.71%, and more than 55 28.86%; In terms of the distribution of education level, 7.41% are junior high school students and below, 35.71% are senior high school students/vocational high school students, 44% are college students/universities, and 13.14% are graduate students and above; In terms of monthly income distribution, the proportion below 2000 yuan is 02,001 yuan to 4000 yuan, accounting for 10%, 4001 yuan to 6000 yuan, accounting for 34.29%, 6001 yuan to 8000 yuan, accounting for 28.86%, 8001 yuan to 10000 yuan, accounting for 16.57%, and more than 10000 yuan, accounting for 10.29%; In terms of occupation distribution, students account for 0%, government/public institutions account for 18%, enterprises account for 12.57%, private owners/self-employed account for 36.29%, freelancers account for 26.29%, and others account for 6.86%.

4.2. Validity and reliability test of the questionnaire

4.2.1. Reliability test

The test items in this study are all from the mature scale, and the opinions of several scholars around have been solicited during the research, so the content validity of the questionnaire has been sufficiently guaranteed. In terms of construction validity, exploratory factor analysis was adopted. The KMO value of the sample population data was 0.968, and Bartlett's spherical test ($P=0.000$) was also passed. Six factors with characteristic values greater than 1 were identified by confirmatory factor analysis, and the cumulative variance interpretation proportion reached 78.781%;

To sum up, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire have been well verified. The above results show that the sample data of formal research is very suitable for CFA test.

The confirmatory factor analysis was carried out with AMOS software, which mainly included three tests: construct validity, convergence validity and discrimination validity.

4.2.1.1 Construct validity

Table 1. of Model Adaptation Coefficients

Fitting index	$\times 2 / df$	RMSEA	NFI	CFI	RFI	TLI	IFI
actual value	1.613	0.042	0.951	0.981	0.942	0.977	0.981
recommended value	1~3	<0.08	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Fitting effect	ideal	ideal	ideal	ideal	ideal	ideal	ideal

4.2.1.2 Convergence validity

Table 2. Convergence validity analysis

dimension	Item	Parameter significance estimation				convergent validity			
		Unstd.	S.E.	t-value	P	Std.	SMC	AVE	CR
Consistent face awareness	U1	1				0.800	0.639	0.6922	0.8999
	U2	0.970	0.054	17.976	***	0.842	0.709		
	U3	0.982	0.054	18.246	***	0.851	0.725		
	U4	0.956	0.054	17.752	***	0.834	0.696		
Differential face awareness	D1	1				0.797	0.707	0.6882	0.8686
	D2	0.891	0.049	18.065	***	0.872	0.719		
	D3	0.825	0.049	16.726	***	0.818	0.701		
Others oriented face awareness	O1	1				0.815	0.677	0.6941	0.8719
	O2	0.865	0.048	18.086	***	0.843	0.680		
	O3	0.850	0.047	18.050	***	0.841	0.683		
Informative impact	I1	1				0.841	0.683	0.7011	0.9037
	I2	0.841	0.043	19.501	***	0.848	0.712		
	I3	0.810	0.042	19.098	***	0.837	0.631		
	I4	0.824	0.044	18.601	***	0.823	0.740		
Normative impact	N1	1				0.825	0.697	0.6898	0.8989
	N2	0.790	0.044	18.061	***	0.826	0.679		
	N3	0.833	0.046	17.418	***	0.827	0.635		
	N4	0.833	0.045	17.114	***	0.844	0.760		
Purchase intention	W1	1				0.794	0.669	0.6866	0.8975
	W2	0.899	0.050	18.105	***	0.860	0.664		
	W3	0.910	0.052	17.418	***	0.835	0.710		
	W4	0.890	0.052	17.11	***	0.824	0.708		

4.2.1.3 Discriminant validity

Table 3. Discriminant validity analysis

	uniformity	Difference	Others oriented	Informative	Normative	Purchase intention
uniformity						
Difference	0.828***					
Others oriented	0.852***	0.818***				
Informative	0.798***	0.803***	0.819***			
Normative	0.827***	0.754***	0.782***	0.758***		
Purchase intention	0.836***	0.767***	0.816***	0.791***	0.757***	
AVE square root	0.8528	0.8296	0.8331	0.8373	0.8305	0.8286

Table 4. The moderating effect of informational influence on face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan liquor

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Gender	-0.045	-0.045	-0.081	-0.122	-0.078
age group	0.021	0.021	0.012	0.025	0.012
Education level of age group	-0.030	-0.030	-0.036	-0.033	-0.038
monthly income	-0.050	-0.050	-0.030	-0.040	-0.039
occupation	-0.001	-0.001	0.012	0.015	-0.010
uniformity		0.387***	0.408***		
Difference		0.182***		0.276***	
Others oriented		0.289***			0.330***
Informative			0.306***	0.362***	0.323***
uniformity × Informative			-0.144***		
Difference × Informative				-0.184***	
Others oriented × Informative					-0.187***
R2	0.021	0.622	0.797	0.772	0.790
Adj.R2	0.007	0.613	0.635	0.596	0.624
F value	1.459***	70.134***	74.099***	69.988	70.626

Table 5. Regulatory effect between face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan wine

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Gender	-0.045	-0.045	-0.080	-0.101	-0.060
age group	0.021	0.021	0.017	0.038	0.027
Education level of age group	-0.030	-0.030	-0.031	-0.018	-0.021
monthly income	-0.050	-0.050	-0.021	-0.024	-0.024
occupation	-0.001	-0.001	0.012	0.012	0.010
uniformity		0.387***	0.464***		
Difference		0.182***		0.311***	
Others oriented		0.289***			
Normative			0.238***	0.323***	0.273***
uniformity × Normative			-0.153***		
Difference × Normative				-0.227***	
Others oriented × Normative					-0.200***
R2	0.021	0.622	0.777	0.772	0.780
Adj.R2	0.007	0.613	0.604	0.596	0.609
F value	1.459***	70.134***	65.052	62.852	66.381

4.3. Result analysis

Wen Zhonglin et al. (2005) believed that: "In the hierarchical regression analysis, (1) regression of Y to X and M yields the coefficient R21. (2) regression of Y to X, M and XM yields R22. If R22 is significantly higher than R21, the regulatory effect is significant."

Regulatory effect of reference group's informational influence on consistent face awareness and purchase intention

① As shown in the table, the R2 value measured in model 3 is 0.797, and the R2 value measured in model 2 is 0.622. R2 becomes larger and the model is significant ($F=0.175$, $P<0.001$), so there is a regulatory effect in model 3. The influence of reference group information on consistent face awareness and purchase intention is a negative adjustment (-0.144 , $p<0.001$), so the hypothesis is valid and supported.

② Regulatory effect of reference group's informational influence on differential face awareness and purchase intention

As shown in the table, the R2 value measured in model 3 is 0.772, and the R2 value measured in model 2 is 0.622. R2 becomes larger and the model is significant ($F=0.150$, $P<0.001$), so there is a regulatory effect in model 3. The effect of reference group's informational influence on differential face awareness and purchase intention is a negative adjustment (-0.184 , $p<0.001$), so the hypothesis is valid and supported.

③ The regulatory effect of reference group's informational influence on others' oriented face awareness and purchase intention

As shown in the table, the R2 value measured in model 3 is 0.790, and the R2 value measured in model 2 is 0.622. R2 becomes larger and the model is significant ($F=0.168$, $P<0.001$), so there is a regulatory effect in model 3. The effect

of reference group's informational influence on others' oriented face awareness and purchase intention is a negative adjustment (-0.187 , $p<0.001$), so the hypothesis is valid and supported.

④ Regulatory effect of normative influence of reference group on consistent face awareness and purchase intention

As shown in the table, the R2 value measured in model 3 is 0.777, and the R2 value measured in model 2 is 0.622. R2 becomes larger and the model is significant ($F=0.155$, $P<0.001$), so there is a regulatory effect in model 3. The effect of normative influence of reference group on consistent face awareness and purchase intention is a negative adjustment (-0.153 , $p<0.001$), so the hypothesis is valid and supported.

⑤ Regulatory effect of reference group's informational influence on differential face awareness and purchase intention

As shown in the table, the R2 value measured in model 3 is 0.772, and the R2 value measured in model 2 is 0.622. R2 becomes larger and the model is significant ($F=0.150$, $P<0.001$), so there is a regulatory effect in model 3. The influence of reference group information on consistent face awareness and purchase intention is a negative adjustment (-0.227 , $p<0.001$), so the hypothesis is valid and supported.

⑥ The regulatory effect of reference group's informational influence on others' oriented face awareness and purchase intention

As shown in the table, the R2 value measured in model 3 is 0.780, and the R2 value measured in model 2 is 0.622. R2 becomes larger and the model is significant ($F=0.158$, $P<0.001$), so there is a regulatory effect in model 3. The effect of reference group's informational influence on others' oriented face awareness and purchase intention is a negative adjustment (-0.200 , $p<0.001$), so the hypothesis is valid and supported.

Table 6. Validation of assumptions in this study

	Assumptions	Validation results
H1	Consistent face awareness has a positive impact on Sichuan wine purchase intention	support
H2	Differential face awareness has a positive impact on Sichuan wine purchase intention	support
H3	Other oriented face awareness has a positive impact on Sichuan wine purchase intention	support
H1a	Reference group information influence negatively regulates consistency, face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan liquor	support
H2a	Negative regulation of different face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan wine with reference to group information influence	support
H3a	Negative adjustment of others' oriented face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan liquor with reference to the group's informational influence	support
H1b	Normative influence of reference group negatively regulates consistency, face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan liquor	support
H2b	Refer to the normative influence of the group to negatively regulate the differential face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan wine	support
H3b	Negative adjustment of others' oriented face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan liquor by reference to group normative influence	support

5. Conclusion and Marketing Inspiration

This study takes face awareness, reference group influence and Sichuan wine purchase intention as the foundation of model construction. Through reviewing the relevant literature, the main effect path of face awareness on Sichuan wine purchase intention is constructed. At the same time, reference group influence is introduced to adjust the relationship between the main effect variables, forming the final theoretical model.

On the basis of this theoretical model, this study conducts empirical research, verifies each hypothesis one by one through the processing of sample data, clarifies the impact of face awareness on consumers' willingness to purchase Sichuan liquor, and provides guidance and help for enterprises in marketing planning of related products.

To sum up, the conclusions of this study are as follows:

The three dimensions of face awareness can significantly affect consumers' purchase intention of Sichuan Liquor, and the consistent face awareness is greater than others' oriented face awareness than the differential face awareness.

Reference group influence plays a moderating role between face awareness and Sichuan wine purchase intention. And this paper demonstrates that both informational and normative influences of reference groups play a negative role in regulating the relationship between the three-dimensional degree of face awareness and Sichuan wine purchase intention. Due to the restriction of internal norms of the group, consumers will reduce their willingness to buy Sichuan wine triggered by face, and will also reduce their willingness to buy Sichuan wine under the premise of complex external group information and uncertain reliability.

In theoretical sense, face, as a complex concept, was considered as a whole variable in most previous studies. This study subdivided the three dimensions of face awareness from the perspective of face filling characteristics, and improved the empirical research related to face. At the same time, based on the characteristics of Chinese culture, this study made a revision and supplement to the antagonistic behavior model, demonstrating the necessity of cross-cultural research on some western theoretical models. In addition, this paper divides the reference group influence into informational influence and normative influence, and explores the

regulatory role of the two on face awareness and purchase intention, which provides a certain reference value for subsequent research on the difference of reference group influence.

In a practical sense, understanding the connotation of consumers' purchase intention in the new era is the key to understanding the changes in consumers' shopping psychology in the economic transition period. This study will help Sichuan wine marketers to have a deeper insight into the characteristics of Chinese Sichuan wine consumers' crowd and face awareness, thus providing some help for the market positioning of Sichuan wine. When positioning products, enterprises must be associated with consumers' face, so as to attract their attention and purchase desire. Since the reference group influence all reversely adjusts the relationship between face awareness and purchase intention of Sichuan liquor, businesses need to screen the most important and valuable information and deliver it accurately, convey the information expected by consumers, attract target customers under group norms, and establish a good relationship with consumers in order to promote consumption.

Although this study has conducted a more in-depth study on the purchase intention of Sichuan liquor, there are still some shortcomings in this paper: the sample sampling is limited to Sichuan, and the sample size is also small, so there may be some regional limitations and sample limitations. Subsequent research can improve the scientificity of the study by increasing the collection channels, sample number and regional scope; In terms of model construction, we can consider introducing self construction, social status and other variables to supplement the existing model, discuss its impact on consumers' purchase intention, and enrich the theoretical model.

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