

Cultural Interpretation of Consumerism and Anti-Consumerism in the New Media Era



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Abstract: With the continuous improvement of China's scientific and technological level and sustained economic development, people's lives have become richer. Under the background of the new era, with the diversification of information and the development of new media industry, Chinese consumerism values are influenced by advertisements. Nowadays, many people advocate consumerism. Recently, consumerism has come under attack, and anti-consumerism is highly regarded by people in the new media era. Taking Southwest Medical University as the research object, this paper analyzes the culture of consumerism and anti-consumerism in the current new media era.

Keywords: new media; consumerism; anti-consumerism

1. Introduction

Now, people's living standards in our country have improved. After the improvement of their material life, they have a higher spiritual pursuit. Consumers will change their consumption concept, thus two new cultures, consumerism and anti-consumerism, have emerged. These two cultures have also affected the new media industry to some extent. Under the background of new media, the two cultures and the new media industry influence and restrict each other. Only by coordinating the relationship between them and improving them at any time can we better promote the progress and development of the new media industry.

2. The spread of consumerism culture in the new media era

In the mainstream culture of society, consumerism culture is a special existence, and people usually regard it as a marginal culture. Consumption, an economic behaviour, has been integrated into people's lives and has profound cultural connotations. If we want to make an in-depth analysis, it needs to be carried out from many aspects such as economics and philosophy. Under the background of consumption, popular culture influences people's consumption concept, and people want to get material and spiritual satisfaction, so they often show off. In the long run, it also forms a kind of culture, and people hope to meet their own needs and realize the value of life through consumption (Hou, 2022). With the prevalence of the capitalist era, China's commodity economy has developed, and China's commodity resources have

become increasingly abundant. We have entered the era of a consumer society. The spirit of capitalism has developed from the initial Protestant ethics to the infinite pursuit of wealth. People's living standard has been greatly improved, and the pursuit of luxury goods has become the life direction for people to meet their material and spiritual needs. By using this kind of consumerism of the masses, merchants use various ways to induce consumers to spend, and before they can detect it, they have already fallen into the consumption trap of merchants.

3. The consumerism culture and new media restrict each other.

In the new media industry, if you don't combine the consumerist culture, but only work on your own feelings and experiences, then you will not be able to produce popular news. The development of the new media industry will be influenced by consumerism culture to a certain extent, and the psychological changes of consumers will bring new challenges to the new media industry. When broadcasting content, the new media should pay attention to the combination of consumerism culture, and make the content rich and logical, so that it can resonate with the masses to a certain extent. Once the content broadcast by new media still uses the previous template, it will make the content unattractive and unable to arouse the enthusiasm of the audience. In the long run, it will not only fail to attract new audiences but may also lose the audience who liked the programs before (Xia & Wang, 2020). In addition, the new media should always pay attention to the psychological changes of the audience and choose the current hot topics, which can stimulate the audience's

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80

interest. The audience's life values will be restricted by the consumerism culture in some aspects, because the audience is the main body of the new media, so the consumerism culture restricts the content selection and development mode of the new media to some extent, and restricts the development direction of the new media industry.

4. Consumer culture and the new media influence each other.

With the advent of the Internet age, new media has been integrated into people's daily life and become a part of people's lives. Whether in restaurants or shopping malls, they can be seen as affecting people's work and life. As the main body of consumerism culture, consumers' thoughts will influence consumerism culture to a certain extent, and consumerism culture will restrict the development of new media in a certain way. As the supervisor of society, the new media industry will play a role in promoting the development of the market economy once it is influenced by the consumerism culture. For example, when you take the subway, you will often see some travel programs broadcast by new media, which will arouse people's interest in tourism and promote economic development. Movies in cinemas sometimes insert advertisements to introduce excellent products and arouse people's desire to buy. Shopping malls will broadcast advertisements of recent promotions to attract the attention of the masses, promote consumption and so on. These are effective measures taken by new media to stimulate consumption and improve consumption levels. The new media should constantly innovate its working methods according to the development of the times and closely integrate with the consumerism culture, so as to give full play to the advantages of the new media and promote social development (Chen, 2021).

5. The mainstream media's attack on consumerism

By analyzing the current situation of consumption markets in other developed countries, we can learn from some experiences. In the process of social development, commodities will eventually return to themselves, and people will gradually change their consumption concepts and stop blindly consuming. With the development of the consumption era, people no longer advocate consumerism and pursue luxury goods as their life goal, so a new idea: anti-consumerism has emerged. People advocate green consumption and rational consumption and decide to take the road to sustainable development. Most people think that spiritual wealth is more important than material wealth. As stated in People's Daily's *Consume, not Consumerism*, it is necessary to change our understanding of consumerism. In the past, with consumerism, people thought that consumption could replace care. In the new media era, Taobao and other shopping software take advantage of the Internet to add some advertisements while people browse and shop. People feel that they are always under the supervision of consumerism culture, and often recommend luxury goods and daily necessities to people. In the process of pushing, a new concept of light luxury appears. Using big data can make most users purchase power and get a better experience in the shopping process.

6. Anti-consumerism videos of youth groups are prevalent.

Nowadays, anti-consumerism circulating on the Internet is prevalent and has become mainstream. Take a short video of vibrato as an example. As long as you search for consumerism, hundreds or even thousands of videos will appear, and most of them can reach over 10,000 broadcasts. Recently, some news about consumerism has appeared, and the state has launched a series of investigation activities so that young people who keep up with the trend of the times begin to reflect on whether their consumption is reasonable. At the same time, the rise of shopping software in Pinduoduo and the appearance of a cheap market show that the excessive consumption of society is unrealistic. For this special group of college students, the main source of income is the supply of their parents. If excessive consumption will make their income and expenditure unbalanced, some students will choose extreme ways, such as borrowing money from software to satisfy themselves. Now this phenomenon is also very common. Since anti-lending propaganda activities were launched in universities, young people began to advocate an anti-consumerism culture. On some online platforms, some online celebrities have released recommended videos of cheap and good things. The popularity of such videos has awakened young people, who are beginning to realize the harm of excessive consumption and will plan their property reasonably to meet their needs according to their actual consumption level. In the long run, young people have become the main body advocating anti-consumerism culture and practising anti-consumerism with their own practical actions (Yao, 2020).

7. Conclusion

To sum up, all aspects of people's daily life are inseparable from consumption, which has penetrated into people's daily life. It is a very important thing to help the younger generation form their own correct values, especially the consumption concept. In this era of developed networks, people have different views on consumerism. Some people use inappropriate words when criticizing consumerism, and some readers are disgusted.

Criticism of consumerism is somewhat unrealistic. At present, everyone in society has the right to choose independently, and everyone has the freedom of consumption. It is not a simple matter to truly realize the freedom of consumption, which requires the strong assistance of the state. The state should pay more attention to low-income people and fight the tough battle against poverty, so as to eliminate people's wealth-hating psychology from the root. In the future, the economic development of society still needs to be driven by consumption, and consumerism is unlikely to disappear. Only by fundamentally improving the economic level and producing more products with good quality and low prices can we promote the development and progress of society.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of
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