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# **Research Article**

# THE IMPACTS OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF ADVERTISING ON THE CONSUMPTION OF CHINESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates and analyzes 300 college students from a National Normal University in Henan Province, China, through the questionnaire on towards college students about the impacts of advertising on their consumption. This shows that advertising has a significant impact on the consumption of contemporary college students and there are great differences in the influence of different forms of advertising on consumption of male and female. There are also significant differences for university students from urban and rural areas. Therefore, the merchants can only their goal by conducting advertising according to individual conditions when they are facing different groups of consumers. At the same time, it also provides countermeasures for advocating good advertisement information dissemination and guiding college students' h to cultivate correct consumption value.

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# **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Question Raising**

Contemporary advertising defines the nature of advertising as a persuasive promotional campaign. The so-called advertising refers to that the specific advertisement must use the form of payment purposefully and adopt various means of communication and expression to deliver the product and service information to its targeted consumers and thereby speed up the product sales. With the continuous development of social economy, especially the development of modern forms of propaganda, advertising has become the main promotion method for the development of contemporary enterprises, and it has accelerated the development of the entire social economy. Now in the information age, people are living in a space created by advertising. People are more or less affected by advertising or other forms of promotion. Contemporary college students, as a special group of consumers, have the features of having higher education, having access to be exposed to much more information, having a higher level of cognition, having more complex thinking ways, impulsive consumption awareness and more avant-garde consumption patterns and so forth. Research shows that contemporary college students have a higher level of awareness of advertising, and they are sensitive about advertising and commodity brands.

Contemporary college students are more willing to accept new things, new ideas and new forms of life. To a certain extent, they are the leaders of social trends. We will use this survey to analyze the impact of different forms of advertising on college students' consumption.

#### Background of this study

Since the implementation of education reform in our country, colleges and universities have been expanding their enrollments, and the number of university students has also been increasing. Although the overall consumption level of college students is not high and it cannot become the main force of social consumption, it is undeniable that their consumption position in society is gradually increasing. The degree of education received by contemporary college students and the special campus environment make them become a relatively special consumer group in society. As a result, they have different consumer psychology and consumer demand from other consumer groups and have shown different Consumer behavior. Advertising is an economic activity, and it is a comprehensive and complex cultural phenomenon. Advertising propaganda is a kind of transmission method aiming at creating people's consumption conception and consumption behavior. With the rapid development of advertising communication, advertising is continuously

stimulating the consumption psychology of college students, guiding the consumption patterns of college students and transforming the concept of university students' consumption, constructing college students' consumption fashion and it also has great influences on the spreading of consumer culture. Advertising is an information dissemination activity. The basic function of advertising is to deliver the main information about commodities, ideas, and labor services to consumers through media to promote the sale of goods. [1] The goods and services produced by enterprises are consumed and used by consumers, and then enterprises can get profits. Thus, companies must allow consumers to understand the relevant product information in order to obtain the opportunity of being selected. Therefore, to maintain communication between businesses and consumers, we must do a good job in advertising. Advertising campaigns have always played an important role in this regard. The kind of production mode that consumers just buy what the companies have produced has already been the past. Provided that the goods produced by enterprises are unknown to consumers, the products will be left untouched. And the contradiction between production and sales will become prominent. Enterprises should not only produce marketable products and allow consumers to know the advantages, the benefits of the products they produce, but also persuade consumers to purchase to make profits. The role of advertising is undoubtedly more and more important.

## Significance of this research

The bad or good usage of advertising, to a certain extent, will affect the purchase rate of the product. It is also a key factor in the success or failure of a company [2] Currently, in China, the main forms of advertising are newspapers, magazines, radio, television, network, outdoor, leaflets and so forth. In addition, college students also have their own specific ways and means of collecting consumption information. This study assumes that different forms of advertising will influence college students on the way they purchase goods. Therefore, in this study, we want to understand the impact of different advertising formats on contemporary college students' consumption behavior, so as to provide a certain reference for businesses to adopt better forms of advertising in response to people's needs.

The consumption of college students is also an important part of the overall social consumption. Under the influence of modern society's lifestyle, consumption concept, and fashion, consumer behavior and psychology often have mutual influence and form unique psychological characteristics of a consumer group. This paper starts from the social consumption environment, the psychological needs of college students' consumption, and the influence of the college students' consumption psychology, takes the college students' consumption psychology as the theme, and promotes the cultivation of college students' awareness of consumption responsibility according to their consumption characteristics. As a special consumer group in contemporary society, the consumption status of college students reflects the current value orientation and life state of college students to some extent. The establishment and formation of their consumption concepts will have a significant impact on their quality and behavior throughout their lives. College students are a special consumer group that is continuously changing. Different ages, different genders, different backgrounds, different levels of cities, or different regions all lead to students' differences of consumption. Therefore, educating and guiding college students to form correct and correct consumption values through various ways and propagating positive consumption culture in universities are crucial in the development and growth of contemporary college students.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

From the mid-1980s to the present, European and American scholars have done a lot researches on consumers and advertising. Advertising attitude, as a kind of people's attitude, can be understood from three perspectives which include people's cognitive aspects, emotional aspects, and behavioral intentions. Cognitive aspect refers to individual's belief in advertising behavior. This belief derives from its own thoughts, cognition, value, and learning. The emotional aspect is an emotional reflection of the individual's exposure to the advertisement, which refers to the subjective feeling expressed towards advertisements of love, hatred and so on. In terms of behavioral intention, one part is the performance of an individual based on his own beliefs or feelings, and the other is the performance of an individual due to the influence of the external environment. [3] Wang Dan, Du Min, Li Jilian, and Zhang Wen argued in the investigation on public's attitudes towards different media advertising that "the attitude of advertising" refers to people's constant acceptance of information through daily life. But the relatively fixed tendency of approval and disapproval on ad's overall performance is a reflection of various positive and negative cognition and emotions evoked by advertisements. [4] Chinese scholars Li Rui et al found in the research on contemporary college students' advertising attitudes, that college students tend to agree with the overall attitude toward advertising; College students' attitudes to advertisements expressed in a perceptual manner are significantly better than advertisements expressed in a rational manner. However, there is no research on the impact of college students' different genders and different backgrounds on different advertising campaigns. The relationship between advertisements and college students' consumption behavior has not yet been involved. I hope this research can found something.

## The Process of This Research

## **Research Content**

Advertising has an increasingly prominent influence on the values of college students' consumption. To address this issue, based on the statistical analysis of the survey results, this study used sociology, communication, advertising, and statistics related theories to try to explore the influence of advertising on the consumption values of students from a state normal university in Henan Province, China from impacts of different media advertisements on consumption value. This study also uses relevant statistical analysis methods to examine thoroughly and reveal the internal mechanisms that make things happen and offer countermeasures and suggestions for advocating a good advertising information dissemination and making college students to form correct and rational consumption conception.

#### **Objects and Methods**

#### Measuring Tools and Objects

In this study, a questionnaire towards college student about the impacts of advertising on consumption was compiled, and these questionnaires were sent to students of a normal university. 294 questionnaires were collected from a random sample of 300 objects, including 131 boys and 163 girls. The recovery rate was 98%, of which 263 were valid questionnaires and the availability rate was 87.7%.

#### Statistical Methods

Percentage data statistics method is adopted in this study.

#### The Original Data

294 questionnaires were sent out, including 131 boys and 163 girls. The recovery rate was 98%, of which 263 were valid questionnaires.

#### Analysis of the Survey Results

In this effective questionnaire about effects of different forms of advertising on commodity purchasing, 238 college students believes that advertising has a great impact on the decision to purchase goods, which accounted for 90.5% of the total number of objects. Among these forms of advertisements, television advertisements, promotional advertisements, and online advertisements occupy the top three with the greatest impact on college students' consumption. Mail advertisements are the least, and they have the worst influence on college students' consumption.

The influence and diversity of different forms of advertising on college students' consumption behavior

advertisements expenditures that enterprises spend will increase the cost of products. And the extra cost will be passed on to consumers and thereby increases the economic burden on consumers. However, in fact, advertising makes the products be sold in a large amount and allows enterprises to achieve economies of scale. As a result, companies can reduce the cost of production, sales, and management which will help enterprises save a lot of expenses and lower the unit price of products, and thereby lighten consumers' economic burden of purchasing products.

However, for college students, television advertisements, online advertisements, and shopping mall advertisements rank among the top three. And mail advertisements have the least impact on college students' consumption. On the one hand, television, Internet and other advertisements have the characteristics of fast information transmission and wide range, and they usually have greater inducement for the consumption needs of college students. Because college students are affected by many factors such as age and life experience, they are in a special period of transition from semi-mature to mature. Their consumption behaviors have the features of blindness, conformity and pursuing fashion. Under the influence and induction of the external environment, college students are very easy to get trapped in the psychological desire of keeping in step with fashion. Therefore, when purchasing a product, they pay special attention to whether the style of the product is popular or not, and care less about the practical value, quality, and price of the product itself. They often purchase goods in order to highlight their own personalities, or attract attention.[5]

TV advertising	Internet advertising	Promotional advertising	Leaflet advertising	Outdoor advertising	Magazines	Broadcast advertising	Postal advertising
33.5%	30%	16.3%	8%	4.2%	3.4%	2.7%	1.9%

The discussion of the influence of different forms of advertising on consumption has revealed that advertising has a great influence on the decision-making of contemporary college students' consumption behavior. This shows that advertising can provide product information for college students, help them to make decisions about consumption behavior, and plays an vital role in guiding and influencing consumption behavior. Since the reform and opening up, people's living standard has been greatly improved, and they are gradually becoming more and more passionate on consumption. Advertising has taken an increasingly important position in the acquisition of consumer information. Before consumers purchase goods, they usually need to learn about the basic information of the product. However, advertising is disseminate information about the functions, performance, usage methods and price of the products as well as where, when and how they are sold trough media, so that the majority of consumer groups can obtain relevant information. When a new product is about to be launched, or a new brand is about to emerge, or a kind new service is going to be provided, people usually acquire the latest news advertising. In particular, since the pace of life in contemporary society is accelerating, the convenience of purchasing can be obtained, the scope of product selection can be expanded and time can be saved through advertisements. Superficially, the large amount of Therefore, combining the characteristics of advertisements such as television advertisements and the Internet advertisements with the consumption characteristics of college students will generate a great impact on both sides. With the increasing number of fraudulent cases of mail advertisements, such an advertising form is increasingly not recognized by society. When a mail advertisement is mentioned, it is often associated with fraud. Therefore, the impact of mail advertisements on students' consumption is very small. Thus, companies should use more advertising formats such as television, internet, and shopping mall promotions that have a large impact on college students when making their own advertisements.

The influence and diversity of different forms of advertising on the consumption of male and female

	Male	Female
TV advertising	33.3%	27.3%
Internet advertising	35.8%	21%
Newspaper and magazine	4.2%	8.3%
Broadcast advertising	2.5%	2.1%
Outdoor Advertising	5%	3.5%
Promotional advertising	10.8%	31.5%
Postal Advertising	0.83%	3.5%
Leaflet Advertising	7.5%	2.8%

Through the analysis on the results of the questionnaire, it is found that when purchasing goods, contemporary college male are affected by the Internet and television advertising, with 35.8% and 33.3% respectively. The impacts of mailing and broadcasting advertising on the consumption of college male are very small, with 0.83% and 2.5% respectively. Compared with male, shopping mall promotion, television, and Internet advertising have relatively great impacts on contemporary female college students' purchasing of goods, occupying the top three, with 31.5% 27.3% and 21% respectively. Radio advertising has the smallest influence, with only 2.1%. Among these forms of advertising, Internet and promotional advertising have differences in influencing the consumption of different genders of contemporary college students.

The frequency of daily contact with information to college students has a direct relationship with the significant differences between two genders on online advertising and promotional advertising. In our daily life, boys are more exposed to the Internet than girls, and boys like to buy things in a simple and quick way; While girls like firstly shopping around and then make a decision. Therefore, it is more likely for them to encounter and concern Mall promotional advertising campaigns. As the saying goes, the love of beauty is common to all people. For a contemporary female college student with a relatively high level of education, pursuing beauty is also something that cannot be ignored. Therefore, in their daily lives, girls often pay attention to some popular newspapers and magazines, so as to obtain some prevalent information, such as clothes matching, styles, colors and so forth as well as cosmetics, fashionable decorations and a series of stuff that girls are fond of. Most of girls spend most of their money on these items[6]. Newspapers, fashion magazines, and other information representing fashion trends often represent the front line of a contemporary fashion trend. Therefore, contemporary female college students will dress like what people dress in fashion magazines. And they tend to purchase clothes of the same style or color with what the clothes are in magazines. This has changed the consumption trends of female college students in a subtle manner. However, there is a significant difference of the consumption behavior between contemporary male college students and female college students [7]. The advertisement information that male students encounter in daily life mainly comes from the internet. Compared with female college students, boys are less likely to read newspapers and magazines, and when shopping, they tend to pay more attention to a quick and targeted form. Therefore, there are significant differences in the consumption behavior between contemporary male college students and female college students influenced by advertising formats such as the Internet, newspapers, magazines, and promotions.

## The influence and diversity of different forms of advertising on the consumption of urban and rural university students

Through the analysis on results of the investigation, it is found that, when purchasing goods, university students from urban areas are greatly affected by Internet and television advertising with 36.8% and 29.1% respectively. Broadcast, mail, and outdoor advertising have less influence, with only 1.7%, 2.5% and 4.2% respectively. However, college students from rural areas are greatly influenced by television advertising, shopping mall promotions, and online advertising, with 35.7%, 25.7%,

and 20.4% respectively. While postal advertising is less influential on the consumption of students from rural areas with only 0.7%. Because most of the promotional advertising will give people a feeling that the products are with high quality but low price. Due to family financial conditions, college students from rural areas are more concerned about promotional products. It is easier for them to take the appropriate purchasing action. In this regard, there are great differences in consumption between college students from urban areas and those from rural areas; As rural areas are relatively remote and the transportation is inconvenient, college students from rural areas rarely come into contact with postal advertising before going to university. Therefore, mailing advertising has a minimal impact on rural college students. Among these advertising types, newspaper, and shopping mall promotion advertising have differences in affecting the consumption of college students from urban areas and rural areas.

The influence and diversity of different forms of advertising on the consumption of urban and rural university students

	From urban areas	From rural areas
TV advertising	29.1%	35.7%
Internet advertising	36.8%	20.4%
Newspaper and magazine	5%	1.4%
Broadcast advertising	1.7%	3.5%
Outdoor advertising	4.2%	4.2%
Promotional advertising	13.2%	25.7%
Postal advertising	2.5%	0.7%
Leaflet advertising	7.5%	8.4%

Through the analysis on the results of this questionnaire, it is found that TV advertising, promotional advertising in shopping malls, and online advertising embrace a large impact on both urban and rural college students. They occupy the top three and the less influential ones are also mail advertising and radio advertising. However, there are significant differences in the impact of online advertising, shopping malls and promotional advertising. There are also great differences in the impact of the less influential postal advertising and radio advertising for college students from urban and rural areas. Generally speaking, urban families have a better condition compared with rural ones. So urban families are more likely to have contact with Internet and their entertainment activities are more abundant. Listening to radio has become a relatively unfamiliar thing for them, which makes the impacts of broadcast advertising on college students from urban areas gradually decrease. Since college students from rural areas have relatively few recreational activities, they will retain some of their original home-based habits. They will listen to radio as a recreational activity. In the process of listening to the radio, they will inevitably be influenced by advertisements on the radio. When collecting information before making a purchasing decision, they are more or less influenced by broadcast advertising. Therefore, advertising forms such as Internet, radio, and promotion advertising have significant differences in the influence on the consumption of college and university students from urban and rural areas.

## Analysis of College Students' Consumption Psychology

College students have become an important force to guide consumption trends. It is particularly important to pay close attention to the behavior of college students and to grasp the psychological characteristics and behavioral orientation of college students. The consumption psychology of contemporary college students mainly includes the following aspects.

## College Students' Consumption Autonomy

Most contemporary college students are unscrupulous in what to buy and what they should not buy. When they see others buying something, they also swim with the stream. The result is that money is spent on something useless, causing a lot of waste. This kind of blind consumption analyzed in an internal way the consumption autonomy caused by individuality. For students, the college period is a special period in which independence and dependence coexist. Accompanied by the awakening of self-consciousness, they have a strong selfdominated demand in material and spiritual life. Most of the contemporary college students grew up after reform and opening up. The shaping of the environment has enabled them to have their own unique views, opinions, thoughts, and feelings in life, learning, ideology, and interpersonal relationships.

# The Imitation Trend of College Students' Consumption

Contemporary college students are better educated and thus have stronger imitation abilities. Therefore, in order to adapt to this fast-changing society, they choose to follow others' consumption choices in the process of consuming. Boys will learn to smoke and drink to make themselves look manly; Girls are fond of fashionable clothes, brand cosmetics and all kinds of exquisite jewelry. There is a constant imitation of star's dress style and lifestyle. There are also kinds of trends on campus like "birthday trend", "tourism trend", "starstruck craze" and so forth. All these crazes are related to the psychology of consumption imitation. The imitation tendency of contemporary college students' consumption is, to a certain extent, also produced by the psychological comparison of consumption, which is what will be discussed in the following passage. In particular, there is a crowd psychology that "I must have what other people have". The mutual influence between consumption psychology relationship and consumption popularity has also contributed to the emergence of this imitation trend. The consumption psychology directly determines the formation of consumption popularity; However, under the impact of consumption, many subtle changes have taken place in consumer psychology.

# Behavior of Rivalry of College Students' Consumption

When college students are advocating the secularized material enjoyment, the imitation of consumer behavior in the group naturally breeds a deformed psychological state that overwhelms the other parties. And it provides the conditions for college students to compare with each other. We can often see the case that once a girl in a dormitory wears fashionable clothes, the other girls in this dormitory will also quietly wear clothes that can be compared with her. If a girl who is from a poor family wants to buy a fashionable dress to keep pace with the fashion trend, she needs to be more economical to save money for over a month; Another example is that if a boy buys a popular piece of clothing, other students will put more money on comparing with him. In this way, students keep comparing with each other, which leads to a vicious circle and the continuous rise of college students' consumption. The psychology of seeking to do others down among contemporary

male college students competing for strength is reflected in consumption. They compare with each other, and strives to lead the trend of cultural consumption on campus. There are two aspects that are same with the essence of college students' mind of rivalry. The first one is the conformity behavior that "I must have what others have". In social life, people all have such psychological tendencies that things accepted by most people will be acceptable for individuals. College students are the same. In general, college students who pay extreme attention to the fashionable things and students who do not pay attention to fashion at all are the minority. Most people's attention has shifted with the development of fashion. The second is people's psychological difference. People controlled by this kind of psychology like changing patterns, looking for more fashionable and perfect things in order to achieve physical and mental satisfaction. This is the student's spontaneous psychology of seeking differences. The existence of this kind of psychology makes certain fashion meet the psychological needs of the university students for a moment, and then it will inevitably produce new needs. And they eagerly want consumption to be changed and innovated. Leading the new trend of culture consumption on campus is what some college students who have a strong sense of emulation and a desire to show themselves always dream for.

# CONCLUSION

- Since the reform and opening up, China has gradually 1. entered the information age. Advertising has a great impact on contemporary college students' consumption behaviors. Due to the continuous improvement of family conditions, every household has a television or even has been equipped with Internet. College students are exposed to television and Internet. TV advertising and online advertising have a significant impact on the consumption of college students. Since the promotion of goods will give people a feeling of quality and cheapness and college students are still pure consumers whose economic sources are still limited, promotions are also very popular among college students. Due to too many social frauds, people cannot trust things that cannot be seen or touched. Thus, they have the worst influence on college students' consumption. Therefore, merchants can achieve the maximization of profit by advertising according to different customer groups and individual conditions.
- 2. Internet advertising has the greatest impact on boys while mail advertising has the smallest effect on boys; Boys prefer Internet, and that is why they are greatly influenced by Internet in their daily life. When they want to buy some one-click products, the first thing that comes to mind is to search on the Internet. Boys are different from girls. They like to buy things in a quick and simple way; The promotional advertising in shopping malls has the biggest impact on girls and the radio advertising has the smallest impact. Since girls love Shopping more, the promotions in shopping malls are most popular among female college students; And online advertising, fashion magazine advertising, promotional malls' advertising shopping have significant differences in the affecting the consumption of different genders.

3. Internet advertising has the biggest impact on college students from urban areas and radio advertising has the smallest influence. While TV advertising has the biggest influence on college students from rural areas and mail advertising has the smallest impact on them. Generally speaking, urban families live in better conditions compared with rural ones. They are more likely to make contact with networks and their entertainment activities are more abundant. Listening to radio has become a relatively unfamiliar thing for them, which makes broadcast advertising gradually have less influence on college students from urban areas. Since college students from rural areas have relatively few recreational activities, they will retain some of their original homebased habits. They will listen to radio as a recreational activity. In the process of listening to the radio, they will inevitably be exposed to the advertisements on the radio. Since the financial conditions of the rural families are not good and promotion is generally a related cheap commodities, promotions in shopping malls are deeply loved by college students from rural areas. Therefore, online advertising, radio advertising, and promotional advertising have significant differences for college students from urban and rural areas in influencing their product purchases.

In this study, we learned that different forms of advertising influence the behavior of contemporary college students. The results of this study have two practical implications.

This study can provide a certain reference for businesses to adopt better forms of advertising in response to people's needs and to use different medias for different groups of people. For example, for girls, they can use promotional advertisements in shopping malls, television advertisements, and fashion magazine advertisements. For boys, they can use publicity channels such as online advertisements and television advertisements. For students from rural areas, they can use promotional advertisements in shopping malls, television advertisements and other publicity forms. For students from urban areas, they can use online advertising, television advertising and so on. Companies can grasp the key and get the greatest benefit.

On the other hand, because college students have a strong consumption psychological autonomy, consumer imitation tendencies and the mind of rivalry, the consuming behavior of college students is often influenced and induced by many factors. For schools, parents, and all sectors of the community, understanding the impact of various advertisements on college students' consumption can help them effectively prevent these undesirable phenomenons from happening. Through various means, they can educate and guide college students to establish correct and rational consumption values. In addition, advocating a positive consumer culture in the university is very important role in the growth and success of college students.

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