Literature Review on Online Shopping Attributes Influencing
Consumer Behavior in China

Abstract:

With the growing popularity of of online shopping in China, Chinese scholars have conducted several studies to understand the Chinese online shopping market as well as the Chinese online shopping behavior of consumers. This literature review have found out that the Top five players of online shopping in China are Taobao/Tmall, JD.com,Pinduoduo, Tiktok E-commerce and Xiaohongshu. The commonly purchased products online in China are Electronics products,clothing and apparel, beauty and personal care, household goods, foods and fresh products. The online consumer groups are mostly young women, college students, urban white collar workers and middle aged and elderly people. Factors considered by online consumers before buying a security, privacy, product variety, product delivery, Diversity, Website Design,Product information quality,prices, product and promotions, customer service quality, social media and user generated content and brand reputation.

I. Introduction

According to the China Online Retail Market Data Report 2023, the number of online shopping users in China in 2023 reached 915 million, an increase of 69.67 million compared with December 2022, accounting for 83.8% of the total Internet users. By the end of December 2023, the number of stores on China's online retail platforms had reached more than 25 million, an increase of 2.1%, among which there were about 13.582 million stores of physical goods, accounting for 54.2%. By June 2024, the number of stores on online retail platforms was about 25.597 million, an increase of 2.8 percent. AmonChina's online retail sales reached 7,099.1 billion yuan in the first half of 2024, up 9.8 percent year on year, according to data released by the National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Commerce. China's online retail sales reached 3.3 trillion yuan in the first quarter, up 12.4 percent year on year. This shows that China's online shopping market continues to expand, and consumers are increasingly accepting and relying on online shopping. The total online sales volume of these enterprises was 1.91 trillion yuan, up 2.7 percent from the previous year, according to the "China Top100 Online Retailers 2024" list released by the China Chain Store and Operation Association.

With the steady growth of online market comes with the exponential growth on the number of online sellers, making the China Online shopping market highly competitive. As such Chinese scholars have conducted researches to better understand the behavior of online shoppers particularly on matters that would influence them to buy a

41 product online. These manuscript analyzed the results of the completed researches in
42 order to provide a better understanding on the buying behavior of of Chinese online
43 shoppers.

2. Report on the Top 5 online shopping platform

45 The five top online shopping platforms in China (Taobao/Tmall, JD, Pinduoduo, Tiktok
46 E-commerce, Little Red Book) have their own characteristics, and meet the diversified
47 needs of consumers through different business models and technological innovation.

2.1 Taobao/Tmall

49 Taobao and Tmall, as the core e-commerce platforms of Alibaba Group, dominate
50 the Chinese e-commerce market. Taobao mainly adopts the C2C model, attracting a
51 large number of small and medium-sized sellers and individual merchants, while Tmall
52 mainly adopts the B2C model, focusing on brand merchants and high-quality products.
53 Research has shown that the success of Taobao and Tmall is attributed to their strong
54 technological support, such as intelligent recommendation systems and personalized
55 algorithms, as well as well-established logistics systems (Chen et al., 2021). In addition,
56 Taobao and Tmall have further consolidated their market positions through large-scale
57 promotional activities such as "Double 11" (Zhang et al., 2022). According to a report by
58 iResearch Consulting, Tmall's market share in the B2C market will reach 63.5% in 2023,
59 firmly ranking first in the industry (iResearch Consulting, 2023).

2.2 JD.com

61 JD.com is the largest self operated e-commerce platform in China, known for its
62 efficient logistics system and high-quality products. JD has achieved fast delivery and
63 high-quality services through its own logistics system (such as JD Logistics),
64 significantly improving consumers' shopping experience (Liu et al., 2021). In addition,
65 JD.com has further optimized its logistics efficiency through technological innovations
66 such as drone delivery and intelligent warehousing (Wang et al., 2023). JD's B2C model
67 and commitment to genuine product protection have also won high trust from
68 consumers (JD Research Institute, 2022). According to the National Bureau of
69 Statistics, JD's market share in the self operated e-commerce market will reach 25.8%
70 in 2023 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023).

2.3 Pinduoduo

72 Pinduoduo has rapidly emerged as an important participant in the Chinese e-
73 commerce market with its unique social e-commerce model and low price strategy.
74 Pinduoduo has lowered product prices through group buying and social sharing,
75 attracting a large number of price sensitive consumers (Li et al., 2020). Research has
76 shown that Pinduoduo's success lies in its precise market positioning and in-depth
77 exploration of the sinking market (Guo et al., 2021). In addition, Pinduoduo has also

78 helped farmers directly connect with consumers through its agricultural product upward
79 plan, further expanding its market share (Pinduoduo Research Institute, 2022).
80 According to data from Analysys, Pinduoduo's annual active users will exceed 900
81 million in 2023, making it one of the largest e-commerce platforms in China in terms of
82 user base (Analysys, 2023).

2.4 Tiktok E-commerce

84 Tiktok e-commerce is a social e-commerce platform that has risen rapidly in recent
85 years. Relying on Tiktok's short video and live delivery mode, it has attracted a large
86 number of young consumers. Tiktok e-commerce realized efficient promotion and sales
87 of goods through content marketing and KOL (key opinion leader) delivery (Zhang et al.,
88 2023). Research shows that the success of Tiktok e-commerce lies in its strong user
89 stickiness and accurate algorithm recommendation system (Wang et al., 2022). In
90 addition, Tiktok E-commerce has further improved its product quality and user trust
91 through cooperation with brand merchants (Tiktok E-commerce White Paper, 2023).
92 According to the data of QuestMobile, in 2023, the GMV (total volume of commodity
93 transactions) of Tiktok e-commerce will exceed 2 trillion yuan, becoming the leader in
94 the field of social e-commerce (QuestMobile, 2023).

2.5 Xiaohongshu

96   Xiaohongshu is a platform that combines social networking and e-commerce, mainly
97 targeting young female consumers. Xiaohongshu has formed a unique social e-
98 commerce model through user generated content (UGC) and community interaction.
99 Research has shown that the core competitiveness of Xiaohongshu lies in its authentic
100 product reviews and user sharing, which provide consumers with reliable shopping
101 references (Liu et al., 2022). In addition, Xiaohongshu has also launched a large
102 number of exclusive products and customized services through cooperation with brand
103 merchants, further enhancing its market appeal (Xiaohongshu Annual Report, 2023).
104 According to data from iMedia Consulting, the monthly active users of Xiaohongshu will
105 exceed 200 million in 2023, making it one of the preferred social e-commerce platforms
106 for young consumers (iMedia Consulting, 2023).

107   In 2023, China Youth Network Campus News Agency conducted a questionnaire
108 survey on 4673 college students. Nearly 90% of college students mainly shop online,
109 and more than 70% of college students shop online or at campus supermarkets and
110 small shops at least once a week. Among them, online shopping is the most common
111 shopping method for college students. According to the data of iMedia Consulting, in
112 2024, among the shopping platforms commonly used by Chinese college students,
113 Taobao/Tmall will account for 39.70%, Pinduoduo will account for 30.80%, Tiktok will
114 account for 28.80%, JD/Jingxi will account for 28.10%, and Xiaohongshu will account
115 for 17.60%. These platforms have their own unique features and meet the diverse
116 shopping needs of college students. Most college students are satisfied with their online

117 shopping experience, especially with affordable prices and a wide variety of products
118 that are more likely to attract their attention.

119 With the rapid development of China's e-commerce market, consumers are
120 increasingly diversifying their online shopping categories. From electronic products to
121 fresh food, e-commerce platforms meet the diverse needs of consumers through
122 technological innovation and logistics optimization. The following are the five most
123 popular products for online sales in China in 2023, which not only account for the main
124 sales of e-commerce platforms, but also reflect the shopping preferences and market
125 trends of Chinese consumers.

126 **3. Report on the commonly purchased products online in China**

127 **3.1 Electronic products**

128 Electronic products, such as smartphones, laptops, and tablets, are one of the most
129 popular product categories for online sales in China. According to a report by
130 iResearch, the sales of electronic products on e-commerce platforms will account for
131 28.5% in 2023, with smartphones being the best-selling item (iResearch, 2023). JD and
132 Tmall are the main platforms for electronic product sales, thanks to their genuine
133 product guarantee and efficient logistics services (JD Research Institute, 2022).

134 **3.2 Clothing and Apparel**

135 Clothing and accessories are another popular category on e-commerce platforms.
136 According to data from Analysys, the sales of clothing products on Taobao and
137 Pinduoduo will account for 35% and 25% respectively in 2023 (Analysys, 2023). Female
138 consumers are the main purchasing group for clothing products, especially young
139 women (Xiaohongshu Annual Report, 2023).

140 **3.3 Beauty and personal care**

141 In recent years, the sales of beauty and personal care products on e-commerce
142 platforms have grown rapidly. According to the report of QuestMobile, the sales of
143 beauty products in Tiktok E-commerce and Little Red Book will increase by more than
144 40% year on year in 2023 (QuestMobile, 2023). International brands such as Est é e
145 Lauder and Lanc ô me, as well as domestic brands such as Perfect Diary and Huaxizi,
146 have both performed strongly (iMedia Consulting, 2023).

147 **3.4 Household goods**

148 The sales of household items (such as furniture, home appliances, and decorations)
149 on e-commerce platforms have steadily increased. According to the National Bureau of
150 Statistics, the online sales of household goods will reach 1.2 trillion yuan in 2023, a
151 year-on-year increase of 15% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). JD and Tmall are

152 the main platforms for home goods sales, especially for the delivery services of large
153 items, which are favored by consumers (JD Research Institute, 2022).

3.5 Food and Fresh Products

155 Food and fresh produce are one of the fastest-growing categories of electronic
156 goods in recent years. According to a report by Pinduoduo Research Institute, the sales
157 of agricultural and fresh products will increase by 25% year-on-year in 2023, with fruits,
158 vegetables, and seafood being the most popular items (Pinduoduo Research Institute,
159 2023). Platforms such as Hema Fresh and JD Home have further driven the growth of
160 this category through instant delivery services (iResearch, 2023).

161 The rapid growth of China's online shopping market cannot be separated from the
162 active participation of different consumer groups. From young women to middle-aged
163 and elderly people, each group has its unique shopping habits and preferences. The
164 following are the five most influential consumer groups in China's online shopping
165 market in 2023, whose consumption behavior not only drives the development of e-
166 commerce platforms, but also shapes the future pattern of China's e-commerce market.

4. Report on consumer groups of online shopping in China

4.1 Young women

169 Young women (aged 18-35) are the main consumer group in China's online shopping
170 market. According to the annual report of Xiaohongshu, female users will account for
171 70% of the total platform users in 2023, with beauty, clothing, and maternal and child
172 products being its main purchasing categories (Xiaohongshu Annual Report, 2023). In
173 addition, the data of Tiktok E-commerce shows that the purchase conversion rate of
174 female users in live streaming goods is significantly higher than that of men (White
175 Paper of Tiktok E-commerce, 2023).

4.2 College students

177 College students are an important consumer group in the online shopping market,
178 especially in the areas of electronic products, clothing, and leisure food. According to a
179 survey by China Youth Network, nearly 90% of college students will mainly shop
180 through online shopping platforms in 2023, with Taobao and Pinduoduo being their
181 preferred platforms (China Youth Network, 2023). The consumption behavior of college
182 students has price sensitivity and social attributes, and Pinduoduo's group buying model
183 is highly popular among them (Analysys, 2023).

4.3 Urban white-collar workers

185 Urban white-collar workers (aged 25-40) are the main group with high purchasing
186 power, especially in the areas of electronic products, luxury goods, and household

187 items. According to a report by JD Research Institute, the average annual consumption
188 of white-collar users on the JD platform will exceed 10000 yuan in 2023, with high-end
189 home appliances and digital products being their main purchasing categories (JD
190 Research Institute, 2022). Tmall's data also shows that white-collar users are the main
191 driving force behind luxury online sales (iResearch, 2023).

192 **4.4 Consumers in the sinking market**

193 Consumers in lower tier markets (third tier and below cities) have been the main
194 driving force behind the growth of e-commerce platforms in recent years. According to a
195 report by Pinduoduo Research Institute, the average annual consumption of users in the
196 lower tier market will increase by 20% year-on-year in 2023, with food, clothing, and
197 home goods being the most popular categories (Pinduoduo Research Institute, 2023).
198 Pinduoduo and Taobao Special Edition are the preferred platforms for consumers in the
199 lower tier market (Analysys, 2023).

200 **4.5 Middle aged and elderly people**

201 Middle aged and elderly people (over 50 years old) are an emerging consumer group
202 in the online shopping market in recent years. According to QuestMobile's data, the
203 activity of middle-aged and elderly users on e-commerce platforms will increase by 30%
204 year-on-year in 2023, with health products, home furnishings, and food being their main
205 purchasing categories (QuestMobile, 2023). Tiktok e-commerce has attracted a large
206 number of middle-aged and elderly users through short videos and live broadcast
207 (Tiktok e-commerce white paper, 2023).

208 **5. Report on Factors Affecting Online Shopping Behavior**

209 **5.1 Online Shop Security**

210 Online shopping security is one of the key factors affecting consumers' online
211 shopping behavior. Research shows that consumers' trust and perceived risk on e-
212 commerce platforms directly affect their purchase decisions (Hajli et al., 2017).
213 Platforms can significantly enhance consumers' sense of security by adopting advanced
214 technological protections (such as end-to-end encryption, two-factor authentication) and
215 transparent privacy policies (Zhou et al., 2021). In addition, with the implementation of
216 privacy protection regulations such as GDPR and CCPA, the platform's compliance with
217 data security and privacy protection has also become an important source of consumer
218 trust (Bhattacharya et al., 2022).In addition, the improvement of laws and regulations
219 also provides additional protection for consumers. For example, the EU's General Data
220 Protection Regulation (GDPR) and China's Personal Information Protection Law clearly
221 define the responsibilities of platforms in data protection, further enhancing consumer
222 trust (European Commission, 2018; National People's Congress of China, 2021).

223 **5.2 Online Shop Privacy**

224   Online shopping privacy is an important issue in the field of e-commerce, and with
225 the popularity of online transactions, the protection of consumer personal data is
226 increasingly being concerned. Some researchers pointed out in their research that
227 information privacy issues not only involve data security at the technical level, but also
228 include consumers' perception and trust of privacy risks. They emphasized that
229 transparent privacy policies and effective technological protection measures are key to
230 enhancing consumer trust (Martin & Murphy, 2017). In addition, the improvement of
231 laws and regulations also provides protection for online shopping privacy. For example,
232 the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and China's Personal Information
233 Protection Law clearly define the responsibilities of businesses and platforms in data
234 processing (European Commission, 2018; National People's Congress of China, 2021).

235 **5.3 Variety of Product Sold**

236   The variety of online shopping products is one of the core competitiveness of e-
237 commerce platforms. In recent years, studies have shown that network platforms can
238 better meet the individual needs of consumers by providing rich product choices, thus
239 enhancing market competitiveness and user satisfaction (Chen et al., 2021). However,
240 product diversity can also lead to information overload problems, affecting consumers'
241 decision-making efficiency. To this end, e-commerce platforms optimize product display
242 through intelligent recommendation systems and personalized algorithms to help
243 consumers find needed products more efficiently (Zhang et al., 2022). Taking Taobao
244 and JD.com as examples, these platforms have attracted a large number of consumers
245 through rich product categories and brand choices, but they also need to continuously
246 optimize recommendation algorithms and search functions to help consumers find the
247 desired products more efficiently (Alibaba Group, n.d.; JD.com official website), n.d.) 。

248 **5.4 Product Delivery**

249   Product delivery is an important part of e-commerce transactions, which directly
250 affects consumers' shopping experience and satisfaction. Studies have shown that
251 efficient logistics distribution and high-quality delivery services can significantly improve

252 consumers' trust and loyalty in online sales channels (Xu et al., 2021). In addition,
253 timeliness of delivery, transparency, and flexible return and exchange policies are also
254 identified as key factors to improve consumer satisfaction (Wang et al., 2022).Taking JD
255 Logistics and SF Express as examples, these logistics service providers have
256 significantly improved delivery efficiency and service quality through intelligent
257 warehousing systems and real-time logistics tracking technology (JD Logistics official
258 website, n.d.); SF Express official website, n.d.) 。 In addition, Alibaba's Cainiao
259 Network provides more convenient delivery solutions for global consumers by
260 integrating logistics resources and technological innovation (Alibaba Group,
261 n.d.).Product delivery is an important part of e-commerce transactions, which directly
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263 efficient logistics distribution and high-quality delivery services can significantly improve
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270 website, n.d.); SF Express official website, n.d.) 。 In addition, Alibaba's Cainiao
271 Network provides more convenient delivery solutions for global consumers by
272 integrating logistics resources and technological innovation (Alibaba Group, n.d.).

273 **5.5 Diversity of product types**

274 The diversity of product types is one of the core competitiveness of e-commerce
275 platforms. Research has shown that a diverse range of product choices can better meet
276 consumers' personalized needs, thereby enhancing market competitiveness and user
277 satisfaction (Chen et al., 2021). However, product diversity can also lead to information
278 overload, affecting consumer decision-making efficiency. To this end, e-commerce
279 platforms optimize product displays through intelligent recommendation systems and
280 personalized algorithms, helping consumers find the products they need more
281 effectively (Zhang et al., 2022).

282 **5. 6 Website Design and User Experience**

283 Website design is an important factor that affects consumers' online shopping
284 experience. Research has shown that user-friendly interface design, fast loading speed,
285 and intuitive navigation systems can significantly improve user satisfaction and
286 purchase intention (Liu et al., 2020). In addition, responsive design and mobile
287 optimization are also indispensable parts of modern e-commerce platforms, as more
288 and more consumers shop through mobile devices (Kim et al., 2019).

289 **5.7 Product Information Quality**

290 The accuracy and completeness of product information are crucial for consumers'
291 purchasing decisions. Research has shown that detailed product descriptions, high-
292 quality images, and authentic user reviews can significantly enhance consumer trust
293 and purchase intention (Zhang et al., 2021). In addition, the application of video displays
294 and virtual reality technology also provides consumers with a more intuitive product
295 experience, further enhancing their purchasing confidence (Wang et al., 2020).

296 **5.8 Prices and Promotions**

297 Price is one of the important factors affecting consumers' online shopping behavior.
298 Research has shown that price competitiveness and promotional activities can
299 significantly increase consumers' willingness to purchase (Chen et al., 2020). In
300 addition, price transparency and no hidden fees are also important considerations for
301 consumers when choosing online shopping platforms (Liu et al., 2021). For example,
302 Pinduoduo has attracted a large number of consumers through its group buying model
303 and low price strategy, while Taobao and JD.com maintain their price competitiveness
304 through regular promotional activities and coupons.

305 **5.9 Customer service quality**

306 High quality customer service is the key to improving consumer satisfaction and
307 loyalty. Research has shown that rapid response, effective solutions, and friendly
308 service attitudes can significantly improve consumers' shopping experience (Xu et al.,
309 2020). In addition, multi-channel customer support (such as online chat, phone, and
310 email) also provides consumers with more convenience (Wang et al., 2021).

311 **5.10 Social media and user generated content**

312 Social media and user generated content (UGC) have had a profound impact on
313 consumers' online shopping behavior. Research has shown that consumers are more
314 inclined to trust evaluations and recommendations from other users rather than
315 advertisements from merchants (Liu et al., 2022). For example, Xiaohongshu has
316 attracted a large number of young consumers through its social e-commerce model and
317 user generated content, while Tiktok has risen rapidly through its short video and live
318 delivery model.

5.11 Brand reputation and trust

Brand reputation is an important consideration for consumers when choosing online shopping platforms. Research has shown that consumers are more inclined to choose brands with good reputation and high trust (Zhang et al., 2020). For example, JD.com and Tmall have won high trust from consumers through their genuine product guarantee and efficient logistics services.

6. Conclusion

With the rapid urbanization of China and Changing lifestyle of Chinese Consumers , buying online has become a common lifestyle of Chinese consumers. Such Chinese online shopping has grown rapidly with more consumers buying online and businesses having online platforms for selling their products. This growing opportunity fo online Chinse market have resulted to a number of Online shopping platform competing for the market share. Majors player like Taobao/Tmall, JD Pinduoduo, TikTok E-commerce and Xiaohongshu among others. This platform caters to the different type of consumers from bargain hunters to those seeking high end products. The popularity of online shopping   is particularly evident among young women, college students, urban professionals , a reflection of the changing lifestyle of Chinese consumers.

As online shopping continues to evolve, various considerations are undertaken by online consumers before engaging into buying online products. This includes factors like security, privacy, product variety, product delivery, Diversity, Website Design,Product information quality,prices, product and promotions, customer service quality, social media and user generated content and brand reputation.

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