



Research on the Problems and Countermeasures of Community Group Purchase in University in the Post-Epidemic Era

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Abstract

In the post-epidemic era, community group buying platforms have focused their vision on colleges and universities, while there is almost no research on community group buying in colleges and universities, and the phenomenon of low popularity and irregular process of community group buying in colleges and universities has emerged. Therefore, in order to promote the vigorous development of community group buying in colleges and universities, this paper will take colleges and universities in Anhui Province as the research object, and investigate the willingness of college students to use community group buying platforms and existing problems through literature method, questionnaire method and interview method, in order to explore the possibility of further development of community group buying in the college market, and quantify the research data, so as to better provide favorable countermeasures for community group buying to broaden the college market and establish a better operation mechanism.

Subject Areas

Public Economics

Keywords

Community Group Purchase, Colleges and Universities, Countermeasures, Investigations

1. Introduction

1.1. Survey Content

The field research was restricted due to the epidemic, so the only online survey

was taken at this time. The questionnaire was designed by reviewing literature and distributed online¹ between May 10, 2021 and December 11, 2021, so as to collect valid survey data. The survey was conducted on students of Anhui University of Finance and Economics, Anhui Medical University, Huabei Normal University, Anhui University of Technology, Hefei University of Technology and Bengbu Medical College in Anhui Province. 748 questionnaires were sent out, 704 were collected, and 612 were valid.

1.2. Research Background

Since 2015, “community group purchase” has appeared on the market, relying on its “e-commerce + social” model, and quickly swept the market under the operation of capital, through the form of “WeChat group” to buy products at low prices. At the beginning of 2020, due to the new epidemic, people were restricted from going out to purchase goods, and necessities such as living materials could not be met [1]. Community group purchase home delivery, reduce unnecessary out and personnel contact, further reflecting its advantages, to provide more convenience for the masses, but also because of its light operation, easy to copy and other characteristics, the number of sites quickly increased, quickly occupy the market. Following the explosion of community group purchase in each small area, the universities, also as a densely populated point, were attached to the community group purchase model began to further replicate and upgrade in the universities, but the current development trend of community group purchase in universities is slow, the community group purchase platform to compete to occupy the market, peer competition pressure, while the campus entity supermarkets are also in the digital reform to improve the stickiness of student customers. The development of community group purchase in university is still difficult.

1.3. Research Significance

College community group purchase is still in the exploration stage, the management of various aspects is not perfect, there are some problems, the research on college community group purchase is very insufficient, and the development of college community group purchase is slow [2]. This study is conducted through questionnaires and field interviews to find out the problems and provide countermeasures, so as to find a more practical and feasible way for the development of community group purchase in university, and to promote the platform to establish a more perfect operation mechanism to ensure the quality of products, so as to truly achieve “good quality and low price”, and use the shortest time to buy quality products. This will further open up the market for community group buying in universities and help the “e-commerce + social” model to develop healthily [3]. Therefore, this study on community group pur-

¹<https://www.wjx.cn/vm/tUujLyu.aspx>.

chase in colleges and universities has certain practical significance.

2. The Current Situation of Community Group Purchase Development in Anhui Province Universities

Community group buying in colleges and universities is a kind of shopping and consumption behavior for student groups on campus, and is an e-commerce model that relies on real communities for regionalized, niche and localized group buying [4]. The post-epidemic era provides an objective general environment for the development of community group buying in colleges and universities. At present, the business model combining community group buying and campus market has formed a certain scale effect among students as a group. Through the survey of the selected samples, 52.12% of students said they are using the community group buying platform, among which more than 24.67% of them use it more than twice a week, and 25.49% of them said they are willing to use it in the future although they are not using it now, thus we can see the considerable user repurchase and user group fission growth phenomenon of community group buying in colleges and universities. The community group purchase platform in Anhui province adopts the mode of collecting and pre-selling, which eliminates the intermediate links and has great competitive advantages in terms of price and timeliness, and has unlimited development possibilities in the future [5]. In the post-epidemic era, the demand of student groups for community group buying platforms is growing. According to the survey of some selected colleges and universities in Anhui Province, it is found that various community group buying platforms are emerging in the college environment, and multiple community group buying platforms are active within each school at the same time, so there is great pressure of peer competition; the operation mode and business content are highly similar, all of them are mainly fresh fruits and vegetables, which have the characteristics of easy replication, and each platform There is no special competitive advantage, and the development is slow in general. There are also undesirable phenomena such as no guarantee of quality control, low penetration rate and non-standardized process, which threaten the development of the platform and need to be solved as soon as possible.

3. Existing Problems of Community Group Purchase in Anhui Province Universities

3.1. The Quality of Products Varies from Good to Bad

After online research and feedback from student users of the selected Anhui universities, 66% of the surveyed university student users chose the community group buying platform because of the good quality and low price of the products, but 46% of the student consumers found that the products purchased on the university-community group buying platform did not match with the product pictures on the platform and had exaggerated components, and the quality of the products purchased could not be guaranteed (Figure 1).

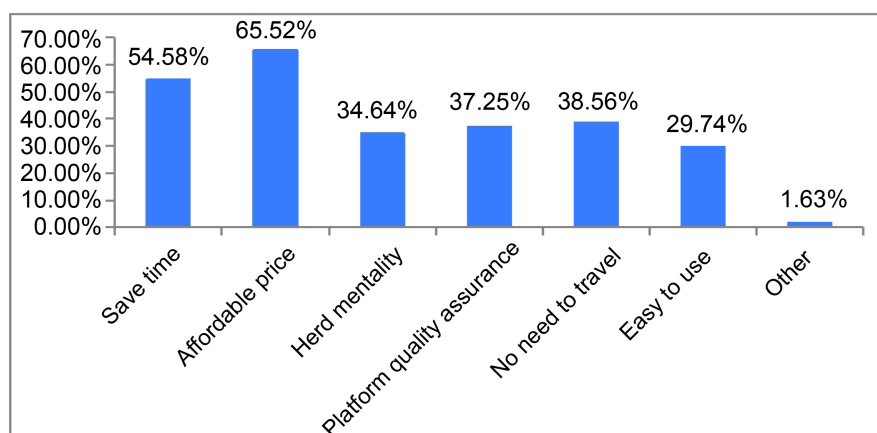


Figure 1. Statistical chart of reasons for using community group purchase.

Although the tolerance of student users to the quality of goods is greatly improved by the conditions during the epidemic period, there are still some arriving goods that are not fresh, broken or even rotten and other unbearable phenomena, and a bad experience will reduce the stickiness of student users to the platform, making it difficult to maintain students' trust in the platform, which in turn affects the development of community group buying within colleges and universities.

3.2. The Popularity Rate of Community Group Purchase in Colleges and Universities Is Low, and the Market Is Not Fully Opened

Community group purchase in colleges and universities has not been developed for a long time, and it is still in the exploration stage, so the popularity rate is not high. In the late stage of the epidemic, all colleges and universities in Anhui Province will be in a closed state, and the campus supermarkets cannot meet the needs of students with fresh fruits and other goods that need to be in the same category, but the survey results show that only 52.13% of students choose to use community group purchasing software, and 61.93% of students only use it once or twice a week, so the market is hardly comparable to offline physical supermarkets. Although the sudden outbreak of the epidemic plays a certain role in promoting the development of community group buying, the publicity of community group buying in Anhui colleges and universities is insufficient, and the survey results in Anhui colleges and universities show that only 58.01% of community group buying student users are developed by the platform publicity, and it is difficult to drive the publicity flow only through word of mouth, and it is impossible to open the market in Anhui colleges and universities completely. Therefore, there is still great potential for the development of community group purchase market in Anhui universities.

3.3. Imperfect Equipment for Self-Pick-Up Points

The part of the college community group purchase that has direct contact with

both the product and the consumer is the pick-up point. After our statistical research and interviews with students, more than 90% of them think there are various problems with the pick-up points.

As shown in **Figure 2**, 21.08% of students think that the environment of self-service points in schools is poor, and the dirty and messy environment visible to the naked eye can easily cause students' resentment, which is not conducive to maintaining customer sources. 33.99% of the students think that the basic refrigeration facilities at the pick-up points are not up to par, and there is no quality guarantee for the products that need to be refrigerated; if these quality-impaired products are finally taken away by students, it will not only greatly affect the reputation of the platform, but also seriously affect the students' health. This is not conducive to the community group purchase to further open up the college market, so it can be seen that the improvement of the self-pick-up point equipment is urgent.

3.4. Product Pick-Up Process Is Not Standardised

According to the research, only 29.47% of the researched student users choose the group purchase platform because of convenience, meanwhile, 43.95% of the college consumers think that the community group purchase platform currently has the problem that the pick-up point pick-up process is not standardized. The problems such as disorderly arrangement of goods at pick-up points, long time to find goods and irregular product pick-up process greatly weaken the convenience advantages brought by the platform, and the main reason for these problems is that the operation of the head is not standardized.

The platform is not strict in the selection of the head, does not pay attention to the follow-up training of the head, loose supervision, so that the head of all levels of their own responsible for the requirements of the goods also become loose, and then there is a poor environment of the self-pick-up point, the goods placed randomly, and finally lead to the pick-up process is not standardized, to seek the convenience of the student group to bring bad shopping experience, and a bad shopping experience, it is very likely to make the platform lose a, or

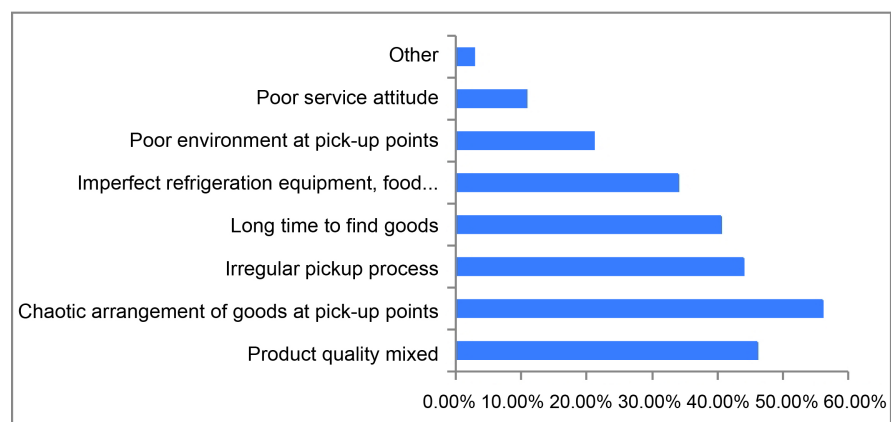


Figure 2. Statistical chart of the problems of community group buying.

even a group of students. A bad shopping experience may cause the platform to lose one or even a group of students, which seriously affects the further development of the platform in the university.

4. Measures to Solve the Community Group Shopping in Anhui Province Universities

4.1. Strengthen the Platform's Supervision of Product Quality

Platform purchase products will mainly have quality problems at the source of products, distribution process or temporary storage point, so it is necessary to strengthen the platform's supervision in these three aspects [6]. Firstly, in the selection of product sources, not only the price should be considered, but also the quality of products is the most basic prerequisite for the development of cooperation; secondly, the distribution process requires constant monitoring of product status under the premise of perfect distribution equipment to ensure product quality; finally, when the products arrive at the temporary storage point, the head of the company needs to carefully check each product in accordance with the company's quality supervision requirements, and timely screening and reporting to reduce the probability of defective products. At the same time, the temporary storage point needs to keep the normal products well and minimize the damage of products due to storage problems.

4.2. Expand the Publicity of the Platform in Universities to Enhance User Stickiness

In the era of fast-paced Internet, the product software is diversified and the update iteration speed is fast, even the wine is afraid of the alley, the insufficient publicity can easily lead to the product being killed in the cradle, so the appropriate increase of publicity can make the community platform further open the market in Anhui province colleges and universities, so that more students understand the community group purchase and use it, only after using it can there be more development and possibilities. Moreover, as a gathering place for young people, colleges and universities are more receptive to new things than community residents, and they are also a place where information is spread quickly, so it is easier to publicize. Therefore, the appropriate increase of publicity can quickly expand the popularity of community group buying and thus mention its popularity within the universities and further development.

4.3. Strengthen the Audit of the Head of Hardware Configuration

The first thing that needs to be responsible for the perfection of self-service point equipment is the platform. The platform should not only be responsible for each product sold out, but also for each leader, so that it is truly responsible for consumers. The platform should pay attention to the perfection of the self-pickup point self-pickup equipment when reviewing the application of the head, especially the application of the head inside the university, and strictly review and

disqualify the head who does not have certain storage conditions to enter specific goods, so as to ensure the reasonable storage of each kind of goods and be responsible for the health and safety of the student group; secondly, the platform should regularly check the self-pickup point environment through the combination of online + offline, so as to avoid from the source Secondly, the platform needs to regularly check the environment of the self-service points through a combination of online and offline methods, so as to avoid the dirty and disorganized environment of the self-service points from the source, and order them to rectify the unqualified self-service points to create a good self-service environment on campus. The improvement of self-service point equipment also needs the cooperation of the headmaster. The platform should conduct regular and targeted training for the chiefs, improve their awareness of responsibility, formulate penalty regulations for the chiefs who are not qualified for the self-service points, and restrain the chiefs with the system so that they can consciously maintain the perfect equipment of the self-service points and maintain the “face” of the community group purchase in the university.

4.4. Standardize the Operating Procedures of the Head, Optimize the Environment for Pick-Up Points

The platform needs to pay attention to the influence of the leader on the whole shopping process and regulate the operation procedure of the leader. First of all, the platform needs to clarify the specific pickup process and other operational procedures, improve the overall platform standardization, so that the heads at all levels of implementation have rules to find; secondly, to regularly organize training for the heads, clarify the specific requirements of the platform, enhance the ideological awareness of the heads themselves, and optimize the environment of the pickup point from the source; finally, through a strict system to restrain the heads, the platform should specifically organize a group to carry out the pickup environment of their respective pickup points At the same time, the pick-up points with orderly pick-ups should be rewarded with a combination of rewards and punishments, so as to maintain the environment of the pick-up points through the intervention of external forces and give the student consumers a good shopping experience.

5. Conclusion and Outlook

The epidemic has made community group buying within colleges and universities deeply popular. There are a large number of community group buying platforms coming in, and the competition between platforms is getting more and more serious. This paper explores the current situation of community group buying development in colleges and universities in Anhui Province from a new perspective of colleges and universities, finds existing problems through online survey and research, and proposes solutions for further development of community group buying within colleges and universities, in order to provide a ref-

erence basis for promoting the good development of community group buying within colleges and universities. However, due to the limited ability, there are some shortcomings in this study.

5.1. Deficiencies

Affected by the epidemic, the research method adopted in this study was conducted by distributing questionnaires online, lacking field research, which has certain errors. In addition, the survey was conducted in some colleges and universities in Anhui Province, which does not represent the situation of all colleges and universities in Anhui Province, and the sample size is not comprehensive enough.

5.2. Future Outlook

The consumption target of community group purchase in colleges and universities is mainly college students, and the consumption behavior and philosophy of college students are different from other groups, these factors will affect the development of community group purchase in colleges and universities, and the investigation of college students' consumption intention will be carried out in the future when the research conditions are more mature, so as to further improve and perfect the theoretical research. In addition, in future research work, we will study the previous research results more deeply and conduct more comprehensive field research to enrich the sample.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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