

Review Article

A Critical Review of Women's Consumption and Empowerment in China

Simei Wang*, Kim Ling Geraldine Chan & Azlina Abdullah

Program of Anthropology and Sociology, Centre for Research in Development, Social and Environment,
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor,
Malaysia

*Corresponding Author: p108590@siswa.ukm.edu.my

Received: 01 January 2024

Accepted: 01 February 2024

Abstract: As Chinese women become more educated and participate in the labor force, they earn more money independently. At the same time, thanks to China's one-child policy, women have gained more intergenerational wealth. The economic foundation allowed Chinese women to play bigger power in the consumer market, and a phenomenon called "Her Economy" since 2007. The improvement of discourse power and economic empowerment of Chinese women in the consumer market rendered them better achieve self-empowerment. However, female behavior is also shaped by society, and female consumption is more likely to be influenced by consumer culture and become the background board of consumer society, and women find it difficult to achieve real empowerment through consumption. Although the existing literature has explored this issue, the research field has not been extended to Chinese female consumers, and the theoretical perspective of empowerment is lacking. Thus, this paper reviews women's consumption and empowerment in China from a critical perspective.

Keywords: Chinese women; consuming behaviour; women empowerment; consumerist; feminism

Introduction

In the 21st century, women have become an important social behavior entity. They have the personality characteristics of loving life, enjoying communication, and pursuing fashion, which makes women play an important role in the process of commodity consumption. In the contemporary consumption tide, female consumers have become the main force of consumption, and are gradually regarded as a new opportunity for economic development and an important profit support for businesses. Data show that in China, women control 60 percent of the turnover of the domestic market, and 80 percent of household consumption is made by women. This economic phenomenon is also called "Her Economy" (Zheng, 2009). The issue of female consumption has become an important topic that many scholars have begun to pay attention to and study, and has received unprecedented attention.

"Her Economy" first appeared in a Chinese language life report in 2007 (Sun & Qiu, 2017). In 2015, The Economist defined the phenomenon of women-led economic development as "Womonomics" or "Her Economy" (Lv & Zhang & Wang, 2018). Literally, "Her Economy" means that with the improvement of women's economic and social status, a unique economic phenomenon has formed around women's financial management needs and consumption (Zhao, 2013). The new word focuses on female subjects with the rise of social status, which becomes "Her Power" in the Chinese market (Zheng, 2009). Due to economic liberalization, "Her Economy" has become an increasingly important segment of the consumption market (Fang, 2010). Not only have women been able to meet their daily needs on their own, but they have also

gradually become influencers, advocates, and decision-makers in the market. In China, the phenomenon of the "Her Economy" is not only the result of female rising incomes but also due to the influence of consumerism. Women need to buy a wider variety of goods in a variety of forms. Enterprises use new media to promote the link between consumption and empowerment, and March 8 Women's Day has been transformed into a "Queen's Day"-themed day of consumption. Only when women consume enough will they be considered successful in a social sense. This not only creates stratification within the women's community, such as rich women and poor women, but also alienates forms of female empowerment.

Consumption is the purpose and driving force of economic development. As one of the essential key links in the process of human production and life, it is not only an economic phenomenon, but also a social and cultural phenomenon. The theory of consumption has been paid close attention by numerous economists at home and abroad. Since China's reform and opening up, both the economy and society have undergone unprecedented changes. In the dual transformation of economy and society, consumption has become an important aspect of economic operation. In the face of the influence of foreign consumption culture and the emerging phenomenon of consumption alienation in China, the academic circle has carried out active exploration and research on consumption issues and formed a large number of theoretical achievements. Theoretically, supply and demand are the two ends of the economic lever, and increasing supply to drive economic development is the only way for the development of a market economy. The consumption problem has become one of the important problems in theory and practice in the current economic field in China.

There is no denying that the development of consumer society has brought about great changes in people's lifestyles, behavior habits, and so on. In this process, women are constantly being shaped and developed as a stable and active consumer group. Although this gives women more rights and freedom, it also makes women alienated by another hidden power. Recognizing the hidden power of suppressing women and returning their due rights is a necessary condition for the development of women in today's society. Consumer society is a society characterized by the large-scale consumption of things (commodities), in which female consumers play an important role. In the process of the transformation from "passive" consumers to "active" consumers, women are "empowered" but also face the awkward situation of "being disempowered" and "being consumed", and the "gender politics" of consumption is increasingly prominent.

Methodology

The literature review is applied in this research. This method provides critical thinking to review previous literature about women empowerment, Chinese female consumers, consumerism, and so on. The above review is based on a comprehensive analysis of journals, books, and online resources from the official website. On the one hand, since the main body of this study is Chinese female consumers, relevant Chinese literature is also used as an important reference. On the other hand, because this study focuses on the relationship between consumption and female empowerment, it will focus on reviewing empowerment theory from a feminist perspective. Finally, consumerism and consumer culture are the important background of this study, so the role of consumption will also be dialectically analyzed. At the same time, the development of feminist research is rapid, and the research on consumption and female empowerment still needs an interdisciplinary perspective, which means that literature review is more useful than other research methods.

Findings

1. Her Economy in China

The consumption behavior in "Her Economy" is manifested in five aspects, including emotionalization, diversification, individuation, autonomy, and leisure (Zhao, 2013). Xu (2019) assumed that "Her Economy" has the characteristics of impulsiveness, individuality, ostentation, sociability, and leisure. Long (2021) believed that "Her Economy" is characterized by fashion, enjoyment, individualism, and emotion, such as online games, makeup, clothes, travel, and so on. To sum up, the popularisation of higher education, continuous progress, and openness of society facilitate the awakening of women's consumption

consciousness and independence, and then inject vitality into the consumer market (Pang & He, 2021).

"Her Economy" is not equal to the masculine economy, they have different consumption preferences and decision-making patterns. For women, shopping is originally a leisure activity, a release from work. Therefore, they are willing to spend more time looking for high-quality products, which increases the shopping time and also reflects the perfectionist tendency of women shopping. For men, shopping is a chore and they do not want to spend too much time on it. On the other hand, men are less familiar with the brand and do not care about the information on the label. They are better at analyzing logic and making quick decisions, and their brand loyalty is also relatively high. They see objects as functional rather than symbolic, so they do not pay attention to fashionable products (Mitchell & Walsh, 2004), and they prefer to be surprised and delighted by new technology products. However, in the new era, female consumption behavior has expanded from traditional areas to emerging areas such as automobiles, tourism, luxury goods, and online consumption, and their influence has gradually increased (Fang, 2010). In other words, women pay more attention to the cost performance of goods, have higher consumption requirements, and dominate social consumption trends (Jin, 2018). In short, these women are economically independent and have characteristics, that are different from virtualization, entities, and the real economy, and is a new economic pattern (Jin, 2018).

2. Analysis of Women's Consumption

Zhou & Zhang (2003) analyzed the influence of women's social and historical status and family role on women's consumption while analyzing that women's consumption has gradually become the leading factor of urban consumption. They believe that the rise of the women's liberation movement and the evolution of the female occupational division of labor makes more and more women gradually become the agents of family consumption, and their consumer groups appear diversified and personalized. Cen (2005) put forward the main characteristics of Chinese women's consumption: explosive consumption after repression, consumption inconsistent with words and deeds, and symbolic consumption. Wang (2007), based on the status quo of consumption since the 20th century, studies American female consumption, analyzes the relationship between consumer culture and female consumption, and expounds on the role of female consumption in a more comprehensive way. Moreover, there are researchers on the rationality and irrationality of consumption.

Fu (2012) put forward the problem of female irrational consumption and analyzed the motivation of irrational consumption. She explains the potential motive of irrational consumption, which is the collision and combination of economics and sociology. Gao added (2004), that female consumers pay more attention to the symbolic, meaningful, and symbolic components attached to the commodity objects to achieve personality satisfaction and spiritual pleasure. It can be found that Chinese literature is still limited to the analysis of Chinese female consumers' consumption behavior from the consumption theory, the relationship between consumption culture and female consumption, and the exploration of the characteristics of female consumption psychology and behavior, the current literature on the consumption behavior of Chinese women mainly starts from the perspective of consumption, and there is a lack of the perspective from empowerment and feminism.

The internal research on female consumption behavior mainly focuses on Baudrillard and Lury. Baudrillard (2016) examines and discusses the relationship between female consumption and female liberation. He believes that people usually think that women's liberation means the liberation of the female body, but in fact, the surface of the rising tide of female consumption does not make the female body in the process of being concerned about real liberation, but a step into the operation of the consumption trap. Taking the analysis of things as a starting point, he put forward "the logic of consumer society" and defined this type of society as "a society that conducts consumption discipline and social domestication towards consumption", and "consumption" is a favorable factor for realizing social control.

Lury (2003) also pointed out that gender factors have a great impact on the development of consumer culture, and there is a close two-way effect between the development of consumer culture and the change of gender relations and proposed the impact of the change of women's status on consumption and female consumption. At the same time, from the development of consumer culture to examine the

relationship between the sexes, because women in the consumption culture find it difficult to obtain the same economic and cultural resources as men, female consumption has a limit. On the one hand, it points out that the consumption culture changes the relationship between men and women; On the other hand, it also analyzes the objectification of male-female relations, including family relations. It can be seen that researchers have realized that female consumption behavior does not bring female empowerment, but the research scope of these theories does not take Chinese female consumers into account, nor does it take into account the new social phenomenon of China's "Her Economy".

3. Consuming Behaviour and Women Empowerment

Historically, the term empowerment originated in academic literature in 1976 (Conyers, 1976). In theory, empowerment refers to the delegation of power to marginalized groups such as women, but it aims to address women's subordination and inequality. Ultimately, power should extend to all levels (Choudhry & Mutalib & Ismail, 2019). At a static level, empowerment focuses on whether women can determine their own lives and make decisions. In terms of dynamics, empowerment is associated with a process, women can gain power over time. More specifically, Agarwal (1994) defines empowerment as the process of enabling vulnerable individuals or groups to challenge and change existing power relations. There is no denying that empowerment has different meanings in different socio-cultural, economic, and political contexts. However, it is always associated with self-strength, self-control, self-power, independence, freedom, and so on (Staples, 1990).

The reason lies that individual consumption can break the stereotypical gender image, which means that the realization of gender equality can rely on the power of consumer culture. Through consumption, female consumers can further confirm their subjectivity, break the fate of being stared at by others, and eliminate contextual cognition by others (Shi, 2016). Thus, there is no denying that the phenomenon of "Her Economy" in China is an active attempt for Chinese women to self-reflect on themselves, construct self-identity, and break gender discrimination (Sun, 2016). This independent consuming behavior embodies the awakening of feminine consciousness, gender equality, and women empowerment (Hong, 2014).

However, this relationship between women's empowerment and consumption is complex. On the one hand, consumption can be seen as a tool for empowerment and self-expression, allowing women to break free from traditional gender roles and expectations. On the other hand, it can also perpetuate harmful stereotypes and reinforce gendered norms and values (Maclaran et al., 2022). For example, the idealized image of a single woman as a wealthy and independent consumer can exclude those who do not fit this mold, reinforcing class and racial inequalities (Belisle, 2020). The sense of self-satisfaction generated by the process of consumption can indeed bring a sense of structure and consistency to the 'self' and identity, but it can also lead to fragmentation and uncertainty of the self. The positive influence of consumption on women's empowerment is, therefore, a "threshold".

4. Consumerist and Women Empowerment

Regardless of whether women are empowered through consumption, they should more be wary of internalized patriarchal cultural discipline and avoid the objectification of female bodies and the infiltration of female thoughts by consumer culture (Shi, 2016). Proponents of neoliberalism say that human flourishing is best promoted by creating an institutional environment in which everyone can best exercise their entrepreneurial skills and make their own unfettered rational choices. This environment includes minimally restricted markets, trade, and the unrestricted right to accumulate capital (Cressida, 2013). Not only within the nation-state, but also globally, this form creates a diminishing but increasingly strong economic base, and the social structure shifts from an oval to a pyramid. Calkin (2015) also states that although women can maintain and secure their power through household property, they must be wary of the hidden consumerist culture. Specifically, even though society excludes women from many areas, they are still constructed as a consumer group (Khan, 2007).

Firstly, feminism is aligned with neoliberalism and adopted as a tool (Byatt, 2018). Neoliberalism is an advanced form of liberalism, it considers liberation and autonomy as a tool to control individuals and groups (Song, 2010). The liberal spirit works for a neoliberal economy, unmarried women are encouraged to

consume. Neoliberalism has also made our lives increasingly turned our lives into a series of flat, insignificant quasi-economic transactions. Under the influence of this thinking, women's realization of self-worth must be achieved through a new kind of sales pitch, harder work (Cressida, 2013), accepting the commodification of their bodies, and striving only for personal success. Indeed, the neoliberal economy transformed the male-dominated housing market (Ronald & Nakano, 2013). However, when women resist Confucian patriarchy, they also fall into the consumerist trap. The neoliberal economy uses multiple media to disseminate induced information to create anxiety and stimulate consumption. Apart from consumers, women are also treated as labour, and women empowerment is introduced into the financial market and called smart economics (Byatt, 2018). It treats women as an undeveloped resource and implies that women's labour is inferior to men's. In essence, this model reinforces rather than reduces gender inequality.

Similarly, in the early 1990s, Goldman Sachs introduced 'Womonomics', emphasising that women could benefit from being investors (Calkin, 2015). Women take loans from banks and start their businesses. There is a virtuous circle between women's empowerment and economic development (Duflo, 2012). Women's discourse is strengthened, and their social status is improved. At the same time, the economy gains the potential to achieve sustainable development (Bayeh, 2016). However, women are transformed into indentured labourers and forced to create surplus value (Dobb, 1966), and they suffer from the foreclosure crisis (Lichtenstein & Weber, 2015). There is also a new portrait of feminism that is composed primarily of the neoliberal female individual, who is rationally self-interested, maximising her utility and making free choices. This free choice takes the form of consumerism, unrestricted heterosexual expression, and competitive and self-interested economic behaviour. The above discussion does not mean that feminism disappears completely in the neoliberal economy. On the contrary, it is necessary to discover the variation and increase its advantage (Dabrowski, 2021).

Discussion

Based on the above literature, although the rise of China's economy and the consumption behavior of Chinese women have enabled women to obtain the autonomy of consumption behavior, it is difficult for women to obtain real empowerment through consumption, because consumption freedom is not real freedom. On the contrary, Chinese female consumers are influenced by consumer culture, and their purchasing behavior is determined by the logic of capital, which further leads to the alienation of female consumption behavior and the objectification of the female body, which is finally reflected in the theoretical level and manifested as the commercialization of feminism.

1. The Alienation of Women's Consumption

Alienation is a philosophical term, alienation is a kind of alien power. In Hager's view, alienation not only means that the "self" externalizes a "non-self" that is different or even opposed to the "self", but also means that this "non-self" is "oppressive" to the "self" and "devouring its power". In his Economic-Philosophical Manuscript of 1844, Marx criticized the alienation of capitalist labor, pointing out that the alienation of labor includes the alienation of the product of labor, the alienation of labor itself, the alienation of man from his kind nature, and the alienation of man from man. The subject of alienation is man, and alienation is the alienation of man, especially the alienation of a certain true and essential state of being of man. Alienation is precisely the alienation of man's product from man, man's creation becomes man's opposition and now becomes a hostile, alien force against man. The core meaning of alienation should be that as a product of man, it deviates from man's essence and true existence, and deprives and distorts man's essence.

Consumption alienation can be analyzed from the aspects of subject, object, and environment. First of all, the consumer subject is self-alienation. For example, to "face", or some other reasons to give up the original willingness to consume, against the will to consume. This psychological alienation also reflects the helplessness and compulsion of the subject in the process of consumption. People should get the objective need of survival and development in consumption, but it is manifested as starting from the main body's possessive desire and showing off the purpose of consumption, and consumption for consumption, entering the irrational state. This kind of irrational consumption eventually leads to the alienation of consumers. Consumption that should be carried out as an individual is alienated into consumption as a group, as a

society, or even as a nation. Secondly, the alienation of consumption objects. The alienation of objects refers to the alienation of commodity quality and price. For example, some goods are bought and left idle, losing their use value. In the irrational pursuit of some commodities, the price far exceeds its value, forming "sky-high" commodities. In addition, alienated consumption has also caused serious damage and impact on the environment. Excessive consumption caused by environmental pollution, and resource depletion limit economic development, consumption capacity with the decline, and the impact on social life is becoming more and more obvious. As a modern social criticism, consumption alienation is the product of the modern social organism. The birth of such a social freak is directly related to the absence of the third dimension of human existence.

The misconception of women's consumption is that the index of happiness is associated with consuming more goods, owning better quality goods, and living in bigger houses. "Contrary to what the culture industry would have us believe, the consumer is not the emperor, not the subject of consumption, but the object of consumption." People sink into consumption. The degradation caused by consumption alienation shows that people avoid reality, lose the courage to face the truth, and are satisfied with the surface, superficiality, and secularization of life. Serious, sacred themes fade from view. In the mass consumption society, people let themselves sink into the carnival of consumption, sink into the ordinary people, hoping to find peace and a "home" feeling. The sensuality of consumerism also weakens and dispels people's moral concept, and falls into a state of alienation. Human existence is the existence of three dimensions, the perceptual level, the rational level, and the sacred ideal and belief level that unite the perceptual level and the rational level. However, consumption makes human existence multi-dimensional and flat.

2. The Materialization of Women's Body

To make women consume as much as possible, businesses use various means to promote goods and give goods meaning through sound, scene, painting, color, story, etc., thus creating an image of consumption. Human is no longer a real rich subject, but is dissolved by the symbols of objects in advertising and becomes the image of consumption. Therefore, on the one hand, women satisfy their material and spiritual desires in consumption, on the other hand, they also lose themselves and do not know what they need. After the realization of consumption again and again, they fall into a new round of confusion and needs, and women are thus controlled by the objects consumed, and their subjectivity as human beings is thus weakened.

Excessive attention to the body leads to the consumption of women's bodies. In a consumer society, everything can become a commodity, including the body. In the consumer society, the body is regarded as a symbol and becomes the focus of people's scrutiny and worship. As a result, the body alienation of the consumer society is produced, and the body alienation of women is more serious than that of men. It shows that the female body is mostly related to consumption, and the female body is divided into fragments by consumption culture. As Baudrillard believes, under the influence of the modern concept of consumption, female liberation is equated with the liberation of the body. Therefore, the female body has been paid much attention to become the subject of visual culture, and it seems that only by liberating the body can women be liberated. Therefore, women in the consumer society are more conscious of their bodies than women in the past society. In modern society, the development of beauty, cosmetics, and other industries highlights women's attention to the body. This concern is not only for women themselves but also for multiple reasons from men and society, whose purpose is to cater to men's construction standards of the body. The excessive attention paid to women's bodies shows that modern society is a society of male hegemony, and women's bodies are consumed and viewed as commodities. The abuse of the female body in advertising, the vulgariousness and disrespect of the female body in entertainment, are not the true discovery of the body, but the personalized body internalized in our unconscious sphere in narcissistic worship. Women unconsciously fall under the control of male discourse and hegemony, and become the objects of manipulation and others to realize profits.

Consumerist culture presents to women the values of "I buy, therefore I am" and "femininity can be bought", which directly equals the realization of consumption and self-worth, and it seems that only consumer goods can become beautiful and successful people. Consumer society uses the power of

commerce and the media, citing the symbolic value of commercial products, to create a series of symbols with "beauty", "beauty", "fashion" and other symbolic meanings for women to attract women's attention. To be recognized by mainstream society, women equate the realization of self-value with consumption directly, and consume the false symbols behind them by purchasing and using goods, and finally achieve the purpose of shaping themselves. From this paradoxical logic that cannot withstand deep reflection, we can see that consumerism has a strong male cultural color, men no longer discipline women with "power and punishment", but hide behind the consumption system to deliver a variety of male expectations and normative consumption activities to women, to achieve the purpose of controlling women. In this case, on the one hand, women unconsciously internalize the male evaluation standard into their value standard when they engage in male norm consumption activities; On the other hand, when women cultivate femininity through their consumption, "they see themselves as objects that men look at."

Women are not only the subject of consumption but also the object of consumption. In advertising, women are presented with the beauty of technical make-up by the rules of consumer society, using women's values and character to give women a connotation of materialism and futility. By depicting women as 'brainless beauties' or 'earth mothers', patriarchal social norms are communicated through anthropomorphic means, reinforcing existing social relations and structures (Ourahmoune & Binniger & Robert, 2014). Men, on the other hand, are often associated with human domination over nature and display characteristics of strength and rationality. Thus, the different representation of male and female roles in the consumer market reflects the subordination of women and reinforces the legitimacy of patriarchy. Women, as objects of consumption, are diminished in their self-empowerment.

3. The Commodification of Feminism

Although female empowerment advertisements have constructed a variety of diverse and powerful female images and made great contributions to breaking the social stereotype of women, some scholars believe that the commercialization and profit maximization-oriented goals behind them are actually in conflict with the original intention of feminism.

With the influence of "Her Economy", the publicity strategy of female empowerment advertisements has changed from focusing on the value of women's appearance to shaping the values of independent women, encouraging women to pursue themselves, attacking social stereotypes of women, and emphasizing diverse aesthetics. However, many advertisements package feminist ideas into conceptual symbols, linking feminism, products, and consumers' consumption desires, prompting women to buy various "concepts". Some women's empowerment advertisements focus more on the emotions of female consumers than on women's social problems. They use women's identity labels to package feminism into the consumption ideology. Through feminist marketing, they also raise the awareness and sales of their brands while arousing widespread social discussion and promoting feminism. In this process, feminist thought became a propaganda tool, and the directivity of the concept was only limited to female consumers with purchasing power, while women without purchasing power were marginalized.

In the consumerist society, in addition to the function of products, consumers pay more attention to the illusory meaning of symbols and the spiritual satisfaction of the function of signs and expect to satisfy their desires, define themselves, and reconstruct their identities through the consumption of symbols. Female empowerment ads are also presented in more roundabout forms, "these brands are a symbol of female independence," "Women need a sophisticated life," "Women do not have to please men, this bag can prove your value"... Through discourse construction, advertising on the one hand uses subtle words to make consumers feel that they are lacking; on the other hand, it links specific products with female values in the new era, making beautiful characteristics such as self-confidence and bravery become the consumption meaning of brand culture, suggesting that female consumers can be endowed with the subjective consciousness of modern women after owning the product. And push women to pursue a beautiful female image that matches the trend of brand culture. Similar words seem to care about women from the standpoint of women and encourage women to achieve independence it is to create a false female power with the behavior of buying and buying, and the ultimate goal is to promote the purchase behavior of female consumers. The value pursuit of female consumers is gradually covered by the false carnival of shopping,

thus ignoring real meaningful self-improvement.

Conclusion

There is no denying the theoretical connection between consumption and empowerment. Through consumption, Chinese women gradually form their identity and image, understand their material and psychological needs, and the subjectivity of purchasing behavior is further transformed into the strengthening of self-empowerment. This allows women to gradually achieve economic empowerment from a position of weak or even powerless.

However, the rise of "Her Economy" does not equal the strengthening of women's empowerment, and women's power in the consumer market is difficult to expand to other areas. On the one hand, China's phenomenon of "Her Economy" is not entirely the result of the increase in women's income level, but the need for economic and social development. For example, Chinese women's consumption in cosmetics, clothing, tourism, and other fields is largely influenced by consumer advertising. The advancement of science and technology, the facilitation of online consumption, and multimedia advertising all have an impact on women's consumption behavior, which is ultimately manifested in "Her Economy". On the other hand, female empowerment is a comprehensive concept, although the increase in women's income level has enabled Chinese women to gain economic empowerment, it is only the foundation of female empowerment. Moreover, female empowerment is a process, because Chinese women's consumption behavior still lacks subjective consciousness and thinking, so economic empowerment cannot be spread to other fields, and it is difficult to help Chinese women achieve true empowerment.

Moreover, the consumption mode under the influence of consumerism culture goes far beyond people's basic survival needs and is a false demand created by society's compulsion. This kind of false demand makes people lose themselves, lose the right to independent choice and judgment ability, and become one-way people. Due to the lack of subject consciousness for a long time, women are more susceptible to the influence of consumerism culture than men, unable to resist the temptation of false needs, and lost the ability of independent think and judgment. The real needs of women are erased by the consumer society, and instead, they satisfy their inner sense of lack through consumption, and they are alienated into blind consumers and slaves of consumption. Whether it is the alienation of female consumption or the objectification of the female body, it fully shows that women find it difficult to achieve empowerment through consumption, their behavior is controlled by capital, and they change from the subject of consumption to the object of consumption. From the perspective of theoretical development, it is also necessary to vary the commodification of feminism.

Acknowledgement: The author acknowledges the valuable supervisors' guidance. These contributions made this article a success.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- Agarwal, B. (1994). *A field of one's own: Gender and land rights in South Asia* (No. 58). Cambridge University Press.
- Baudrillard, J. (2016). *The consumer society: Myths and structures*. Sage.
- Bayeh, E. (2016). The role of empowering women and achieving gender equality to the sustainable development of Ethiopia. *Pacific Science Review B: Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 37-42. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psr.b.2016.09.013>
- Belisle, D. (2020). *Purchasing Power: Women and the Rise of Canadian Consumer Culture* (Vol. 50). University of Toronto Press.
- Byatt, B. (2018). The case of Kiva and Grameen: Towards a Marxist feminist critique of 'smart economics'. *Capital & Class*, 42(3), 403-409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309816818799702>

- Calkin, S. (2015). Feminism, interrupted? Gender and development in the era of 'Smart Economics'. *Progress in Development Studies*, 15(4), 295-307. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464993415592737>
- Caterall, M. A., & Maclaran, P. B. (2001). Gender perspectives in consumer behaviour: An overview and future directions. *The Marketing Review*, 2(4), 405-425. <https://doi.org/10.1362/1469347012863853>
- Cen L Y. (2005). A probe into female consumption behavior. *Journal of Wuzhou Branch of Guangxi University*, 01,18-20. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:WZFX.0.2005-01-006>.
- Choudhry, A. N., Abdul Mutalib, R., & Ismail, N. S. A. (2019). Socio-cultural factors affecting women economic empowerment in Pakistan: A situation analysis. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 9(5), 90-102. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v9-i5/5842>
- Conyers, J., & Wallace, W. L. (1976). *Black elected officials: Study of black Americans holding government office*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Dobb, M. (1966). *Marx on Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*, Guilford Press.
- Duflo, E. (2012). Women empowerment and economic development. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 50(4), 1051-1079. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1257/jel.50.4.1051>
- Fang, W. (2010). Research on the influence of female consumption in the era of "She Economy". *Journal of Shangqiu Normal University*, 10,79-82. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:SQSZ.0.2010-10-022>.
- Fu, L. (2012). Thinking about the motivation of irrational Consumption behavior - Starting from women's consumption behavior of clothing [J]. *Mall Modernization*, 30, 21-22. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:SCXH.0.2012-30-016>.
- Gao, X. (2004). Rationality and irrationality of female consumption behavior. *Business Times*, 26,14-16. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:syjk.0.2004-26-007>.
- Heyes, C. J. (2013). Foucault studies special issue: Foucault and feminism, September 2013. *Foucault Studies*, 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.22439/fs.v0i16.4114>
- Hong, L. (2014). *Residential Real Estate Wealth, Leftover Women (Shengnü), and Gender Inequality in Urban China*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Tsinghua university, China].
- Jin, Z. (2017). Accurate marketing strategy of "she economy" model in e-commerce market. *Business Economics Research*, 23, 59-61. https://chn.oversea.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CJFD&dbname=CJFDLAST2018&filename=SYJJ201723019&uniplatform=OVERSEA&v=QEOJtDgStlAkODkwDNY5bZa2jQJP4M5qT8A7eA9MX1FovrgMsPqIW_so4WqUAamu
- Khan, S. (2007). Negotiating the mohalla: Exclusion, identity and Muslim women in Mumbai. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1527-1533. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4419519>
- Lichtenstein, B., & Weber, J. (2015). Women foreclosed: A gender analysis of housing loss in the US Deep South. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 16(1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2014.932002>
- Long, X. (2021). "Her culture" detonates the effect and trend of "her economy" and "her era". *Chinese Business*, 01, 52-53. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:JSGZ.0.2021-01-025>.
- Lury, C. (1996). *Consumer culture*. Rutgers university press.
- Lv, J., & Zhang, S., & Wang, Y. (2018). Research on "internet + other economy" business model innovation. *Business Economics Research*, 24, 91-93.
- Mitchell, V. W., & Walsh, G. (2004). Gender differences in German consumer decision-making styles. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour: An International Research Review*, 3(4), 331-346. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.146>
- Ourahmoune, N., Binninger, A. S., & Robert, I. (2014). Brand narratives, sustainability, and gender: A socio-semiotic approach. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 34(3), 313-331. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146714528335>
- Pang, H. & He, Y. (2021). "Her economy" and business model innovation under the background of digital economy. *Trade Show Economic*, 15, 90-92. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:SZJJ.0.2021-15-029>.
- Ronald, R., & Nakano, L. (2013). Single women and housing choices in urban Japan. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 20(4), 451-469. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2012.694357>

- Shi, X. (2016). *The female body being disciplined and consumed*. [Master's thesis, Anhui University of Technology, China].
- Song, J. (2010). 'A room of one's own': The meaning of spatial autonomy for unmarried women in neoliberal South Korea. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 17(2), 131-149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09663691003600264>
- Staples, L. H. (1990). Powerful ideas about empowerment. *Administration in Social Work*, 14(2), 29-42. https://doi.org/10.1300/J147v14n02_03
- Sun, G. & Qiu, G. (2017). "Female orientation" Narration in the context of popular culture - A Case study of Guo Jingming phenomenon. *Review of Contemporary Writers*, 06, 37-42. <https://doi.org/10.16551/j.cnki.1002-1809.2017.06.007>.
- Sun, W. (2016). *Give yourself a Home: Unmarried House purchase and the Construction of Female Self-identity*. [Unpublished master dissertation, Southeast university, China].
- Wang, X. (2007). Research on the consumer psychology of female consumers in "Her Century" [J]. *Shopping Mall Modernization*, 5. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:SCXH.0.2007-13-135>.
- Xu, P. (2019). Stronger "her demand": The rapid increase of female home buyers in China's first and second-tier cities. *Decision to Explore*, 06, 30-31. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:JCTS.0.2019-06-024>.
- Zhao, A. (2013). "Her economy" and "her consumption" in "her era". *Journal of Jixi University*, 02, 137-138. <https://doi.org/10.16792/j.cnki.1672-6758.2013.02.062>.
- Zheng, Q. (2009). Enter the era of "her economy". *Anhui Literature (second half month)*, 10, 367-368. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:AHWA.0.2009-10-229>.
- Zhou, R. & Zhang, Y. (2003). Discussion on female consumption psychology and behavior. *Journal of Changsha Railway University (Social Science Edition)*, (z1, 8-10. <https://doi.org/CNKI:Sun:csty.0.2003-z1-002>.