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The Wealth Anxiety of Chinese Generation Z Women Brought by the Wealth-showing Videos on Chinese E-commerce Platform RED

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Abstract: As an e-commerce platform in mainland China, RED was established in June 2013 in shanghai. RED has a total of 6 rounds of financing, with a valuation of more than 20 billion US dollars (about 126.7 billion yuan). More than 200 million monthly active users in 2022, most of its users are women. Money anxiety is a problem for young women today. Through the research on the influence of RED's wealth-showing videos on the money anxiety of young women, people will pay more attention to the money anxiety problems that young women are facing, and problems and improvements needed in the operation of RED as an e-commerce platform. This study investigated young Chinese girls' perceptions of RED's wealth-showing videos and their level of money anxiety by creating and sending questionnaires. A total of 300 questionnaires were issued and 70 valid questionnaires were returned. RED's wealth-showing videos aggravated the money anxiety of most young women, and caused impulsive consumption and excessive consumption of young women, causing physical and psychological harm to young women, as well as adverse effects on society. In response to these problems, platforms should rectify the authenticity of videos, avoid the spread of malicious videos showing off their wealth, and at the same time call on bloggers to share content that is conducive to establishing a correct view of money among young women.

Keywords: wealth anxiety, Chinese, Generation Z Women, e-commerce platform, RED

1. Introduction

RED, an online shopping and social networking platform in mainland China, was established in June 2013 by Wenchao Mao and Miranda Qu in Shanghai.In the RED community, users can share product reviews and travel destination introductions, that is, "grass notes". RED has also sponsored several programs on the Internet and TV, bringing the growth of users and content to RED. Since the establishment of RED, it has won many awards in the industry. At the 2015 First Financial Cross-border E-commerce Investment Summit, RED won the "new growth" award. Then RED was named "China Brand" by "The People's Daily" in 2017. In November 2019, RED was listed on the "Shimao Strait · 2019 Third Quarter Hurun Greater China Unicorn Index" released by the Hurun Research Institute with a valuation of 20 billion China yuan. In January 2020, the Hurun Research Institute released the "2019 Hurun China Top 500 Private Enterprises", and RED ranked 367th with a market value of 20 billion China yuan. In September 2022, RED was selected for Hurun Report's "2022 Mid-

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Global Unicorn List". RED has a total of 6 rounds of financing. The latest round was on November 8, 2021. The post-investment valuation exceeded 20 billion US dollars (about 126.7 billion yuan), led by Temasek, Tencent, Ali, Tiantu Investment, Yuansheng Capital, and other old shareholders followed suit. RED has grown from nothing in the past ten years and has achieved rapid development by catering to the tastes of young people in today's society.

The latest data from the 2022 RED Business Ecology Conference shows that RED currently has over 200 million monthly active users, of which 72% are post-90s and 50% are distributed in first- and second-tier cities, with a total of more than 43 million shares. Most of RED's users are women, with a male-to-female ratio of about 3:7. Female users are irresistible to topics such as shopping, food, and fashion. They are more willing to share such life content, which is easier to form a communication effect. The age distribution of users is mainly concentrated between 18 to 35 years old, accounting for about 70%. Among them, users aged from 18 to 23 are the largest user group. In terms of spending power, among the users of RED, medium consumers accounted for 36.49%, a month-on-month increase of 5.31%; high consumers accounted for 29.38%, a month-on-month increase of 16.91%; medium and high consumers accounted for 23.05%, a month-on-month decrease of 19.71% %. The audience of RED is mostly people with medium consumption and above, and the total number of such people is nearly 90%.

Wealth anxiety has always been a common problem in society. At present, the inflation of national demand for wealth has reached a historical peak, and the uncertainty of wealth has also reached an unprecedented level. The serious gap between high expectations and high uncertainty has caused huge mental pressure on people. Whether it is a monthly salary of 20,000 China yuan or an annual income of one million China yuan, people always feel that the money is not enough. According to the national wealth anxiety data released by "Ping An Fortune Treasure"[1], 17.6% of the respondents are in a state of low anxiety, and 78% are in a state of moderate anxiety. Others are in a state of high anxiety, accounting for 4.4%. The emergence of RED has given many young women the opportunity to learn about the living conditions and wealth status of the wealthy, thus, aggravating the wealth anxiety of young women in society.

2. Literature Review

The huge influence of RED among young women is inseparable from its success as an e-commerce platform. Due to the explosion of e-commerce, consumer behavior has changed dramatically over the past few years. While shopping in stores was once the primary method of shopping, online shopping has become the preferred method of shopping for consumers around the world, and this trend has only accelerated during the global pandemic [2]. With the rapid development of the Internet era, many scholars have studied the audience of e-commerce platforms, the reasons for successful operations, and the positive and negative impacts on society. According to 2021 China Young Users E-commerce Consumption Insight Report, Generation Z becomes the most important growth driver of e-commerce. China has a population of 261 million Generation Z, and Generation Z has begun to grow on a large scale and has continued to grow in consumption power. As the penetration rate of Generation X and Generation Y e-commerce is approaching the saturation point, Generation Z has become the most important growth driver of Chinese e-commerce [3]. Accurately targeting audiences has become one of the prerequisites for RED to be influential. Besides, research from Tencent pointed out that red, as an e-commerce platform, is very good at creating high-quality original content. The platform will strictly check the quality of content before users publish content, and accurately target the audience, so as to achieve the best effect of promotion [4].

Nowadays, the development of e-commerce has brought many benefits to society. E-commerce is a product of the development of the Internet. It changes the shopping model, allowing manufacturers, retailers and consumers to have a better experience, and eliminating unnecessary middlemen [5].

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While e-commerce brings good news to society, it also has drawbacks. For example, excessive consumption, it can be said that most people have experienced excessive consumption online, especially young people who are prone to excessive consumption, only to find that some of the things they buy are useless, and they will become garbage. Because of the excessive rendering and publicity of the business, many people fall into the whirlpool of desire and buy some things that are basically useless [6]. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development shows that with the emergence and development of e-commerce today, shopping is not just about buying and selling items, but shopping today has become a social activity. Consumers today rely on the opinions of others to guide their purchasing decisions, and they have immediate access to these reviews. Anyone on social media can become a brand influencer. Social platforms and online review sites have opened the floodgates for word-of-mouth advertising through product reviews [2]. Many influential media people on RED also advertise through their own influence. Merchants give them free products and pay them to make short videos related to the product, the purpose of which is to recommend the product. Their followers and fans will buy the products they recommend, so as to realize the realization of advertising monetization, which is also the source of most of the income of we-media people today.

Another focus of the theme is Money Anxiety in Young Women. In Mei Lin‘s research on the stress and anxiety of Chinese young people, she pointed out that the premise that the main contradiction in the society has been transformed into the contradiction between the people's growing needs for a better life and unbalanced and inadequate development. An anxious and tense psychological state when people fail to achieve their desired goals for various reasons in their social lives [7]. Jing Jun, a professor at the Department of Sociology of Tsinghua University, replied that he thinks some Chinese people have serious wealth anxiety. This anxiety has nothing to do with whether people can survive or not, and how much money people have, but an eternal comparison [8]. In 2022, China's population will be about 1,411.78 million. According to data from the Institute for Economic and Social Research of Jinan University, only 8.54 million people in China with a monthly income of more than 10,000-yuan, accounting for about 0.61% of the country's total population. This means that most people are of ordinary income, but people's money anxiety comes from the rendering of social platforms that everyone has Hermes and luxury cars [9]. Ping An of China released the "2017 National Wealth Anxiety Report" in 2017. According to the data, 17.6% of the more than 2,000 respondents are in a state of low anxiety, and 78% are in a state of moderate anxiety. Another 103 people are in a state of high anxiety, accounting for 4.4% [1]. However, for a variety of reasons, little research has been done on young women's money anxiety.

The above studies and theories help us understand some background information in advance. However, there are still some research gaps. There are many studies on the influence of e-commerce platforms, but there are few reports on the independence of RED. It is undeniable that RED has its unique research value in China, because RED is committed to the dissemination of content, which makes it more ideological in society, not just a simple online trading platform, and the audience of RED is more focused on young women, which makes its social influence more towards young women. In addition, few studies have focused on the money anxiety of young women. In the inherent thinking of everyone, women are always accustomed to belonging to the family, while ignoring the money anxiety of women in society.

This paper aims to make society pay more attention to young women by studying the money anxiety caused by RED to young women, help the younger generation to establish a correct view of money, and protect the mental health of young women. Effectively avoid potential comparisons and the problem of obtaining money through improper means. In addition, by exposing the potential problems in the promotion and marketing of the RED platform, it can put forward more standardized requirements for Chinese e-commerce platforms, and also provide ideas for the standardization of Chinese e-commerce platforms. The implications of this research can be put into practice. This

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research will use questionnaires to investigate the money anxiety that the e-commerce platform RED brings to Chinese Gen Z women.

3. Methodology

The research method is to send out questionnaires for quantitative research. This research focus on studying the impact of RED as an e-commerce platform on the shopping of Generation Z women and the money anxiety it brings through questionnaires. The subject of the questionnaire is "The Wealth Anxiety of Chinese Generation Z Women Brought by the Chinese E-commerce Platform "RED". The questionnaires were created through the Questionnaire Star platform and were sent out a total of 300 questionnaires on the QQ social media platform to women in the Z generation and received 70 valid questionnaires. The distribution cycle of the questionnaire was one month, and the questionnaire that had not received a reply after one month was regarded as invalid. Age and gender were screened when issuing, so there was no invalid questionnaire due to these problems. The rest of the invalid questionnaires were due to the fact that users had never been in contact with or had little knowledge of the RED platform, or there were few questionnaires which each option for each question was the first, so they were obviously invalid questionnaires filled out without thought.

4. Results

When asked about the frequency of reading RED, 31% of people read RED every day, 53% said they read RED every week, 9% of people said they read RED every month on average, and the remaining 7% said they read RED less than once a month. Among the questionnaires received, 92% of the people had watched the video of showing off their wealth on RED, and 8% said that they had never watched it or paid no attention to it. When asked about their feelings about videos showing off their wealth, 80% said that the negative impact of the video on themselves outweighed the positive impact, and the video brought them money anxiety; 15% said they had neutral attitudes towards such videos. Neither disliked nor liked them. Another 5% said they liked watching such videos, which gave them the incentive to make money. When asked if such videos would affect their view of money, 89% said their view of money would be affected by such videos, while 11% said it would not affect. Among those who filled out the questionnaire, 25% said they had followed the trend on RED to buy products recommended by bloggers and influencers, and the remaining 75% said they had never shopped on RED by following the bloggers. 45% percent of those who followed the trend and bought products said they had purchased products that exceeded their spending capacity, and 80 percent said they had experience of impulse purchases and regretted it later.

In the survey on money anxiety, 11% of people are in a low anxiety state, they believe that their needs can be basically met at this stage; 82% are in a moderate anxiety state. They pursue better Material conditions and are not very satisfied with the current economic conditions; the remaining 7% are currently in a state of high anxiety. They believe that the current economic strength cannot meet their material needs, and the need for money has caused frequent anxiety in their daily life. Regarding whether RED has aggravated money anxiety, 78% of the people said that RED has aggravated their money anxiety, and another 22% said that their money anxiety has not been affected by RED. A survey on the causes of wealth anxiety, as it is a multiple-choice question and open-ended supplements can be added, resulting in a lot of data. 84% of the women surveyed said that their anxiety comes from comparing with others around them and money anxiety brought about by comparison psychology; 75% of their anxiety comes from the high level of money posted by bloggers on social platforms of life videos, such as the sharing of shopping luxury bags; 60% said that the reason for their anxiety is that their salary cannot achieve the personal life they pursue; 37% said

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anxiety comes from raising families; 13% said that their anxiety comes from supporting their parents; 17% said anxiety comes from raising the next generation.

5. Discussion

Regarding the research on the dissemination of RED's wealth-showing videos, 92% of young women have seen wealth-showing videos on RED, and 80% of them said that such videos negatively affect them with wealth anxiety. The reason why so many young women have seen the wealth-showing videos on RED is that RED is deliberately promoting the wealth-showing videos, trying to make it a platform with high consumption levels. The reason why the video of showing off wealth brings money anxiety to people is that people have a mentality of comparison. The video of showing off wealth has exposed the rich life to many ordinary girls, allowing them to see things that they had no chance to touch; The videos on the RED all show the best side, so as to give young women a wrong concept that rich life is simply buying luxury goods and eating high-end cuisine, totally a stress-free life, which is not the fact. Watching videos showing off wealth at a high frequency will make young women have the illusion that everyone around them owns Hermes and luxury cars. This will not only cause girls' money anxiety, but if serious, it will cause young women to distort their view of money and psychological problems, resulting in news that young women in society are looking for rich people to nurse them. The wealth-showing videos on RED are not completely bad without good influence. RED provides a platform for ordinary-income girls to see the life of high-income, and to a certain extent, it can stimulate the motivation of girls to work hard. 5% of the girls in the survey also said they like to watch such videos, which will make them more motivated to work hard and get promotions and raises. Therefore, RED platform should control the content of videos showing off their wealth and should support and retain normal shopping videos that are shared by the wealthy. However, for some bloggers to show off their wealth to gain attention and traffic, videos that exaggerate or fabricate shopping facts should be banned and eliminated. In May 2022, RED launched its first crackdown on wealth-showing videos, punishing a group of people who used luxury houses, luxury cars, and luxury goods to show off their wealth and cut off sincere sharing. This is a good start, but the platform still needs the help of intelligent monitoring and artificial intelligence to further combat the malicious rich videos on RED [10].

In the survey on young women's follow-up purchases and impulse purchases, 25% of the girls had the experience of follow-up purchases on RED. If this ratio is considered as the conversion rate of advertising, it is high. Among the girls who followed the trend of buying, 45% said that they had purchased items that exceeded their consumption capacity, and as high as 80% said that they regretted purchasing the item afterwards and regarded the purchase as a failure impulse spending. The reason why RED's marketing has been so successful is that it has grasped the common psychology of comparison and conformity among young women when advertising content. RED is good at creating Internet celebrity products to make young women follow suit. When the bloggers promote the product, they emphasize that the products are actually used by themselves, so the fans of the blogger rush to buy and use the same product as their idols. Many bloggers own tens of millions of RMB, but they still promote affordable body washes at middle prices, so that young women feel if they buy that kind of body wash, they can use the same thing as bloggers even if they are poor than the bloggers. But in fact, these body washes are not necessarily what bloggers really use. In many cases, this is just an advertising method that takes advantage of the comparison psychology of young women. RED is also good at using multiple bloggers to promote at the same time to create an illusion for young women that everyone is using that kind of product, so the herd mentality makes them want to get the product in the blogger's video, and impulse purchases thus formed. When these young women cool off after a few weeks, they realize that they don't need a drinking glass with a cute cat pattern. Such promotion of RED will also lead to excessive consumption by young women. 45% of the girls said that they

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have bought things on RED that exceeded their financial capacity, which means that they have to eat instant noodles to reduce the cost of the necessities of life to save money to buy luxury bags. The psychology of comparison and conformity itself cannot be regarded as a derogatory term. It depends on what kind of guidance. Sadly, RED uses the psychology of comparison and conformity to promote the irrational consumption of young women through the wrong guidance method. This is where the RED platform needs to be noticed and corrected. In order to correct this misguided situation, RED needs to rectify the content of the platform first and requires that the content published by each blogger is the real user experience, and the product must be personally tried before it can be recommended to the audience. In addition, the platform can use the influence of bloggers to call on young women to establish a correct and healthy consumption concept. Live within their means and consume in moderation. Don't blindly pursue things beyond personal financial strength.

A prominent problem brought about by young women's blind consumption and impulsive consumption is money anxiety. The survey shows that 91% of young women are in moderate or high money anxiety, and RED has aggravated the money anxiety of 78% of the girls. On the one hand, watching bloggers' videos of showing off their wealth will cause girls to fall into money anxiety. RED's videos such as "The rich password of earning 2 million at the age of 20" have caused young women to be confused about the future because they even do not know where to work to get such a fortune [11]. On the other hand, following the trend on the platform to buy or even buy items outside the scope of economic strength puts more pressure on young women, and having to count the remaining money to live at the end of the month also exacerbates their money anxiety. Excessive money anxiety can be detrimental to both the individual and society. For individuals, money anxiety makes people live under mental pressure every day, which is not good for people's physical and mental health; from a social perspective, when some girls are anxious about money to a certain point, they may choose to obtain money through improper or illegal ways. There is an increase in the number of bad transactions involving the moral aspect of being nursed and the legal aspect of the prostitute. Therefore, the money anxiety of young women should be taken seriously.

In order to alleviate the money anxiety of young women, RED should first clean up the content of bloggers that causes audience anxiety through the false fabrication of facts, standardize the content of bloggers' posts, and call on bloggers to share their financial management experience while sharing their shopping life. Besides, the content of helping their fans establish a correct concept of money, teaching young women to control their desires and learn to satisfy them is also important because desires will never be filled, which is human nature; do not spend impulsively, but buy what is really in need.

6. Conclusion

Through the investigation of the money anxiety brought by RED's showing off videos to young women, this paper wants to make society and the RED platform pay more attention to the money anxiety of young women, maintain their mental health, and help young women establish a correct consumption view. In addition, this paper also intends to put forward higher requirements for RED and e-commerce platforms through the problems exposed by RED in promotion and content production and regulate the authenticity of platform content production and the rationality of promotion. As an e-commerce platform, RED is very popular among young women. There are a large number of videos showing off wealth on the platform, which has a negative impact on young women's money concept. The promotion of videos showing off their wealth has stimulated many girls to buy items beyond their financial capabilities and to follow the trend to make impulse purchases, resulting in regrets later. According to the survey, most young women in society are anxious about money. The promotion of RED's wealth-showing videos has aggravated their anxiety about money, which has had a negative impact on their physical and mental health. At the same time, it has also caused harm to

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society due to young women's potentially improper means of obtaining money under money anxiety. In order to solve the above problems and reduce the money anxiety caused by RED's wealth-showing videos on young women, the RED platform should ensure the authenticity of the video content, and no maliciously fabricated wealth-showing videos should appear to gain attention to satisfy the sales purpose of goods. In addition, RED must ensure that the products recommended by each blogger have been personally tested by the blogger, and they cannot output false advertising content for profit. It is necessary to call on young women to consume in moderation, buy the products they really need, and avoid irrational consumption. For the common problem of money anxiety among young women, the platform should focus on rectifying and standardizing the content of bloggers' posts, calling on bloggers to publish more videos that guide fans to establish a correct view of money, and teach young women to control their desires, consume rationally, and learn to manage money.

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