

## Cultivating the View of Sustainable Consumption Among Contemporary College Students——Taking YNU As an Example

Jinghan Yuan

Yunnan University, Kunming 650000, China

monayuan7@gmail.com

### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to discuss how to cultivate the view of sustainable consumption among contemporary college students. In order to externalize the problem, YUNNAN University (hereinafter referred to as YNU) will be taken as an example. The questionnaire survey in-depth interviews will be adopted. Key informants of a sample of 19 institutes in two main school districts in YNU will be interviewed. The study might find that approaches are: to strengthen the management of society, optimize social environment. Family expenses should be moderated, good consumption model should be made, and the contact with the school should be strengthened. The school should pay attention to the consumption education, optimize campus culture of consumption and purify its surrounding environment. Students should pay attention to improving consumption culture quality and choose civilization consumption patterns. Society, families, schools and individuals form the forces for the sustainable consumption of college students which is the basis of resolving the problems.

### Keywords

View of sustainable consumption, consumerism, university students.

### 1. Introduction

The concept of continuous consumption is produced with the proposition of sustainable development and is an important part of sustainable development. It advocates that in the time of consumption. It is necessary to constantly meet its increasing consumption needs, and also to pay attention to the harmony between man and nature, economic and social development, in order to improve people's quality of life. The concept of sustainable consumption fundamentally promotes the renewal of the traditional concept of human consumption and establishes the awareness of sustainable development. It promotes changes in people's lifestyles and bids farewell to consumerism patterns such as high consumption, high energy consumption, high waste, and high pollution that exist today.

College students are a special consumer group. They are at an important age in the formation of the outlook on life and individual socialization, and are willing to accept new kinds of consumer attitudes<sup>[1]</sup>. At the same time, college students are the elite of group youth and an important supporting force for the development of China.

Therefore, it is of great theoretical value and practical significance to focus on cultivating the concept of sustainable consumption of college students in order to correctly guide the consumer trends of the younger generation and even the whole society.

### 2. Method

In May 2018, an electronic version of the standard questionnaire was sent to a sample of 1,000 randomly selected samples from 19 colleges of Yunnan University through a network communication platform, 187 (18.7%) completed the questionnaire. Among the respondents, male students accounted for 38.87% and female students accounted for 61.13%. Participating survey respondents were asked closed questions about understanding, attitudes and behaviors of sustainable consumption. Also collected some suggestions.

List of Questions :

1. Your grade is
2. Your gender is
3. Your monthly consumption is probably about
4. Do you understand the concept of sustainable consumption
5. What do you think sustainable consumption means?
6. Do you think it's necessary to choose sustainable consumption behavior?
7. Do you always pay attention to buying products that are reusable, recyclable or renewable?
8. Do you actively refuse plastic bags when you shop in supermarkets?
9. Do you sort garbage into the trash when you throw it?
10. Do you actively refuse to use disposable chopsticks?
11. Do you have priority for green products when shopping?
12. Do you think that understanding sustainable consumption will affect your concept of consumption?
13. Will you actively call everyone to choose sustainable consumption behavior?
14. Do you think sustainable consumption will save your living expenses?
15. Do you think sustainable consumption will improve the environment?
16. What are your good suggestions for the cultivation of college students' sustainable consumption? (Optional)

The questionnaire contained 16 questions. These questions can be divided into 5 parts according to their purpose:

Q1 to Q2 aims to understand the basic situation of college students who participated in the survey. Q3 to Q6 surveys college students' understanding of sustainable consumption and their attitudes. The purpose is to make a basic understanding of the degree of popularization of sustainable consumption among college students; Q7 to Q11 surveys college students' specific consumption behaviors and consumption sustainability choices to guide the orientation of college students' consumption concept; Q12 to Q15 aims to understand the impact of sustainable consumption on the lives of college students, hoping to find concrete measures to increase its influence; Q16 is an optional open-ended question. The purpose is to hear about college students' suggestions for the cultivation of sustainable consumption.

### 3. Results

Table 1 shows that 71.2% of university students generally understand sustainable consumption, most of them do not have concrete concept for sustainable consumption. However 91.53% of college students believe that it is necessary to choose sustainable consumption.

Table 2 shows that the implementation of the specific consumption behavior, the concept of sustainable consumption has a relatively weak influence on the college students' consumption behavior. Merely 26.14% of university students believe that sustainable consumption will affect their consumer behavior; 56.82% of the students chose to occasionally consider buying green products, and only 3.41% of people would pay attention to purchasing the mark as a reusable, recyclable or renewable product every time. Specific aspects, such as 17.61% of people will take the initiative to refuse plastic bags and more than 60% of students choose depending on the circumstances; 17.05% of students refused to use disposable chopsticks, and more than 50% of students chose to take it as appropriate.

Table1 College students' basic understanding of sustainable consumption

Items	Options	Frequency	percentage (%)
Do you understand the concept of sustainable consumption?	Fully understanding	26	14.7
	General understanding	126	71.2
	Completely unaware	25	14.1
What do you think sustainable consumption means?	Healthy and positive	33	18.6
	Green	60	33.9
	Moderate consumption	84	47.5
Do you think it's necessary to choose sustainable consumption behavior?	Necessary	162	91.5
	Unclear	15	8.5

Table2 The influence of sustainable consumption on college students' consumption behavior

Items	Options	Frequency	percentage (%)
Do you always pay attention to buying products that are reusable, recyclable or renewable?	Every time	6	3.4
	Constantly	38	21.5
	Occasionally	104	58.8
	Never	29	16.4
Do you have priority for green products when shopping?	Constantly	59	33.3
	Occasionally	101	57.1
	Never	17	9.6
Do you think that understanding sustainable consumption will affect your concept of consumption?	Constantly	46	26
	Occasionally, but not obvious	116	65.5
	Never	15	8.5

#### 4. Discussion

Based on a survey of contemporary university students' sustainable consumption, it shows that contemporary college students have not yet formed a sustainable concept of consumption, and their awareness of rationality and green consumption is still relatively weak. Through the survey, it is found that the concept of sustainable consumption of contemporary college students is closely related to consumption habits. The lack of sustainable consumption concepts may lead to the development of unhealthy consumption habits such as excessively advanced and extravagant consumption of contemporary college students<sup>[2]</sup>. To a certain extent, it affects the consumption habits of the university campus and even the entire society. The cultivation of the idea of sustainable consumption for college students is imminent.

According to the conclusion of the investigation and relevant experts' suggestions, the following measures might be helpful to cultivate the sustainable consumption of college students:

The government should optimize the social consumption environment, Sustainable consumption requires the government to control and guide in legal measures, increasing support for green products, and guide college students' sustainable consumption behavior.

The society should strengthen publicity and training of the concept of sustainable consumption and hold some public activities on popularizing and promoting sustainable consumption.

Schools should pay attention to consumer education and educate college students on consumption ethics, consumer quality, and consumer psychology<sup>[3]</sup>. Optimize the campus consumption culture, influence the college students with high-quality consumption culture, purify the surrounding environment of the campus, and ban the illegally operated shops.

Families should be provided with a modest amount of money, both to meet the basic needs of their children's life and learning, and to avoid the children's room for spending money. In the mean time, parents should make a good example of consumption, and pay attention to the development of children's independent awareness and financial management concepts. Strengthen contact with schools, take the initiative to cooperate with schools, and educate the consumption of college students.

College students should upgrade their own consumption literacy and develop the habit of sustainable consumption, starting from the spotlight, start from daily life, always remind themselves of the sustainability of consumption, and at the same time affect the people around them and jointly carry out sustainable consumption<sup>[4]</sup>.

## References

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