

# ***Study on the Influence of Customized Marketing on Healthcare Consumption Behavior of the Elderly***

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**Abstract:** Based on the background that China has entered an aging society, according to the topic proposed by the consumption status of the elderly around them, the research on the impact of different marketing methods on it is studied. By analyzing the characteristics of the elderly market and the problems and impacts of various marketing methods, this study designs a questionnaire based on the survey, collects information from the elderly of different ages and genders, analyzes the questionnaire data, and puts forward relevant feasibility suggestions concerning the data model. This study has great significance on the influence and development trend of the consumption behavior of the elderly. Finally, the plan for the elderly market can be provided by formulating explicit provisions to protect the consumer rights and interests of the elderly, standardize the consumer market for the elderly, establish industry norms, and protect the consumption rights and interests of the elderly. At the same time, correctly guide the consumption of the elderly, prevent the elderly from property loss or health problems, and then develop and improve the elderly consumer market from the marketing perspective.

**Keywords:** aging population, elderly market, marketing methods, consumption behavior

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Research Background**

At present, China has entered an “aging” society. It is estimated that in 2050, the aging level of China’s population will reach 35.1%, and the proportion of aging will increase [1]. Many elderly people have a lot of free time after retirement so that they will pass the time in various ways. In this process, based on the pursuit of most elderly people’s lives - health and longevity, happy leisure, comfortable life, respect by others, and maintenance of existing interests, the actual consumption of the elderly is mainly concentrated in three aspects: health care products, geriatric drugs, and daily necessities, of which the consumption of health care products ranks first, and the general trust in the health care products they are familiar with is high [2]. Subsequently, the emergence of many different forms of marketing methods attracted their attention (“flash deals”, “buy one get one free”, small stalls, single software, “lecture delivery”, etc.), so as to purchase the goods promoted through this marketing method. Therefore, after long-term contact, the formation of the elderly’s preference for this marketing method makes them no longer think carefully about the product’s value, which leads to the elderly becoming a group that can bring long-term benefits. At the same time, with the

development of the Internet, the number of elderly Internet users is increasing, the number of elderly smartphone users is increasing, and the number of elderly people using shopping software is increasing, which has led to the expansion of the range of channels for accepting goods [3]. Not only that but in real life, the elderly will also be affected by the recommendation of others. Therefore, their consumer psychology is also directly related to this. For example, the elderly have relatively strong health anxiety and want to live a long life, so they may consume more of some healthcare health care products companies seize the inner thoughts of the elderly and exaggerate the efficacy of the company's health products. At this time, the older adults will be convinced of it. Statistics from relevant departments show that the annual sales of healthcare products in China are about 200 billion yuan, of which the consumption of the elderly accounts for more than 50%; More than 70% of health foods have false claims and exaggerated efficacy [4]. However, with the gradual weakening of the cognitive ability and thinking abilities of the elderly, they cannot correctly identify the purchase risk, make the correct purchase judgment, and usually follow the crowd or consume impulsively.

## 1.2. Research Significance

First of all, the irrational consumption of the elderly will impact the family, and some older adults try to compensate for consumption after their children have independent spending ability and the economic burden is reduced or disappeared. With the development of the economy and society, the income of the elderly group increased greatly, the purchasing power has become stronger, and new demand has also been generated. These elderly consumers try to find opportunities to compensate for the consumption that has not been realized due to conditions in the family in the past. They will buy many items their children have liked, or they have the same strong interest in dressing, personal interests, etc. Often, these behaviors cause the elderly to quarrel with their children, leading to family conflicts. Secondly, older adults may cause damage to their property by impulsively buying products. Finally, some commodities will affect the health of the elderly, and some health product manufacturing companies without medical licenses sell substandard pharmaceutical health products because they find great potential in the elderly consumer market.

This study can put forward reasonable suggestions and feasible methods for the above problems under the investigation of consumer psychology, behavior, and various marketing methods.

## 2. Elderly Market Analysis

### 2.1. Research Methods

This study will use literature collection, a questionnaire survey, and analytical research methods. Before sending out the questionnaire, this research will investigate the relevant information about the consumption psychology, consumption behavior, and healthcare products of the elderly and analyze the consumption market of the elderly according to the survey results. In this study, we chose to survey in the form of an online questionnaire and statistical analysis, summarize its overall characteristics, objectively analyze the data, and fully prepare for the next step to propose solutions.

### 2.2. Market Status

The advent of the aging society has brought many disadvantages to society, but it has also given birth to a huge and potential market, bringing new opportunities to businesses. Whoever seizes this opportunity will gain a competitive advantage in the elderly market. The elderly are a special consumer group, and their particularity is reflected in their consumption content, power, consumption behavior, consumption mode, consumption concept, consumption habits, and consumption decisions [5]. On April 19, 2023, the China Consumers Association released the "2022 Pension Consumption

Survey Project Research Report”, according to the report, the improvement of living standards has driven the demand of the elderly to become higher, and the elderly pay more attention to housekeeping catering, medical care, the upgraded consumption demand of the young elderly is obvious, and the consumption environment is more “suitable for the elderly”. In addition, with the development of the Internet, the number of elderly Internet users is increasing, the number of elderly smartphone users is increasing, and the number of elderly people using shopping software is increasing [6]. Many elderly people learn about product information online and recommend it to others to drive group consumption with the development of society. Among them, the healthcare category that they are most enthusiastic and interested in is the category. There are many types of healthcare related to treatment and nutrition, and healthcare product companies seize the psychology of the elderly to take physical health as an important one so that the elderly consume a large amount. In other words, now health food consumption is gradually becoming more and more popular, and the popularity is increasing, so healthcare products will have greater development potential in the elderly market [7].

### **2.3. Influencing Factors**

First, thrift and thrift will affect their consumption behavior, usually needed but not urgently needed items if encountering price reductions, discounts, buy one get one free, and other promotional activities, the elderly will also consume. Second, services are the consumption content the elderly pay special attention to, including an enthusiastic shopping guide in the sales process, detailed introduction, thoughtful service and meticulous care, after-sales service, etc. These services allow older consumers to use them with peace of mind and comfort without spending too much energy on maintenance and repair. Therefore, in the process of personnel promotion, the service level of sales personnel directly affects the consumption of the elderly. Third, the shopping of the elderly generally requires goods that are practical and convenient, easy to learn and use, safe and comfortable, beneficial to health, and preferential prices. Compared with other age groups, consumers prefer low-priced products, so they generally do not go to high-priced shopping places. Therefore, most channels for the elderly to understand goods are those they go to in real life, such as vegetable markets, physiotherapy shops, etc., or are told by family and friends. Fourth, exaggerated-style propaganda will also attract the elderly. The elderly, due to their own physical reasons, will be brightly colored items, and loud publicity style attracted if the elderly feel interested the sales of exaggerated wording will be firmer elderly want to consume the psychology. In general, the marketing strategy of the elderly products is usually adapted to the consumption habits of the elderly. The merchants seize the exaggerated, practical, and preferential points, focus on personalized and professional services, and through appropriate marketing, let the elderly have more trust in the product and more recognition to promote the expansion of the elderly consumer market and drive the development of elderly products.

## **3. Result of Multiple Marketing Tools Analysis**

### **3.1. Buy One Get One Free**

Buy one get one free is one of the most common promotional practices on the market. It means that after purchasing a specified product or service, the merchant will give away the incidental goods or items contained in the product. Common buy one gets one free: limit the scope of goods, such as buy one get one free all the goods in a certain price range; Buy one gets one free on the whole site, and check out according to the highest priced item at checkout; Buy any one of the goods, the store selects and provides a gift; Buy one item and get the same item free. In some “buy one gets one free”, the merchant’s practice is reasonable and legal, and the notification is clear, which is a normal promotion method; Some are deceptive and misleading and are a kind of consumption trap [8].

### 3.2. Price Cuts

The auction method originated from swoopo.com websites. Because it brings low prices, entertainment, and interaction to online shopping, the Lightning Deal website has attracted a large number of consumers to participate in a short period of time. A Lightning Deal is an upward markup auction where the seller determines the starting price and markup range in advance, with the highest bidder winning the item. However, it is not the same as the auction method adopted by eBay and Taobao. In Lightning Deals, customers are required to pay a certain bidding fee each time they participate in Lightning Deals, and even if the customer does not win the item in the end, these fees are non-refundable [9]. In a broad sense, “flash deal” refers to online sellers releasing some ultra-low price goods all buyers at the same time online snap up because of the low price of goods, often on the shelves are snapped up, sometimes only one second, so it is called “second deal”. The term “flash kill” was officially recognized in the report “Living Conditions in Chinese Chinese (2006)” published by the Ministry of Education on its official website on August 16, 2007 [10]. Merchants allow the elderly to get “flash deals” opportunities through real-name information, whether it is software “flash deals” or offline shopping “flash deals”, this marketing method is deeply loved by the elderly, and they drive more and more people to participate in it, so it is easy to have the problem of personal information theft and “second deal” disorder.

### 3.3. Long-term “Listening to Lectures”

This phenomenon often occurs in the elderly group; they jointly organize and participate in the institution’s long-term “lecture” session; when the question and answer are correct or the lecture reaches a certain length, the organizer will give small gifts or food. The main purpose of the lecture delivery is to promote goods, and this promotion method is mostly used to promote health products. Through the testimonials of experts and professors, more vigorous lectures are used to promote the usability of products, thereby exaggerating the efficacy of healthcare products and promoting the credibility of elderly consumers to make them buy. Most elderly people will be attracted by the products mentioned in the course after listening to the class, so they buy the products sold by the organizer and inadvertently make high-price consumption. Merchants seize the psychology of greed and cheapness through more elderly people, attract the attention of the elderly with “free delivery”, and obtain a series of high returns in the later stage. Therefore, the lecturers should understand the authenticity and credibility of the content taught by the so-called expert professors in the class.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Questionnaire Analysis

Based on background investigation and consumer market analysis, this study sent out a questionnaire on understanding the consumption situation and consumption preferences of the elderly online. The number of valid fillers in this questionnaire was 31, asking questions about age, understanding of commodity channels, consumption habits, promotion preferences, etc., and obtaining the following valid data.:

According to Figure 1, this study raises questions about participants’ age, and from the results of the questionnaire, most of the elderly who love to consume are between the age of 60-70, 50-60 years old moderately more, and elderly shoppers over 70 years old are a minority.

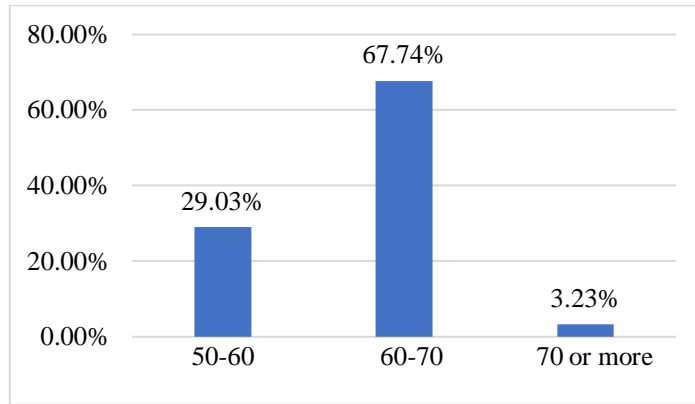


Figure 1: Participants' age.

(Photo credit: Origin)

According to Figure 2, this study asked questions about the economic situation of the participants, and from the results of the questionnaire, it can be seen that most older adults have a medium preference for economic status, some older adults are excellent, fewer older adults have poor economic conditions, and there are no older adults with very poor economic conditions.

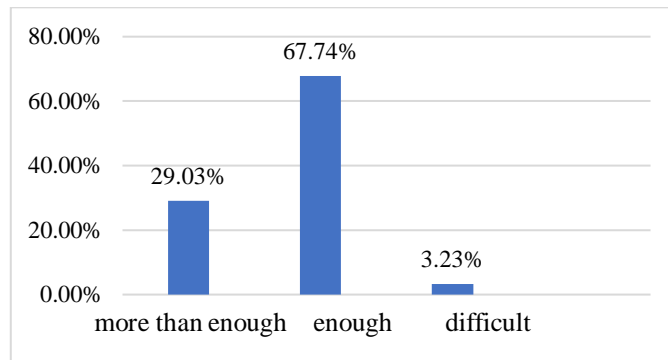


Figure 2: Participants' economic conditions.

(Photo credit: Origin)

According to Figure 3, this study raises the question of the channels through which participants accept commodity information. From the results of the questionnaire filling, most older adults through offline, personal contact (such as supermarkets, vegetable markets, etc.) to understand, some elderly through family and friends recommendations, less elderly through online (such as TV commercials, mobile phone live broadcasts, etc.) to understand the goods they want to buy.

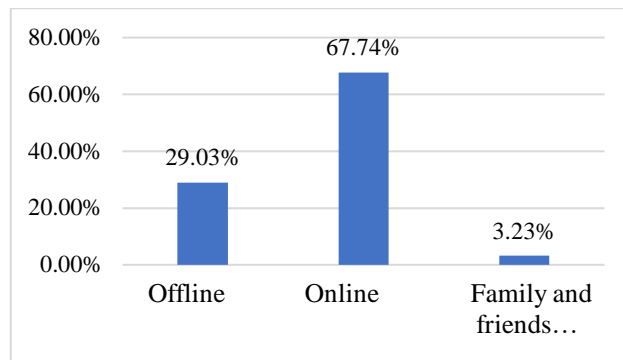


Figure 3: Channels through which participants accept commodity information.

(Photo credit: Origin)

According to Figure 4, this study asks about participants' favorite promotion methods. From the results of filling out the questionnaire, most of the elderly like the most common "buy one get one free", some elderly people like to participate in "price reduction second deal", and fewer elderly people like time-consuming "listening to class sending".

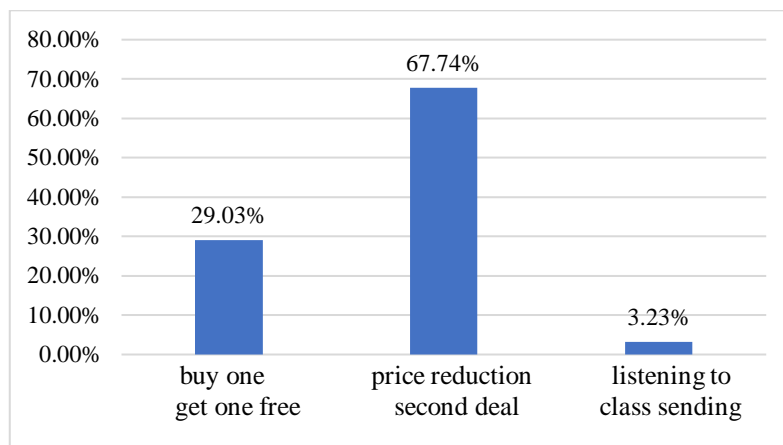


Figure 4: Participants' favorite promotion methods.

(Photo credit: Origin)

According to Figure 5, this study puts forward the level of trust of participants in their preferred promotion methods, and from the results of the questionnaire, most of the elderly have a medium level of trust, some elderly people have a higher level of trust, and fewer elderly people have a low level of trust.

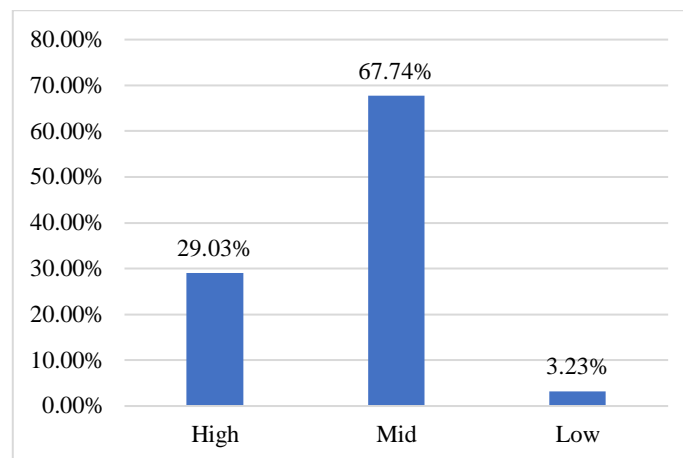


Figure 5: The level of trust of participants in their preferred promotion methods.

(Photo credit: Origin)

## 4.2. Summary of the Situation

Among the 31 people who completed the questionnaire, the 50-60 years old are the majority. According to the survey results, the elderly of all ages are basically in sufficient economic conditions the channels of receiving information are mostly for the people, places, and things that they can contact in daily life, like “buy one get one free” and “price reduction second deal” The number of people and trust in it is higher. Therefore, it can be known that these promotions. If the above two ways customize the marketing plan of health care products, it will make the elderly who believe in health products make huge consumption. This will lead to problems (health, safety, etc.), for which it is necessary to propose rectification (legalization of institutions, process order, etc.) for the above two promotion methods.

## 4.3. Practical Advice

### 4.3.1. Buy One Get One Free

In order to identify the authenticity of the “buy one get one free” promotion, it is necessary to determine the gift goods before purchasing, and at the same time to measure the value of the gifts given by the corresponding purchased items, observe whether the activity is exaggerated by the merchant, whether there are side branches of the project behind it, and consider its production date and shelf life, and whether the health care products given away are the same type of health care products or their additional categories.

### 4.3.2. Lightning Deals

Before going for a flash deal, pay attention to business behavior and speech, and be wary of merchant scams. During the Lightning Deal process, protect your privacy, maintain sanity, and maintain the order of the Lightning Deal. Online flash deals must choose guaranteed software and websites; Offline flash deals must protect themselves and avoid exposing personal wealth.

### 4.3.3. Long-term “Listening to Lectures”

Ensure the legality and safety of the institution before listening to the class, rationally judge your own needs during the lecture process, avoid impulse consumption, discuss with your family before making



a decision, and stop loss in time if you find it unreasonable. At the same time, the national market supervision department should increase the supervision of teaching institutions, and the network supervision department should conduct stricter approval and review of Internet teaching or video to standardize its code of conduct.

## 5. Conclusion

Through the above consumer behavior analysis and the research of questionnaire survey results, it can be understood that the elderly are extremely dependent on health care products, which will lead to a decrease in the safety of older adults: reduced precautions, decreased vigilance, exposure of private information, damage to their property, etc., which will also lead to conflicts in some families. Therefore, multiple parties must work together: the government needs to strengthen supervision and strictly check that drugs are qualified to ensure that consumers take healthy and harmless drugs, control improper marketing methods, and prevent consumer rights and interests from being damaged; The families of elderly consumers should correctly guide the consumption of the elderly; In order to prevent family conflicts, the elderly should communicate with their families in a timely manner, listen to objective opinions and make decisive judgments, do not make subjective assumptions and pay attention to preventing personal privacy and personal safety.

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