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Factors Impacting E-Commerce Platform's Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention in Chengdu, China

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Abstract

Purpose: This research paper aims to investigate the primary determinants that significantly influence individuals' satisfaction and intentions for repeat purchases in Chengdu, China. The conceptual framework proposed causal relationship among security perception, customer service, shipping, innovativeness, popularity, customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention. **Research design, data, and methodology:** The researcher employed a quantitative approach, surveying a sample size of 500 individuals utilizing questionnaires distributed among residents who have engaged in online shopping across five districts within Chengdu city. The sampling techniques involve judgmental, quota and convenience sampling. The distribution of the questionnaires online and offline to the target research population. The data analysis involved the utilization of the Structural Equation Model (SEM) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which assessed the model's adequacy, reliability, and construct validity. **Results:** Eight hypotheses were shown to fulfill the research objectives. The results show that security perception, customer service, shipping, innovativeness, and popularity significantly affect customer satisfaction and that innovativeness, popularity, and customer satisfaction all have a substantial impact on repurchase intentions. **Conclusions:** The results suggests that major e-commerce platforms focus on these areas to generate more excellent economic effects and stabilize good business development. The e-commerce platform should effectively update the platform products and increase customer purchases.

Keywords : Customer Service, Innovativeness, Customer Satisfaction, Repurchase Intention, E-Commerce Platform

JEL Classification Code: E44, F31, F37, G15

1. Introduction

China's e-commerce platform has become one of the most influential business organizations worldwide. According to statistics, the total volume of China's e-commerce market reached RMB 43.83 trillion in 2022, occupying a significant position in the global e-commerce market share. The rapid development of China's e-commerce platforms has driven Chinese companies' globalization and digital transformation. With the rise of the Chinese economy, e-commerce platforms have become an essential channel for Chinese companies to connect with the world market. In the fierce competition of e-commerce, improving consumer satisfaction and repurchase rates is crucial to the platform's success. With the ever-changing needs of consumers, for e-

commerce platforms to gain a competitive edge, only by meeting users' requirements can we attract more users, which can significantly enhance the popularity and market competitiveness of e-commerce platforms. The rise and development of several major e-commerce platforms in China, such as Taobao, Jingdong, and Jinduo, has not only allowed China's e-commerce market to mature but also promoted the innovation and upgrading of the entire business model. For example, integrating online and offline, accurate marketing based on data analysis. These e-commerce platforms constantly change their business models according to user needs and market changes to provide better services for users and merchants (Vongurai, 2022). Therefore, this study investigates the critical factors affecting customer satisfaction and repurchase intention in Chengdu, China.

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2. Literature Review

2.1 Security Perception

According to Díez-Nicolás (2016), to comprehensively analyze the perception of security, it is essential to consider subjective and objective measures. Objective indicators include but are not limited to the crime rate, allocation of public budget towards defense, size of armed forces and other security institutions, and the prevalence of criminal activities. As the utilization of technological environments continues to rise, there has been a corresponding increase in cyberspace security threats, risks, and vulnerabilities. Consequently, technological security plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' overall experience quality and subsequently impacting their quality of life (Baraković et al., 2020). Jackson and Gray (2010) showed that individuals may alter their actions due to the perception of safety or lack thereof. For example, they may avoid unnecessary risks while commuting back home. Carro et al. (2010) refer to the security issue as a significant concern, particularly for urban populations residing in our cities and villages. Prieto Curiel and Bishop (2016) suggested that the perception of security can be regarded as a characteristic of the region rather than solely based on individual impressions and fears, even though these impressions and fears represent the overall behavior of the surveyed population. The perception of security pertains to the degree to which individuals perceive an online service or website as possessing robust security measures. This presents a significant challenge in securely transmitting sensitive information, such as credit card details (Salisbury et al., 2001). The concept of security can be categorized into two aspects: objective security, which encompasses security policy declarations and technical safeguards, and subjective security, which pertains to individuals' overall perception of safety (Chellappa & Pavlou, 2002). In this regard, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Security perception has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.

2.2 Customer Service

Customer service results from the collaborative efforts of three key organizational stakeholders: management or owners, colleagues, and customers (Susskind et al., 2003). Juanamasta et al. (2019) refer to the implementation of CRM (Customer et al.) as essential in establishing customer loyalty through providing high-quality customer service. Evans et al. (2007) stated that retailers engage in customer service as a visible yet occasionally intangible practice accompanying the sale of necessary products and services. According to

Pettigrew (2008), The provision of assistance to customers is referred to as customer service, which aids in the enhancement of the company's primary product offerings. Customer service is a concrete or abstract value-enhancing operation directly or indirectly associated with a product or service, aiming to fulfill customer expectations and ensure customer contentment and allegiance (Kursunluoglu, 2011). According to Xu et al. (2017), it is believed that the focus of conventional customer service lies in addressing users' information requirements. Customer service is an asset within the retail industry, distinguishing one's portfolio, sustaining a competitive edge, and fostering customer contentment and loyalty (Kursunluoglu, 2014). In this regard, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H2: Customer service has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.

2.3 Shipping

According to Wijnolst and Wergeland (1996), the shipping industry is multifaceted, making it challenging to provide a concise academic definition. Shipping is of utmost importance in the region as it is a vital link that guarantees the transportation of essential resources to nearly all major urban areas and communities, supporting various socio-economic sectors (Christensen et al., 2018). According to a study conducted by Eyring et al. (2010), there has been a growing recognition among policymakers and scientists regarding the escalating concern surrounding shipping in recent years. The shipping sector is vital in facilitating economic growth, as global commerce relies on vessels to transport goods from their point of origin to their final destination (Lun et al., 2010). Panayides et al. (2011) refer to shipping companies playing a crucial role in the industry by enabling global trade and promoting industrial development. The effective implementation of this new technology is imperative for the shipping sector, which plays a vital role in ensuring smooth supply chain operations (Stopford, 2000). According to Midoro et al. (2005), to ensure the organization's ongoing expansion, the shipping industry must prioritize delivering exceptional customer satisfaction due to its intensifying competitiveness. In this regard, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H3: Shipping has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.

2.4 Innovativeness

Innovativeness pertains to the unique variations in individuals' responses toward these novel entities, which predominantly ascertain their accomplishments or setbacks (Goldsmith & Foxall, 2003). Salavou (2004) showed that innovation's significant contribution to economic progress

has gained extensive acknowledgment. Innovativeness refers to applying novel solutions in previously unexplored contexts or for unconventional purposes (Nasierowski & Arcelus, 2012). Innovativeness pertains to using fresh approaches in previously uncharted scenarios or for non-traditional objectives (Raju, 1980). According to Roehrich (2004), innovation can conveniently fulfill the desire for distinctiveness.

Additionally, the desire for individuality encompasses the ability to make independent judgments, an essential prerequisite for pioneering procurement practices. Hult et al. (2004) mentioned that a firm's innovativeness is associated with its capacity for implementing novel procedures, goods, or concepts within the organization. The positive impact of innovativeness in perceived value creation and innovativeness in value proposition on customer satisfaction and behavior towards value creation is evident (Clauss et al., 2019). In this regard, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H4: Innovativeness has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.

H6: Innovativeness has a significant impact on repurchase intention.

2.5 Popularity

According to Cillessen et al. (2011), popularity is not a distinct concept or variable but rather a term used to describe variables encompassing children's overall preferences, aversions, and experiences related to their social standing among peers. Popularity pertains to the widespread recognition and utilization of services provided by a specific group purchasing platform (Khamwon & Sorataworn, 2021; Lova, 2021). Lease et al. (2002) proposed that a universally applicable solution for attaining and sustaining popularity can only exist if popularity is a socially constructed concept. According to Tatar et al. (2014), the ability to anticipate the popularity of web content with a limited lifespan is highly advantageous when predicting its success before publication. Popularity may encompass a range of additional attributes that fall outside the scope of the risk and return framework (Ibbotson & Idzorek, 2014). Pakutandang and Indrawati (2022) stated that perceived popularity has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. Brand popularity affects repurchase intention (Ibrahim & Hidayat, 2022). In this regard, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H5: Popularity has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.

H7: Popularity has a significant impact on repurchase intention.

2.6 Customer Satisfaction

The examination of customer satisfaction is approached from a practical standpoint, drawing on extensive academic research that has only recently been explored outside academia (Oliver, 2010). According to Abd Razaka et al. (2020), the level of customer contentment reflects the extent to which the product experience aligns with the buyer's anticipated value. Whether a customer remains loyal to a business is often influenced by the level of satisfaction they experience (Rahim et al., 2012). Gustafsson et al. (2005) found that ongoing performance is what customers evaluate when determining their level of satisfaction. According to Shamsudin et al. (2018), customer satisfaction can be defined as the anticipation of customers and consumers before making a purchase or engaging with a product or service. Customer contentment assesses the perceived variance between initial anticipations and real product effectiveness (Oliver, 1999; Tse & Wilton, 1988). Hennig-Thurau and Klee (1997) stated that the primary driver of competitiveness and success lies in customer satisfaction with the company's offerings. Tufahati et al. (2021) found a direct correlation between customer contentment and the likelihood of repeat purchases. In this regard, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H8: Customer satisfaction has a significant impact on repurchase intention.

2.7 Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention pertains to an individual's assessment of their inclination to procure a particular service from an identical organization, considering their present circumstances and potential scenarios (Hellier et al., 2003). Suhaily and Soelasih (2017) stated that the intention to make repeat purchases is favorable to consumer perception of online retailers, leading to repeated buying actions. According to Wen et al. (2011), it was found that customers' intention to repurchase online is influenced by their satisfaction with the shopping experience on e-commerce websites in a positive manner. Customer satisfaction positively relates to customer repurchase intention (Kim et al., 2012). According to Zhang et al. (2011), repurchase intent is a form of customer loyalty. Hellier et al. (2003) mentioned that the consumer's inclination to repeat purchases indicates their intention to engage in the brand's behavioral patterns again. According to the research of Ebrahim et al. (2016), repurchase intention refers to the act of a consumer choosing to make a repeat purchase of a particular brand. Pandiangan et al. (2021) defined repurchasing intention as a metric that gauge's customer satisfaction by inquiring whether customers will return for future purchases or utilize the company's services again.

3. Research Methods and Materials

3.1 Research Framework

The conceptual framework is based on three previous theoretical models. Firstly, Maditinos and Theodoridis (2010) suggest that security perception (SP) has an impact on customer satisfaction (CSF). Second, Cao et al. (2018) verify that both customer service (CS) and shipping (S) have a positive impact on customer satisfaction (CSF). The third theoretical model was proposed by Chiu and Cho (2021), who argued that both innovativeness (I) and popularity (P) affect customer satisfaction (CSF) and that innovativeness (I) and popularity (P) also positively affect repurchase intentions (RI). Finally, all three theoretical frameworks share a common view that customer satisfaction (CSF) positively affects repurchase intentions (RI).

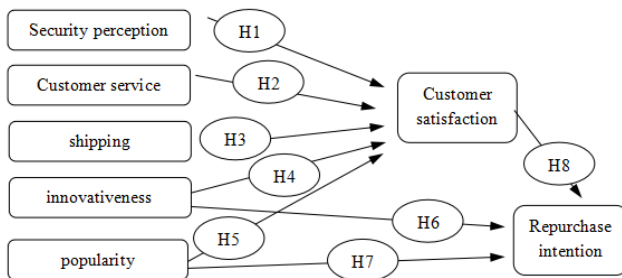


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

- H1:** Security perception has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.
- H2:** Customer service has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.
- H3:** Shipping has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.
- H4:** Innovativeness has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.
- H5:** Popularity has a significant impact on e-commerce customer satisfaction.
- H6:** Innovativeness has a significant impact on repurchase intention.
- H7:** Popularity has a significant impact on repurchase intention.
- H8:** Customer satisfaction has a significant impact on repurchase intention.

3.2 Research Methodology

This research employed a quantitative approach to non-probability sampling. Online questionnaires were distributed to individuals residing in five districts of Chengdu with previous experience with e-commerce platforms. The

researchers examined and analyzed significant factors influencing customer satisfaction and intentions for future purchases. The survey encompassed three sections. Firstly, respondents' characteristics were identified through screening questions, including gender, age, income level, educational background, employment status, and marital status. Secondly, all seven hypotheses were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strong disagreement (1) to strong agreement (5), measuring five proposed variables. Thirdly, to ensure each variable's reliability, three PhD experts were invited to conduct Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) tests on each variable within this study. Finally, the researchers conducted validity and reliability assessments utilizing Cronbach's Alpha with a sample size of 30 participants.

After completing the confidence assessment, the researcher distributed a questionnaire to the intended participants and received 500 responses. The collected data was then analyzed using SPSS AMOS 26.0 software. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed to assess the accuracy and validity of the data. Evaluating the data as a whole to ensure its reliability and validity calculated a measure of model fit. Lastly, the researchers utilized Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the impact of various variables.

3.3 Population and Sample Size

This research focuses on individuals residing in five specific districts within Chengdu, China with experience utilizing e-commerce platforms. A minimum of 629 participants were required to complete the questionnaire to ensure accurate results for structural equation modeling analysis. Following thorough data screening procedures, 500 responses were deemed suitable for inclusion in this study.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The researchers employed judgmental sampling to choose participants residing in five districts of Chengdu. Following this, quota sampling was conducted according to Table 1, which displays the population distribution across each district for quota sampling purposes. Subsequently, the questionnaires were distributed online utilizing the convenience sampling approach.

Table 1: Sample Units and Sample Size

Area	Population Size	Sample Size
Wuhou District	1.22	105
Jinniu District	1.28	111
Jinjiang District	0.91	79
Qingyang District	0.97	84
Chenghua District	1.4	121
Total	5.78	500

Source: Constructed by author

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Information

The demographic characteristics of the 500 participants are shown in Table 2. Male respondents accounted for 59.2 %, and female respondents 40.8 %. Regarding the age group, 60.2% of the respondents were above 24 years of age, followed by 20.4 % of those aged 23-24, 13.6 % of those aged 21-22, and 5.8 % of those aged 18-20. In terms of respondents' income, 30.0 % were below RMB 4,500, 20.6 % were between RMB 4,501-6,000, 12.2 % were between RMB 6,001-7,500, 15.6 % were between RMB 7,501-9,000, and 21.6% were over RMB 9,000. In terms of the educational background of the respondents, the major groups were bachelor's degrees (62.8%), high school education (26.6%), and master's degree or above (10.6%). Of the occupations of the surveyed population, 16.8% were students, 47.6% were employees, 2.4% were full-time homemakers, 12.6% were merchants, and 20.6% were in other occupations. Regarding marital status, 58.0% were married, 3.3% were divorced, and 38.7% were unmarried.

Table 2: Demographic Profile

Demographic and General Data (N=500)		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	296	59.2%
	Female	204	40.8%
Grade	18-20 years old	29	5.8%

Demographic and General Data (N=500)		Frequency	Percentage
	21-22 years old	68	13.6%
	23-24 years old	102	20.4%
	More than 24 years old	301	60.2%
Education	High school degree	133	26.6%
	Bachelor's degree	314	62.8%
	Master's degree or higher	53	10.6%
Occupation	Student	84	16.8%
	Office worker	238	47.6%
	Full-time at home	12	2.4%
	Merchant	63	12.6%
	Others	103	20.6%
Marital status	Married	290	58.0%
	Divorce	16	3.3%
	Unmarried	194	38.7%

4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is a statistical method employed to validate the factor configuration of a given set of observed variables. CFA enables researchers to examine the proposition that exists an association between an observed variable and its underlying structure. Researchers utilize theoretical knowledge, empirical studies, or a combination of both to formulate hypotheses regarding patterns of relationships in advance. These hypotheses are subsequently examined through statistical methods (Suhr, 2006). The factor load value should be greater than or equal to 0.50, with an ideal value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). Table 3 shows that all estimates are significant.

Table 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Result, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variables	Source of Questionnaire (Measurement Indicator)	No. of Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Factors Loading	CR	AVE
Security Perception (SP)	Maditinos and Theodoridis (2010)	3	0.818	0.758-0.787	0.818	0.600
Customer Service (CS)	Cao et al. (2018)	4	0.835	0.735-0.767	0.835	0.559
Shipping (S)	Cao et al. (2018)	7	0.884	0.679-0.847	0.888	0.533
Innovativeness (I)	Chiu and Cho (2021)	3	0.822	0.675-0.854	0.827	0.617
Popularity (P)	Chiu and Cho (2021)	3	0.771	0.719-0.739	0.771	0.529
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	Cao et al. (2018)	4	0.898	0.822-0.838	0.899	0.689
Repurchase Intention (RI)	Chiu and Cho (2021)	3	0.858	0.813-0.825	0.860	0.671

The confirmatory factor analysis employed GFI, AGFI, NFI, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA as model fit indicators. The values for convergent validity and discriminant validity exceed the acceptable threshold for this study, as demonstrated in Table 4. Adequate assurance is provided for both convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Table 4: Goodness of Fit for Measurement Model

Fit Index	Acceptable Criteria	Statistical Values
CMIN/DF	≤ 5.0 (Wheaton et al., 1977)	1.666
GFI	> 0.85 (Sica & Ghisi, 2007)	0.927
AGFI	≥ 0.80 (Sica & Ghisi, 2007)	0.909
NFI	≥ 0.80 (Wu & Wang, 2006)	0.924
CFI	≥ 0.80 (Bentler, 1990)	0.968
TLI	≥ 0.80 (Sharma et al., 2005)	0.963
RMSEA	< 0.08 (Pedroso et al., 2016)	0.037

Fit Index	Acceptable Criteria	Statistical Values
Model Summary		Acceptable Model Fit

Remark: CMIN/DF = The ratio of the chi-square value to degree of freedom, GFI = goodness-of-fit index, AGFI = adjusted goodness-of-fit index, NFI = normalized fit index, CFI = comparative fit index, TLI = Tucker Lewis index, and RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation

The square root of the average variance extracted was determined by ensuring that all correlations exceeded the respective correlation value mentioned in Table 5 for each variable.

Table 5: Discriminant Validity

	SP	CS	S	I	P	CSF	RI
SP	0.775						
CS	-0.146	0.748					
S	-0.031	-0.024	0.743				
I	-0.016	0.012	-0.051	0.819			
P	0.034	-0.048	-0.039	-0.058	0.727		
CSF	0.252	0.199	0.220	0.174	0.222	0.830	
RI	0.198	0.217	0.247	0.203	0.279	0.516	0.819

Note: The diagonally listed value is the AVE square roots of the variables

Source: Created by the author.

4.3 Structural Equation Model (SEM)

According to Hair et al. (2010), Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) validates the measurement error of the causal relationships between variables in the proposed model. The goodness-of-fit indices of the structural equation modeling are shown in Table 6. According to Greenspoon and Saklofske (1998), the GFI and CFI should be higher than 0.8. Every statistic value is satisfied with the acceptable value. Their respective values are 1.925 (less than 5.00), 0.881 (greater than 0.85), 0.866 (greater than 0.80), 0.881 (greater than 0.80), 0.935 (greater than 0.80), 0.939 (greater than 0.80), 0.043 (less than 0.08).

Table 6: Goodness of Fit for Structural Model

Fit Index	Acceptable Criteria	Statistical Values
CMIN/DF	≤ 5.0 (Wheaton et al., 1977)	1.803
GFI	≥ 0.85 (Sica & Ghisi, 2007)	0.919
AGFI	≥ 0.80 (Sica & Ghisi, 2007)	0.903
NFI	≥ 0.80 (Wu & Wang, 2006)	0.914
CFI	≥ 0.80 (Bentler, 1990)	0.959
TLI	≥ 0.80 (Sharma et al., 2005)	0.955
RMSEA	< 0.08 (Pedroso et al., 2016)	0.040
Model Summary		Acceptable Model Fit

Remark: CMIN/DF = The ratio of the chi-square value to degree of freedom, GFI = goodness-of-fit index, AGFI = adjusted goodness-of-fit index, NFI = normalized fit index, CFI = comparative fit index, TLI = Tucker Lewis index, and RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation

4.4 Research Hypothesis Testing Result

As shown in Table 7, all hypotheses are valid. The significance is $p=0.05$. In contrast, perceived safety has a 0.339 impact on customer satisfaction, customer service has a 0.297 effect on customer satisfaction, and shipping has a 0.276. Innovativeness on customer satisfaction is 0.234, popularity on customer satisfaction is 0.281, innovativeness on repurchase intention is 0.130, and popularity on repurchase intention is 0.194.

Table 7: Hypothesis Results of the Structural Equation Modeling

Hypothesis	(β)	t-value	Result
H1: SP→CSF	0.339	7.323*	Supported
H2: CS→CSF	0.297	6.524*	Supported
H3: S→CSF	0.276	6.455*	Supported
H4: I→CSF	0.234	5.342*	Supported
H5: P→CSF	0.281	5.916*	Supported
H6: I→RI	0.130	2.903*	Supported
H7: P→RI	0.194	3.964*	Supported
H8: CSF→RI	0.531	10.505*	Supported

Note: * $p<0.05$

Source: Created by the author

The findings from Table 7 can be elucidated as follows: H1 demonstrates a robust correlation between security perception and customer satisfaction, evidenced by a T-value of 7.323. Regarding H2, the T-value of 6.524 underscores the correlation between customer service and customer satisfaction. H3 confirms the impact of shipping on customer satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.276. H4 finds support in previous research indicating that innovativeness positively influences customer satisfaction. The result for H5, with a coefficient of 0.281, suggests that popularity also affects customer satisfaction. For H6, the T-value of 2.903 indicates that innovativeness positively influences repurchase intention. The outcome for H7, with a coefficient of 0.194, indicates that popularity impacts repurchase intentions. Finally, H8 is validated with a coefficient of 0.531, affirming that customer satisfaction influences repurchase intention.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

This study investigates the factors affecting satisfaction and repurchase intention of online shopping platforms among residents of five districts in Chengdu, China, and develops a conceptual framework from previous studies and proposes hypotheses between seven variables: perception of safety, customer service, shipping, innovation, popularity, customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention. To verify whether the variables interact with each other, the researcher used an online approach by distributing a questionnaire. After the data collection was completed, the researcher conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and applied structural equation modeling (SEM) to the conceptual framework to verify the reliability and validity of the data.

The results of the study are as follows: security perception has a significant effect on customer satisfaction, customer service has a significant impact on customer satisfaction, shipping has a significant effect on customer satisfaction, innovativeness has a significant impact on

customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention, popularity has a significant effect on customer satisfaction and repurchase intention, and customer satisfaction has a significant impact on repurchase intention.

5.2 Recommendation

This study demonstrates the effectiveness of perceived safety, customer service, shipping, innovativeness, and popularity in influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions among residents using an e-commerce platform in five districts of Chengdu, China. Therefore, the researcher suggests that major e-commerce platforms focus on these areas to generate more excellent economic effects and stabilize good business development. E-commerce platforms can pay more attention to protecting customer privacy to enhance customers' security. E-commerce platforms should also improve customer service and express transport to give more effective support. Secondly, the e-commerce platform can strengthen its innovation ability so that customers have more different experiences. The e-commerce platform should also pay more attention to the current popular content, which can effectively update the platform products and increase customer purchases.

5.3 Limitation and Further Study

The limitations of this study are that the study population is only residents of five districts in Chengdu, China, and the questionnaire was only disseminated through online means on social software, which the researcher believes that the study data is single or has some limitations. In future studies, it may be possible to use more data sources to deepen the analysis further.

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