Research on the Influence of Information Source Characteristics on the Continuous Use Intention of Community Group-buying Users

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Abstract. Based on the theory of information source characteristics, the information source is divided into two types: leader characteristics and platform characteristics, and the models of information source characteristics, consumer trust and community group purchase users' intention to continue to use are constructed, and the differences under different leader interaction modes are discussed by multi-group structural equation model. Based on the multi-group model, the comparative study found that whether the leader adopts task-oriented interaction or relationship-oriented interaction, the characteristics of the leader can significantly affect the interpersonal trust of consumers, and then affect their continuous use intention. Perceived usefulness significantly affects the continuous use intention of consumers through platform trust. However, there are differences between relationship strength and interpersonal trust and inter-personal trust and willingness to use continuously. According to the research conclusions, it is proposed that enterprises should conduct relevant training for the heads of companies to improve their business capabilities, attach importance to the quality of interaction and select appropriate interactive styles, so that the heads can gain the trust of consumers when carrying out community group buying, and then transfer the trust of consumers on the heads to the community group buying platform, so as to maintain user stickiness. Increase the user's willingness to continue using.

Keywords: information source characteristics; Community group buying; Willingness to continue to use; Type of interaction; Multi-group analysis

1   Introduction

Since the emergence of community group-buying in Changsha, Hunan Province in 2016, it has developed rapidly, and its concept and business model have become increasingly clear. Generally speaking, community group buying takes offline physical communities as sales areas, sets up leaders in each community, and the leaders initiate group buying on social media platforms such as wechat, forming a group buying model of "online pre-purchase + offline self-pickup". Its core is acquaintance and semi-acquaintance socializing, establishing a bond between the platform, the leader and the consumer. Therefore, this study refers to the broad definition of information source, defines information source as the sender of information and the transmission channel of information, and considers that information source includes two: The first is the sender of information, that is, the leader who conveys information such as commodity characteristics and purchase suggestions to consumers through community group-

buying. The second is the communication channel of information, that is, the community group-buying platform that relies on wechat for interactive communication and information dissemination. Information sources will have a positive or negative impact on the internal psychology of the information receiver, which depends on its characteristics. This study refers to the credibility model of information sources, and Explore which features of the leader and platform can influence consumers' willingness to continue using it, and how companies can effectively use these features for marketing.

At present, most domestic and foreign scholars conduct qualitative analysis on business models, problems, marketing strategies, development prospects and other aspects of community group-buying, and there are few research perspectives based on consumer behavior. The only studies are mostly focused on consumers' initial participation intention, rather than consumers' continuous use intention. However, in a market dominated by consumers, their willingness to continue to use determines their future development and is the key driving force for the ultimate success of community group buying. On the other hand, some studies have shown that certain characteristics of leaders can affect consumers' perceived trust and willingness to participate in community group-buying[1], but in fact, different types of leaders have different forms of interaction, mainly divided into relationship-oriented and task-oriented, and consumers' attitudes and behaviors will also change due to different interaction modes. What are the specific manifestations of these changes? Whether it contributes to the master feature's contribution to users' willingness to persist is unclear.

Based on this, this paper intends to take SOR theory as the logical framework to deeply explore the influencing factors of information source characteristics on the continuous use intention of community group purchase users, and on this basis, focus on the differences between two different interaction modes. On the one hand, it provides a new perspective for improving the continuous use intention of users. On the other hand, it is intended to provide a reference for enhancing the stickiness of users and further improving the business model of community group-buying.

2 Theoretical basis and research hypothesis

In marketing, trust is related to the degree of confidence and dependence on a trading partner. With the maturity of e-commerce, a large number of business transactions have been transferred from offline to online, and trust has become a key factor affecting online "space transactions". According to different trusted objects, trust can be divided into interpersonal trust and system trust. Pizzutti[2] believes that in Internet e-commerce, consumers' trust based on system and merchant will affect consumers' purchase intention. Hsu[3] divided online shopping trust into four types: website, merchant, intermediary and group members. In community group buying, the purchasing situation extends from offline to online, and online in turn supports offline. Therefore, this study divides consumer trust in this situation into interpersonal trust and platform trust with reference to Pizzutti[2]. Interpersonal trust refers to the degree of trust between consumers and the leader, which is a recognition and expectation of the professional ability, service, integrity and other characteristics of the leader, and platform trust refers to the degree of trust between consumers and the group buying platform, including trust in platform reputation, service, integrity and other aspects.

In communication, interaction mainly refers to a kind of social activity in which individuals or groups interact with each other through information transmission. With the wide application of interaction, its connotation is constantly enriched. In the field of Internet, it mainly refers to the interactive relationship[4] between users, media and information. At present, there are many types of interaction. Sheth[5] classifies interaction into three types: interactive oriented, self-oriented and task-oriented based on interaction style; Rafaeli[6] classifies interaction into three types: one-way, reactive and fully interactive based on interaction form; Chen[7] classifies interaction into task-oriented and relationship-oriented based on interaction mode between e-commerce anchors and consumers. In community group buying, different types of leaders general y have different forms of online interaction. Based on the research of Chen[7], it is divided into two types: task-oriented interaction that helps to achieve consumers' shopping goals, and relationship-oriented interaction that makes consumers' shopping experience more pleasant. Although there are two types of interaction in community group-buying, task-oriented and relationship-oriented, it is still unclear how consumers' attitudes and behaviors differ under these two interaction modes, and further research is needed to investigate the differences in consumers' willingness to continue using different interaction modes.

2.1 The influence of leader information source characteristics on interpersonal trust

First, professionalism and its influence. Goldsmith[8] believes that professionalism comes from knowledge of things. In community group buying, the professionalism of the head mainly means that the head has the professional background knowledge related to the product, and uses the relevant knowledge, experience and skills to sell or provide services to consumers[9]. Generally speaking, the professionalism of the information source will affect consumers' trust and attitude towards it, and then affect their purchase intention[10].

Cai[11] pointed out that interaction and experience have a direct impact on consumer trust. Zhao's research[12] shows that the interaction between consumers and consumers or between consumers and customer service will have a positive impact on consumers' trust in shops. Compared with relationship-oriented interaction, when consumers participate in task-oriented interaction, the more professional the leader is, the more informative content will be provided, thus reducing the uncertainty of consumers, which may increase consumers' trust in the leader. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1a: Professionalism significantly affects consumers' trust in the head;

H1b: When the leader is task-oriented interaction, the positive influence of the leader's professionalism on interpersonal trust will be enhanced.

Second, friendliness and its influence. Celeste believes that friendliness refers to the atmosphere and feeling of psychological and emotional intimacy created by social networks[13]. In the community group buying, the friendliness of the leader mainly comes from two aspects. First, the consumers are all offline actual users, and the leader has a relationship with some consumers as neighbors or friends; The second is to build intimate relationships with consumers through online communities. Creating an intimate atmosphere and feeling in the community through "online + offline" will positively affect consumers' judgment on the reputation and product quality of merchants, reduce consumers' risk perception[14], enhance consumers' trust in the leader, and further influence consumer behavior. Wu[15] found that relationship-oriented interaction can make consumers feel happy and affect their emotions when shopping online. In

the community group-buying, compared with task-oriented interaction, the atmosphere of relationship-oriented interaction is more friendly, pays more attention to the emotional value of consumers, and it is easier to establish intimate interpersonal relationships[16]. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2a: Friendliness significantly affects consumers' trust in the leader;

H2b: When the interaction is relationship-oriented, the approachability has more significant influence on interpersonal trust.

Third, relationship strength and its influence. Relationship strength can be divided into strong relationship and weak relationship. Among them, the weak relationship can be used as a "bridge" in the community group purchase, which can make more people contact, generate information value, and contribute to the formation of social cohesion. Strong relationships can enhance the cohesion of the community, thus establishing a closer social connection and generating more and deeper emotional wisdom[17]. In fact, research has found that people are more likely to trust and accept the behavior of those with whom they have a close relationship[18,19]. In the community group-buying, compared with task-oriented interaction, relationship-oriented interaction shortens the psychological distance between consumers and the leader by arousing the pleasure of consumers, turning the weak relationship into a strong one and enhancing the sense of trust[20]. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3a: Relationship strength significantly affects consumers' trust in the leader;

H3b: Relationship strength significantly influenced interpersonal trust when it was relationship-oriented interaction.

2.2 The influence of platform information source characteristics on platform trust

Based on the technology acceptance model and with reference to the studies of DAVIS and other scholars, perceived usefulness is defined as the degree to which consumers perceive community group-buying to save time and facilitate shopping according to their own experience or observation. Perceived usability is defined as how easy it is for consumers to perceive how easy it is to learn and use community group-buying.

Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are mostly studied together as factors influencing consumers' use intention in e-commerce. Convenience, security and service quality perceived by consumers all have a positive impact on their perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, thus enhancing their group buying intention[21,22]. In community group buying, when consumers feel more about the time efficiency, convenience and benefits, rich categories and simple operation process brought by community group buying, the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of the platform are stronger, their perceived value of the community group buying platform will also increase, thus enhancing their trust in the platform. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Consumers' perceived usefulness to the community group-buying platform significantly affects their trust in the platform.

H5: Consumers' perceived ease of use of community group buying platform significantly affects their trust in the platform.

2.3 The impact of interpersonal trust on platform trust

Trust transfer theory holds that an individual's trust in a subject is transferred to another unknown subject through the connection between two subjects[23]. Chen J[24] found that consumers' trust in members can be transformed into trust in the community, which leads to continuous purchase intention of users. Parboteah[25] believes that relational-oriented interaction will have a positive impact on consumers' emotions. In community group-buying, compared with task-oriented interaction, relationship-oriented interaction is more inclined to focus on establishing intimate relationship and emotional communication, and consumers are more likely to have positive attitudes and emotions toward the leader, and then transfer such positive attitudes and emotions to the community group-buying platform, generate trust in the platform, and affect consumers' final willingness to use it. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6a: Consumers' trust in the leader significantly affects their trust in the community group-buying platform;

H6b: When the leader is relationship-oriented interaction, the influence of consumers' interpersonal trust on platform trust will be enhanced.

2.4 The impact of consumer trust on users' willingness to continue using

Previous studies have proved that there is a positive relationship between trust and purchase intention. Zhao J D[26] prove through research that consumers' trust in merchants can be transformed into trust in brands, and when consumers trust merchants and brands, their purchase intention will be sustained. And Trust is seen as a key factor affecting the success of virtual trading, which can prompt traders to adopt a positive attitude, which in turn triggers purchase intentions[27]. When consumers participate in relationship-oriented interaction, pleasant shopping experience will enhance immersion, reduce the perception of uncertainty and risk in the transaction, increase the degree of trust in the leader, and then more willing to continue to using. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7a: Consumers' trust in leader significantly affects their willingness to continue using;

H7b: Consumers' trust in community group buying platform significantly affects their willingness to continue using;

H7c: When the leader is relationship-oriented interaction, the influence of consumers' interpersonal trust on their intention to continue using will be enhanced.

3 Research Design

The research object of this paper is the members who participate in community group buying, and the data is mainly collected by snowballing. In order to make the subjects feel the real buying environment, the same chat interface of WeChat group is designed to ensure that the subjects can imagine the interaction with the head of the group during the usual group purchase. With regard to the stimulation materials of different types of interaction of heads of delegations, the author studied the experimental design of relevant literature, based on the definitions of "task-oriented" and "relationship-oriented", collected users' experiences of participating in

community group buying, and adapted them according to real situations. The subjects browsed the situational materials according to the experimental guidance before the questionnaire and filled in the questionnaire.

The questionnaire design mainly includes the following parts: The first part explains the main purpose of the questionnaire and defines related concepts. Before the formal answer, the subjects were asked to answer whether they had ever participated in community group buying. The second part is to measure the variables studied in this paper. The third part collected the basic information of the subjects, including gender, age, education level, purchase frequency and so on.

3.1 Measurement of variables

According to the research content, this paper selects the relevant maturity scale that has been used by scholars at home and abroad, and adopts the translation-back translation program to avoid the influence of semantic differences. At the same time, combined with the research content of this paper, the five-level Likert scale is adopted and modified appropriately on this basis. The characteristics of the leader were measured by using the scale of Netemeye, Wiliams, Petrocai. For the measurement of platform characteristics, use DAVIS, Deng's scale for reference; Interpersonal trust and platform trust are measured by Ba, Pavlou et al. And measures of persistent use of willingness draw on scales compiled by Bhattacherjee, Shang D.

3.2 Pre-experiment

Before the formal investigation, 64 questionnaires were distributed for pre-investigation. In the pre-experiment, independent sample T-test was used to verify the effectiveness of the two interaction mode scenario materials provided by the leader in the process of community group purchase, and to verify whether the task-oriented interaction and relationship-oriented interaction scenarios provided in the experiment would make the subjects feel that there were significant differences in task-oriented and emotionality. In order to confirm that the relevant materials prepared can be used in the formal experiment.

The test results showed that the score of the task-oriented group was significantly higher in information than that of the relationship-oriented group (M task-oriented group =4.210, M relationship-oriented group =3.000, p=0.000), and the score of the relationship-oriented group was significantly higher in emotionality than that of the relationship-oriented group (M task-oriented group =2.864, P =0.000). M relationship-oriented type =3.313, p=0.000) This indicates successful manipulation of the leader interaction mode, and relevant situational materials can be used for formal experiments. Finally, a total of 640 questionnaires were sent out, and 599 effective questionnaires were processed.

4 Data analysis and results

4.1 Questionnaire reliability test

In order to test the feasibility of the constructed model and the reliability of the questionnaire, the collected data were analyzed for reliability and validity. The results showed that the Cronbach'α coefficient of each scale was above 0.7, indicating that the questionnaire had high

reliability and good internal consistency and stability. KMO test and Bartlett sphericity test were used to determine the validity of the questionnaire. Both KMO values were above 0.6 and significant at the level of 0.001, indicating that the scale was suitable for factor analysis.

According to the results of the structural equation model fit test, the X^2/df value is 2.496, less than 3, indicating that the model fit is ideal. The RMSEA value is 0.05, which is less than 0.08, indicating a good fit of the model. In addition, the equivalent values of GFI, NFI, IFI and CFI were all greater than 0.85 and close to 0.9, which met the adaptation criteria. The above indicators indicate that the model constructed in this paper has a good degree of fitting.

4.2 Hypothesis Testing

According to Table 1, it is assumed that the path coefficients of H1a, H2a, H3a, H4, H5, H6a, H7a and H7b are significant at 1% level, so these eight hypotheses are all valid.

Table 1. Path coefficients of the theoretical model

Hypot hesis	Paths	std.	S.E.	t-value	P	Results
H1a	Professionalism -->Interpersonal trust	0.316	0.06	5.18	* * *	Support
H2a	Friendliness -->Interpersonal trust	0.246	0.049	4.374	* * *	Support
H3a	Relationship Strength -->Interpersonal trust	0.37	0.042	6.284	* * *	Support
H4	Perceived Usefulness -->Platform trust	0.439	0.101	5.862	* * *	Support
H5	Perceived Ease of Use -->Platform Trust	0.291	0.088	4.235	* * *	Support
H6a	Interpersonal Trust -->Platform Trust	0.189	0.058	3.744	* * *	Support
H7a	Interpersonal trust --> Willingness to continue using	0.253	0.046	4.549	* * *	Support
H7b	Platform Trust -->Willingness to continue using	0.659	0.048	9.919	* * *	Support

Divide the sample into task-oriented and relationship-oriented groups based on the situational material, and delve into whether there are differences between task-oriented and relationship-oriented interactions in the path that affects the intention to continue using. On this basis, a multi-group structural equation model was constructed to further verify the research hypothesis. In order to explore whether the bias of the subjects in scoring the questionnaire under different situations will affect the research conclusion, and whether the grouped data is suitable for the multi-group structural equation model constructed based on theoretical assumptions, a multi-group congruence test is needed. According to the order from loose to strict, the unrestricted model, measurement coefficient model, structural coefficient model, structural covariance model, structural residual model and measurement residual model are set up. The results show that the RMSEA values of the multi- group models are all less than 0.08, the equivalent values of GFI, NFI, IFI and CFI are all greater than 0.85, and the X^2/df values are all less than 3. All the measured values meet the adaptation criteria, indicating that the model has a good fitting result with the sample data.

When the preset model is true, the p-value of the structure coefficient model is 0.018, which is less than the significance level 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there are differences in the influence path of community group purchase users' intention to continue using under different interaction modes of the leader.

On this basis, referring to the research method of Yan[28], the difference between task-oriented orientation and relationship-oriented orientation is reflected in two paths, that is, relationship strength has a significant difference on interpersonal trust, and interpersonal trust has a significant difference on continuous use intention.

In combination with Figure 1, it can be seen that (1) the positive impact of relationship strength on interpersonal trust is significantly different between the two groups. The critical ratio value of path coefficient =-2.148 (P < 0.05), and the path coefficient of the task-oriented group (b=0.285***) is smaller than that of the relationship-oriented group (b=0.474*). Based on this, hypothesis H3b is valid; (2) The positive effect of interpersonal trust on persistence intention is significantly different between the two groups. The critical ratio value of path coefficient is =-3.036 (P < 0.01), and the path coefficient of the task-oriented group (b=0.109***) is smaller than that of the relationship-oriented group (b=0.411*). Therefore, the hypothesis H7c is valid. In other words, when the group leader is in relationship-oriented interaction, the positive influence of consumers' interpersonal trust on the intention to continue using will be enhanced.
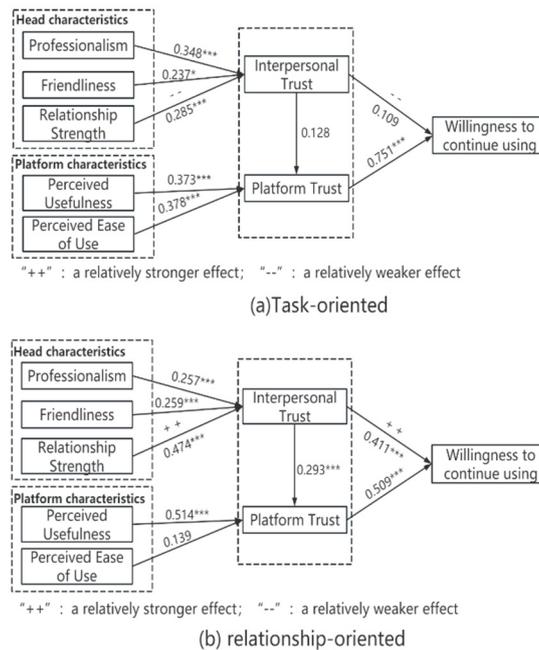

Fig. 1. Path coefficients and inter-group differences of multi-group structural equation models

4.3 Discussion of hypothesis testing results

Assuming that H1a, H2a, H3a, H4, H7b are all verified in the sample population and group samples, it shows that no matter which interaction mode the leader adopts, the characteristics of

the leader can affect the level of consumers' trust in the leader, and consumers' knowledge of the usefulness of the platform will also positively affect consumers' trust in the platform, thus enhancing their willingness to continue using.

It is assumed that H5, H6a, H7a are verified in the population sample, but there are unverified cases in the group sample. Among them, in task-oriented interaction, H6a and H7a were not verified, that is, interpersonal trust had no significant effect on platform trust and interpersonal trust had no significant effect on continuous use intention. In relationship-oriented interactions, H5 was not verified, that is, the impact of perceived ease of use on platform trust was not significant.

Assuming that H3b is true, it indicates that for relationship-oriented leaders, the positive impact of relationship strength on consumers' interpersonal trust will be enhanced. If H7c is established, it indicates that for relationship-oriented leaders, the positive impact of consumer interpersonal trust on the willingness to continue using community group buying will be enhanced. If H1b is not established, it indicates that the positive impact of professionalism on consumers' interpersonal trust will not be enhanced by task-oriented leaders. Assuming that H2b is not true, it indicates that the positive effect of friendliness on consumers' interpersonal trust is not enhanced by relationship-oriented leaders. Assuming that H6b is not true, it indicates that the positive impact of consumer interpersonal trust on platform trust will not be enhanced because of the relationship-oriented leader.

5   Conclusions

Based on the survey data, this study reveals the ways in which leader characteristics and platform characteristics in community group-buying affect consumers' intention to continue using through consumer trust, and the effects of different leader interaction modes on consumers' attitudes and behaviors. This study has the following two theoretical significance: First, existing literature has discussed consumers' intention of first use in community group buying, and this study further reveals the path of influencing consumers' intention of continuous use from the perspective of information source characteristics; Second, existing studies have explored the impact of the characteristics of community group-buying platforms on consumers' group-buying intentions. Based on this, this study concludes through comparative analysis that different group-buying interaction patterns will cause changes in consumers' emotions and behaviors, as well as the resulting changes that will affect their intention to continue using. Based on the above research conclusions, the following countermeasures and suggestions are put forward:

(1) Attach importance to the quality of interaction and choose the appropriate interaction style. The research found that whether it is task-oriented interaction or relationship-oriented interaction, consumers will have trust in the leader and will continue to want to buy. Based on this, the head should first pay attention to the real-time interaction with consumers, learn interactive skills and hot field methods, timely feedback to consumers' problems, enhance the activity of the community, and use a variety of incentives to promote consumer participation, so that they have a sense of immersive consumption, create a good community atmosphere, so as to improve their shopping experience. Then, the leader has to create characteristics according to his own characteristics, so as to form a unique mode of interaction.

(2) Attach importance to the degree of embedment of the relationship between the leader and the members. The results show that the strength of the relationship between consumers and the leader can affect their willingness to continue using the leader through influencing consumers' trust in the leader, and compared with task-oriented interaction, relationship-oriented interaction has a more significant impact on this path. This requires the leader to actively communicate and share with consumers, enhance interaction, increase the familiarity and relationship intensity between each other, and establish more emotional connections as much as possible.

(3) Strengthen the training of heads and pay attention to the establishment of trust mechanisms. It is found that consumer trust in leader can affect their intention to continue to use, and relationship-oriented interaction has a more significant impact on this path than task-oriented interaction. It can be seen that when consumers choose the leader, they are mostly based on the professionalism, friendliness and relationship strength of the leader. Based on this, enterprises need to understand which characteristics of the head can arouse consumer emotions and behavior, appropriately improve the entry threshold of the head, choose the head with relevant experience and integrity, and control the quality of the head from the source.

There are still some shortcomings in this study that are worth exploring in the future: First, the sample source is relatively simple. Considering the convenience of data collection, the questionnaires in this study were mainly distributed online, with a large number of young people and a small number of middle-aged and elderly people. In the future research, the sample size can be further expanded from age, occupation and other aspects, so as to obtain a universal conclusion; Second, the theoretical model still has a lot of room for improvement. This study mainly focuses on the impact of two characteristics of the head and the platform on consumers' intention to continue using, but does not pay attention to the impact of group buying products on consumers. Future research can consider product attributes, product prices, product quality and other factors.

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