

## Consumption Trends and Development Countermeasures of Outdoor Sportswear Industry- Take Wuhan as an example

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**Abstract.** Based on the comprehensive effects of factors such as policy-driven, economic development and traffic improvement, the outdoor sports industry has developed vigorously and has become a bright spot in the sports industry. In particular, outdoor clothing has outstanding advantages and distinctive features, and has been widely favored by consumers, becoming a leader in outdoor products. The literature data method, questionnaire survey method and field survey method were used to investigate the consumption trends of outdoor sportswear in Wuhan. The consumer behavior theory was combined with the national outdoor clothing consumption data to analyze the consumption trends. The study believes that the outdoor sportswear market in Wuhan has the characteristics of large scale, deep potential and good development. Research suggests that related companies can innovate and design outdoor clothing in terms of appearance, performance and comfort, and increase marketing efforts in terms of promotion, pricing, product line and brand positioning.

### Introduction

As a healthy lifestyle, outdoor sports encourage people to stay away from the hustle and bustle of the city, enter into nature and experience the unknown world<sup>[1]</sup>, and it is also gradually becoming the best choice for urban residents to travel on holidays. According to COCA statistics, the annual retail sales of outdoor products in China increased from 148 million yuan to 22.19 billion yuan from 2000 to 2015, with a GAGR (annual compound growth rate) of 43.08%; the total retail sales of outdoor products increased from 2.38 billion yuan in 2007 to 23.28 billion yuan in 2016, with a CAGR of 28.84%<sup>[2]</sup>. Driven by multiple positive factors, it is estimated that the output value of China's outdoor products market will reach 300 billion yuan in 2020<sup>[3]</sup>. The good development trend indicates that the outdoor sports goods industry has great potential for development.

At present, the total number of outdoor sports brands active in the Chinese market has reached 903, including 454 domestic brands and 449 foreign brands<sup>[4]</sup>. Many brands offer consumers a variety of choices. Outdoor sportswear is no longer just the exclusive clothing for people to participate in outdoor sports activities, but also the daily choice of consumers with its excellent features. However, in terms of design and marketing, whether the current outdoor sportswear can truly meet the needs of consumers for differentiated, diversified and multi-level needs, and it is worthy of consideration by relevant companies. Based on this, a detailed survey on the current situation of outdoor sportswear

Sales and consumer behavior in Wuhan is conducted, and the development trend of outdoor sportswear consumption is further explored, and relevant theoretical suggestions and practical countermeasures are proposed to promote the healthy and sustainable development of China's outdoor sportswear industry and even outdoor sports products industry.

### Research Methods

**Documentary Law.** Taking outdoor sports goods, outdoor sports goods market, outdoor sportswear, and outdoor sports marketing as the key words, from the CNKI, Baidu library, EBSCO

and other databases to access relevant literature, from the outdoor sports related portal website to obtain the outdoor products industry in Wuhan and other cities in recent years. Development and consumption data of the apparel industry.

**Field Trips.** Visit Wuhan business district to investigate the number of outdoor sports brands and the number of similar clothing brands in the business district.

**Questionnaire Method.** The theme of the questionnaire of outdoor sportswear (including 19 questions) is to use the consumer's purchase situation, consumer experience and demand as the type of problem, to the public and the college students' consumers surveyed (including 69 males and 55 female consumers) designed the "Outdoor Sportswear Needs Questionnaire". A total of 124 copies were distributed and 124 copies were recovered, with an efficiency of 100%.

### **Analysis on the Consumption Trend of Outdoor Sportswear Industry——Taking Wuhan City as an Example**

**Analysis of the Current Situation of Outdoor Sportswear Sales: Taking Wuhan as an Example.** The development orientation of Wuhan City is a “new first-line” city with strong comprehensive strength, rapid economic development, diverse population structure, developed transportation and abundant outdoor sports resources. Wuhan has certain representativeness in many aspects. Based on national data, the author chooses Wuhan to conduct case investigation and analysis.

**Field Visits in Wuhan.** Table 1 shows the proportion of outdoor sports brands and similar clothing brands owned by major commercial locations in Wuhan. The data shows that the highest proportion is 23% and the lowest is 7%. The total number of outdoor sports brands in the nine shopping malls in the four business districts surveyed was 43, and the total number of similar clothing brands was 302, accounting for 14.2%.

**Table 1.** Physical store outdoor brand proportion survey

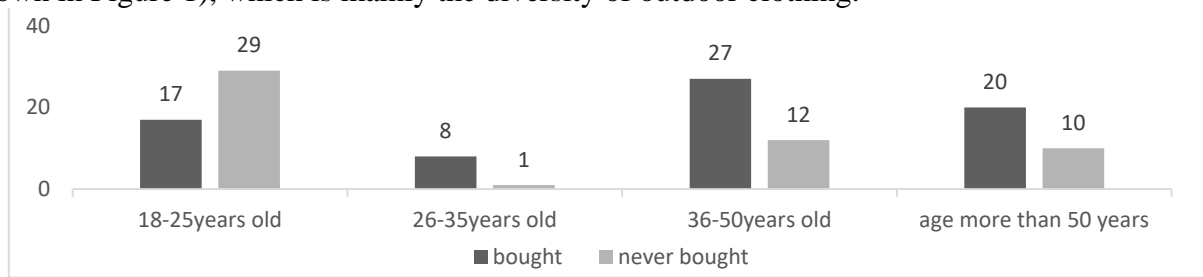
Trading Area	Shopping Mall	Number of Outdoor Brands	Percentage
Optical Valley	Grand Ocean Store	6/26	23%
	World City Plaza	3/36	8%
	Luxiang Plaza	5/71	7%
	Chicony Square	7/34	20.5%
Jiedaokou	New World Plaza	3/27	11%
	Yin Tai Plaza	2/21	9.5%
Han Street	Han Street	4/29	14%
	Yin Tai Plaza	3/15	20%
Zhongnan Road	Zhongnan Plaza	10/43	23%

It is not difficult to see through the tabular data that the outdoor sports brands in some commercial districts in Wuhan account for a relatively good proportion of similar clothing brands in the mall. Most commercial districts have at least two outdoor brands.

At present, the total consumption of outdoor products in China has continued to rise. Moreover, due to the impact of the economic environment, the growth rate has been decreasing year by year, but the overall growth trend is still small. More and more traditional sports brands have entered the outdoor sporting goods industry one after another, but professional outdoor sports brands still dominate the main position in the market.

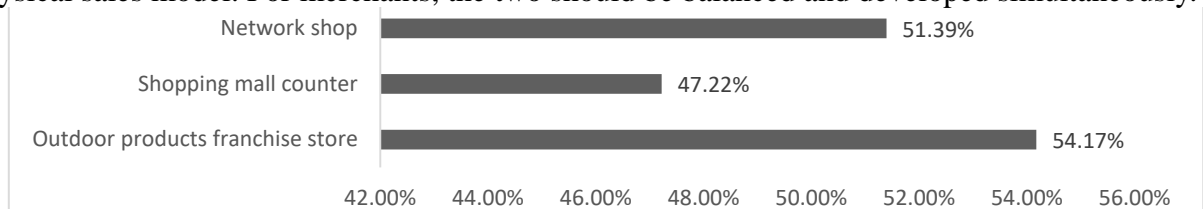
### **Analysis of Consumer Demand for Outdoor Sportswear in Wuhan.**

**Consumer Age.** Consumers at different ages have different consumer preferences. At present, the population of outdoor apparel consumers in China is mainly middle-aged and young people (as shown in Figure 1), which is mainly the diversity of outdoor clothing.



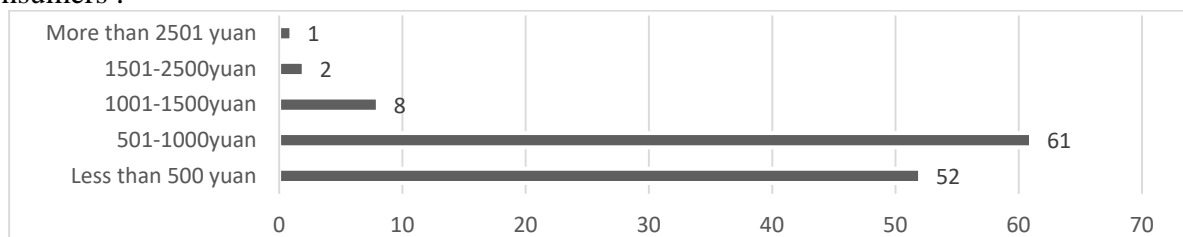
**Fig. 1** Consumer age and purchases

**Shopping Channels.** According to the survey of consumers' outdoor sportswear purchase channels, the choice of online and offline shopping channels is not much different (as shown in Figure 2). Among them, offline shopping channels include shopping mall counters and outdoor sports brand franchised stores, and the online sales platform has not completely replaced the physical sales model. For merchants, the two should be balanced and developed simultaneously.



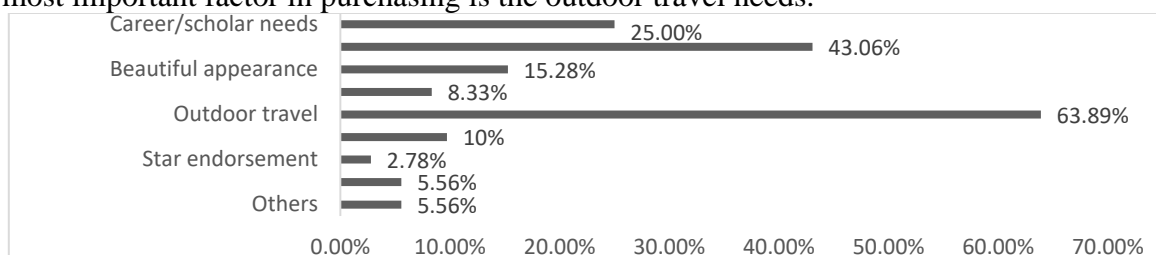
**Fig. 2** Consumer outdoor sportswear purchase channel

**Price Range.** Psychological pricing strategy is a commodity pricing strategy based on consumer's psychological expectations to determine the price of consumers it is of great significance to find out the psychological pricing of consumers(As shown in Figure 3). Most consumers' price expectations for outdoor sportswear range from 501 yuan to 1,000 yuan, and the outdoor sportswear of this price segment is more popular with consumers. Secondly, the two price segments below 500 yuan and 1001-1500 yuan also account for a certain proportion. It can be concluded that the outdoor sportswear within the current stage of 1,500 yuan is more favored by consumers .



**Fig. 3** Consumers' acceptance of outdoor sportswear prices

**Purchase Factors.** According to the survey, the main factors for consumers to buy outdoor sportswear are outdoor travel needs, functional needs and professional needs (as shown in Figure 4). The most important factor in purchasing is the outdoor travel needs.



**Fig. 4** Consumer outdoor sportswear purchase factors

**Analysis of Outdoor Sportswear Consumption Trends.** Based on the consumer behavior theory, starting from the subjective factors such as economic income, personal interest, and objective factors such as policy introduction and industrial development, this paper analyzes and predicts the sales trend of outdoor sportswear industry.

**Subjective Factors.** (1) Economic Income. As China gradually enters the well-off society in an all-round way, the overall economic level has been improved, personal income has been increased year by year, the disposable income has increased. As the material basis of economic conditions, supporting people's consumption, the current growth of China's outdoor clothing sales is inseparable from the increase in personal economic income, and will show a sustainable growth trend. (2) Personal Interest. As a physical activity that is pleasant in body and mind, close to nature and self-training, and outdoor sportswear naturally becomes the first choice for people to participate in, which is especially favored by the masses. (3) Age Structure. The average life span of Chinese residents is getting longer and longer, and people's healthy needs are also rising. In the past, the elderly used to choose to work at home or take care of themselves. Now they are more willing to go out to participate in physical exercise activities (such as outdoor hiking, climbing, etc.). And more and more elderly people will buy outdoor clothing. Therefore, the age line of Chinese people participating in outdoor sports is constantly expanding, which will correspondingly continue to increase the sales volume of outdoor sportswear. (4) Professional Nature. Work needs to be the main reason for some outdoor workers to choose outdoor sportswear. The traceability is highly recognized for the high quality functionality and excellent ductility of outdoor apparel. The characteristics of outdoor clothing will become the first choice for more and more people in professional clothing.

**Objective Factors.** Specific to outdoor sports, it is reflected in factors such as policy introduction, industrial development and technological innovation. (1) Policy Introduction. The Party Central Committee and the State Council have high hopes for China's sports undertakings; in addition, the Ministry of Education, the State Sports General Administration and other ministries have successively issued documents to provide industrial popularization and sports industry development. With a certain degree of policy support, this signal indicates that sports are growing into important industrial sectors. (2) Industrial Development. The sales of outdoor sportswear products cannot leave the rapid development of the outdoor sports service industry. The action plan jointly issued by the National Development and Reform Commission and other departments has promoted the development of China's outdoor industry to some extent. In addition, more and more outdoor sports brands have begun to focus on the transition of products from specialization to popularization, which is a development trend of the current outdoor sports market <sup>[5]</sup>. (3) Technological Innovation. The main feature of outdoor sportswear is the combination of functionality, comfort and portability, so outdoor sportswear has higher requirements for fabrics<sup>[6]</sup>. Since the development of outdoor sportswear, functional requirements have driven product innovation. In order to adapt to different needs and different wearable environments, technical fabrics such as Gore-Tex, Coolmax, MTD, Polartec and so on researched and developed. The design of outdoor sportswear is different from daily clothing. Aiming at the complex and severe outdoor wearing environment, it is necessary to meet the basic functions of warmth preservation, water-proof, ventilation, perspiration and endurance, as well as the increasingly mature intelligent monitoring functions of safety positioning, sports detection, etc.<sup>[7]</sup> With the update of technology, outdoor sportswear will certainly develop more safe and practical functions, further highlighting the advantages of strong functionality of outdoor clothing. The variability of clothing refers to a variety of dressing effects on a clothing, so that the clothing has a variety of wearing styles and a variety of clothes have a variety of wearing or using functions<sup>[8]</sup>. From the perspective of consumers, the more combinations of outdoor sportswear, the more adaptable to the ever-changing wearing environment, greatly increasing the chances for people to choose to wear outdoor clothing.

## **Outdoor Sportswear Industry Development Countermeasures**

According to the research and analysis results, combined with the theory of marketing, outdoor

sports marketing and other disciplines, based on the perspective of the company, the following countermeasures are proposed for product research and development, production and marketing.

#### **Combine Consumer Demand and Broaden Research and Development Ideas.**

**Appearance.** For the rapidly developing outdoor apparel industry, relevant enterprises should fully understand the lifestyle and needs of consumers, grasp the popular development trend of outdoor sportswear, and design differentiated and personalized products, in order to form the core competitiveness of the brand<sup>[9]</sup>. Outdoor sportswear should be based on the original outdoor features, add more appearance styles, increase and decrease the details, design a variety of products for different aesthetics. In short, outdoor apparel companies should focus on the characteristics of outdoor sports, draw on the design experience of other apparel, and design and develop a multi-series of products.

**Performance Aspects.** Facing the increasingly fierce market competition, the innovation of outdoor clothing is even more important. According to the survey, consumers are expecting more from the functionality and appearance of outdoor clothing. Enterprises should attach great importance to and refer to consumers' opinions and suggestions, and innovate to create products that better meet consumer needs by strengthening scientific research.

**Comfort Aspects.** Increase the research and development and application of new fabrics, and enhance the wearing comfort of outdoor apparel products in different scenarios. At the same time, outdoor sporting goods companies should strengthen the labeling of fabrics, design and functions of products, and guide consumers to correctly select products that suit their needs according to different purposes.

#### **Increase Marketing Efforts to Accurately Target the Crowd.**

**Promotional Aspects.** Outdoor products companies have the responsibility and obligation to strengthen outdoor sports education for ordinary people. According to the survey, most consumers who do not purchase outdoor sports related products are not exposed to or do not like outdoor sports. Only by mobilizing users' emotions, let consumers understand and participate in outdoor sports, can outdoor sports products will become more popular. At the same time, create brand features, increase brand propaganda, select popular stars to carry out brand endorsement, so that the majority of consumers pay attention to outdoor sports brands; increase sponsorship for outdoor events, and increase brand exposure degree.

**Price Aspect.** The price of outdoor sportswear that consumers are willing to accept is more than 1,500 yuan, which proves that ordinary consumers' attitude of pursuing high quality and low price. A large number of similar products drive down the price standards of the industry. People can buy their favorite outdoor sportswear at a more civilian price, which is one of the factors for the continuous increase of outdoor sportswear sales. However, it is worth noting that the market competition cannot rely solely on low-end and mid-end products, but rather on rationally setting prices according to brand positioning.

**Product Line Aspects.** Relevant enterprises should reasonably plan their product line. For different groups of people, they can be divided into high-end products with high professionalism and high performance, and low-end and mid-end products with appearance and performance as the supplement; relative products suitable for urban, light outdoor and professional outdoor shall be arranged according to different needs; for the age of consumers, the layout is suitable for a variety of consumption abilities and aesthetic concepts.

**Positioning Aspects.** Through market research, it can be understood that the actual demand for outdoor sports products in the target area; through reasonable positioning, it is identified that the competitive market of its own brand, endow the product with unique brand characteristics, form differentiated competition, and establish product competitive advantages.

#### **Summary**

With the rapid development of the sports industry, the outdoor industry has entered the fast lane,

and the outdoor apparel industry has shown a prosperous momentum. At the same time, there has also been a decline in the growth rate, but the overall situation is slowly growing. It is undeniable that the outdoor sportswear sales trend is relatively good, but related products such as appearance, performance, comfort and other issues need to be improved. In view of this, outdoor sportswear companies can improve from product development, production, marketing and other aspects, while guiding consumer behavior, but also better promote the development of outdoor sports industry. It is believed that with the passage of time, outdoor sportswear will be widely recognized by the market and provide consumers with a more perfect wearing experience.

## Acknowledgements

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