Influencing Mechanism of Shaoxing High School Parents' Purchase Intention in Selection of Online Courses

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Abstract: The study investigates the influencing mechanisms behind Shaoxing High School parents' purchase intentions regarding online courses for their children's education. It identifies three primary factors: convenience, social influence, and performance expectations. Convenience pertains to the ease of access, flexibility, and user-friendliness of online platforms, significantly enhancing parents' willingness to enroll their children. Social influence highlights the impact of recommendations from peers and community members, reinforcing parents' confidence in their choices. Performance expectations focus on parents' beliefs about the educational outcomes of online courses, emphasizing the importance of perceived effectiveness and quality of instruction. These factors reveal a comprehensive framework that educational providers can leverage to tailor their offerings, thereby improving enrollment rates and student success in online learning environments. The findings underscore providers' need to address these key dimensions to enhance parental engagement and satisfaction in selecting educational programs based on the sample population of 380 high school parents.

Keywords: High School Parents, Purchase Intention, Online Courses

1. Introduction

Online education has become a popular way to learn, moving beyond the limits of traditional classrooms and physical materials. Both teachers and students benefit from various digital tools, such as interactive devices, e-learning courses, and e-textbooks. With advancements in artificial intelligence and big data, education is changing in form and content [1](Chen et al., 2021). These technologies allow students personalized learning experiences and give teachers better tools and resources. From a business standpoint, investing in online education allows companies to reach more people and achieve long-term profits through different revenue models. China's online education market is growing rapidly and shows excellent potential. Between 2016 and 2022, more people started using online education, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, when the need for online learning surged. China's "double reduction" policy has impacted the extracurricular education market by limiting offline education services[2]. As a result, online education platforms have become essential for parents and students looking for learning resources. This shift has increased competition in the market.

In 2022, China's online education market was valued at around 343.29 billion yuan, with significant growth in higher education, primary and secondary schools, and vocational training. The K-12 sector reached about 58.99 billion yuan, making up roughly 17.2% of the overall market. To adapt to policy changes and market needs, online education platforms must understand what influences user decisions [3] This means improving course

offerings and content to enhance product quality and user experience, and knowing the key factors affecting parents' choices when purchasing online courses. This understanding will help improve marketing efforts, build a positive reputation, and effectively engage communities. Our research will explore what influences parents' decisions to buy online courses and how these factors affect students' engagement in learning [4]

2. Research Objectives

This study explores the influencing mechanism of Shaoxing High School parents' purchase intention in the selection of online courses with the following objectives: (1) To examine the influencing mechanisms of the Shaoxing high school parents' purchase intention on online courses for their children based on convenience factors, social influence, and performance expectation. (2) To offer practical views for the online course platforms for improving the purchase intention of Shaoxing high school parents by enhancing their perceptual value and social expectations.

3. Theoretical Foundation

a. Definition of Technology Acceptance Model relating to Purchase Intention

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) helps us understand what influences parents' decisions to buy online courses for their high school kids. Two key factors are perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness [5]. Parents want user-friendly online learning platforms and believe these courses will benefit their children's academic success. Parents will likely enroll their kids if the platform is easy to navigate. Conversely, complicated platforms may deter them. Perceived usefulness hinges on parents' views of the courses' benefits, such as engagement and flexibility, compared to traditional schools. Social interactions and recommendations from others also influence their acceptance of online education, and the COVID-19 pandemic has made many parents more comfortable with these tools for supporting their children's learning. TAM is a valuable framework for understanding high school parents' intentions to purchase online courses. It highlights the importance of perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and social influences in guiding parents' decisions to invest in their children's online education[6]

b. Definition of Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) helps explain why high school parents buy online courses for their children. It identifies three main factors that affect their choices: attitudes, social pressure, and belief in their ability to complete the purchase [7]. First, parents' attitudes are essential when deciding whether to buy online courses. If parents see online education as practical, flexible, and helpful for their children's learning, they are more likely to purchase these courses. Their views can be shaped by personal experiences, school information, and the success they see in online learning. Next, social pressure influences parents. When deciding on online courses, they often consider what their friends, family, and teachers believe. If parents feel that people around them support online education or if online learning is popular in their community, they may be more likely to purchase. Finally, parents' belief in their ability to choose and manage online courses matters. This in-

cludes their comfort with technology, skill in picking the right courses, and ability to help their children learn online. Parents who feel confident in these areas are more likely to buy online courses. However, they may hesitate to purchase if they worry about not having the right skills or doubt the quality of online education. [8]

c. Definition of Terms

1) Purchase intention regarding high school online courses pertains to the likelihood that parents will choose to enroll their children in such programs. Several factors influence this decision-making process. Key considerations include the perceived quality of the course, how relevant it is to the child's educational needs, the flexibility it provides, and its potential to enhance academic performance. Parents typically evaluate the course's reputation, the instructors' qualifications, and the overall cost. Other parents' or educational institutions' recommendations can significantly shape their choices. Ultimately, purchase intention represents a blend of emotional and rational evaluations parents make regarding the value of online education for their children [9]

2) Convenience factors in parents' purchase intention of high school online courses refer to the ease and accessibility associated with enrolling their children in these programs. Parents consider how readily available the courses are, including the flexibility of scheduling that allows students to learn at their own pace. The simplicity of the enrollment process is also crucial; if it is straightforward and user-friendly, parents are more likely to proceed with the purchase. Additionally, the availability of technical support plays a significant role; parents feel more confident in their decision when they know assistance is readily available for navigating online platforms. Accessing course materials and resources from various devices enhances convenience, making it easier for students to engage with their studies[10]

3) Social influence plays a significant role in shaping parents' intentions when purchasing high school online courses, as it reflects how social interactions and community perceptions affect their decision-making process. The opinions and experiences of peers, family, and other parents often weigh heavily on their choices regarding online education. Endorsements from trusted individuals, such as friends or relatives who have had positive experiences with online courses, can significantly increase parents' openness to exploring these educational options for their children. Furthermore, the impact of social media and online reviews is crucial in this context. Parents commonly utilize social and educational forums to seek insights and feedback about specific online programs. Positive endorsements or testimonials can significantly influence parents' perceptions of a course's credibility and effectiveness, ultimately guiding their decisions [11]. Performance expectation influences parents' purchasing decisions regarding high school online courses. This concept refers to parents' beliefs about the effectiveness and advantages these courses will offer their children. They evaluate the potential of the online programs to meet specific educational objectives, enhance academic performance, and deliver a substantial learning experience. Several key factors contribute to shaping these expectations. These include the perceived quality of the curriculum, the instructors' qualifications, and the program's overall reputation. Parents often conduct thorough research and

compare online courses, focusing on important outcomes such as improved grades, skill development, and preparedness for future educational challenges [12]

4.   Conceptual Framework

This framework examines how convenience, social influence, and performance expectations affect parents' decisions to buy high school online courses in Shaoxing. Convenience means how easy it is to access online courses, how flexible the learning schedules are, and how easy the online platforms are to use. Parents prefer programs that let their children learn at home and their own pace. This reduces the challenges of traditional schooling. When parents see online courses as convenient, they are more likely to enroll their children, as it fits their desire for a simple educational experience[13] Social influence shapes how parents think about online education. This influence comes from the views and experiences of friends, family, and the community. In Shaoxing, parents often look for recommendations from other parents or education experts, which can either motivate or discourage them from choosing online courses. Positive reviews and community support can boost parents' confidence in these choices [14]. Performance expectations refer to what parents believe about how well online courses can help their children learn. This includes academic performance, skills gained, and the quality of education [15]. Parents tend to look at the program's reputation, the teachers' qualifications, and the success of past students. When parents believe in the benefits of online education, they are more likely to consider these courses for their children. The research core shows how convenience, social influence, and performance expectations impact parents' intentions to buy high school online courses in Shaoxing. By understanding these factors, educational providers can better meet the needs of parents in the area.
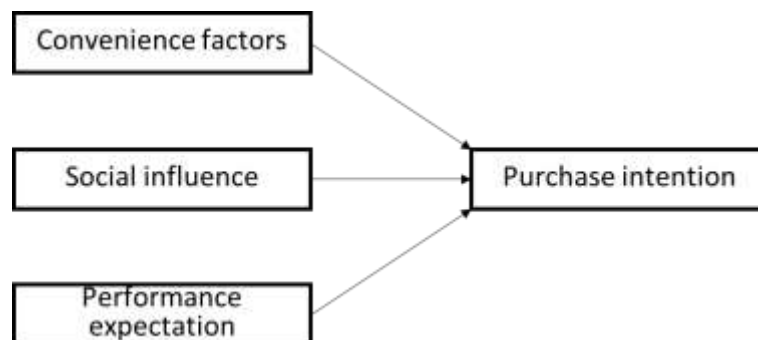

Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework

5.   Research Restriction

One key restriction in analyzing parents' attitudes and behaviors toward online education is the potential lack of accessible or updated data on local educational trends. This limitationcan hinder a comprehensive understanding of the subject. Additionally, cultural factors specific to Shaoxing may not be adequately considered, which could influence the interpretation of how societal norms affect purchasing intentions in online education. Another challenge is parents' varying levels of technological literacy; differences in comfort and familiarity with online

platforms can impact their perceptions of convenience and usability. Lastly, the rapidly changing landscape of online education necessitates ongoing research, as findings may quickly become outdated. Longitudinal studies are essential for effectively capturing shifts in trends and preferences over time.

6. Research Hypothesis

a) The Correlation between Convenience Factors and Purchase Intention

The hypothesis concerning the relationship between convenience factors and parents' intention to purchase online learning courses in Shaoxing suggests that an increase in perceived convenience may lead to a greater likelihood of parents opting for these educational options for their children. Aspects such as the accessibility of online courses, flexible learning schedules, and the user-friendliness of the platforms are believed to play a crucial role in shaping these intentions. When online learning is viewed as convenient, offering the ability to study from home without commuting and allowing for personalized pacing, parents are more likely to consider enrolling their children in these courses. Furthermore, the perception that online education can effectively fit busy lifestyles and provide a manageable educational experience may further enhance parents' intentions to invest in such learning opportunities [16]

H1:   There is no positive correlation between convenience factors and purchase intention in Shaoxing high school parents' purchase intention in online courses.

b) The Correlation between Social Influence and Purchase Intention

The hypothesis concerning the relationship between social influence and parents' intention to purchase online learning courses for their children in Shaoxing suggests that increased social influence may lead to a higher likelihood of purchase. This concept indicates that when parents encounter recommendations, testimonials, and endorsements from peers, family members, and community leaders, their confidence in the quality and effectiveness of online education tends to grow. Specifically, it is proposed that parents who receive positive feedback from their social networks are more inclined to view online courses favorably and consider enrolling their children in these programs. Additionally, the impact of community norms and shared experiences can further amplify this inclination, as parents frequently seek validation and assurance from their surroundings when making educational choices [17]

H2 There is no positive correlation between social influence and purchase intention in Shaoxing high school parents' purchase intention in online courses.

c) The Correlation between Performance Expectation and Purchase Intention

The hypothesis concerning the relationship between performance expectations and parents' intentions to purchase online learning courses in Shaoxing suggests that an increase in performance expectations will likely lead to a greater willingness among parents to invest in these educational options for their children. This perspective emphasizes that when parents perceive online education as effective in enhancing academic performance and meeting their educational aspirations, they are more inclined to commit financially. Moreover, it is posited that factors such as parents' evaluations of instructional quality, the reputation of the online programs, and the success rates of past students play a crucial role in shaping their purchase intentions. High expectations related to the educational benefits of online courses, such as skill development and overall academic achievement, are expected to significantly enhance the likelihood of parents enrolling their children in these programs [18]

H3   There is no positive correlation between performance expectation and purchase intention in Shaoxing high school parents' purchase intention in online courses.

7.   Research Methods

a.   Population and Sample

This research population consists of parents of high school students in Shaoxing, China, who are involved in purchasing online study courses. A sample of 380 was collected for this study's analysis in March 2025 through the WeChat Survey Platform.

This study's minimum research sample size is based on the study of [19]

1) The margin of error (confidence interval) – 95%

2) Standard deviation 0.5

3) 95% - Z Score = 1.96

4) Sample size formula = (Z-score) ^{2} * Std Dev*(1-StdDev) / (margin of error) ^{2}

5) $(1.96)^2$ x 0.5(0.5) / $(0.05)^2$

6) (3.8416 x 0.25) / 0.0025

7) 0.9604 / 0.0025 = 384

8) 384 respondents would be needed for this study based on a confidence level of 95%

b.   Research Model Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is widely used to measure the degree of association between different variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient is commonly used to test the correlation. The value of the correlation coefficient (r) indicates the strength of the correlation between variables, while the significance level of the correlation is shown in the P-value.

c.   Correlation Analysis of User Belief and Purchase Behaviour

The correlation coefficient r between user belief and purchase behaviour is 0.767, and P=0.000 is less than 0.01. Thus, user belief significantly correlates with the purchase behaviour

d. **Correlation Analysis of Perceived Value and Purchase Behaviour**

The correlation coefficient r between perceived value and purchase behaviour is 0.767, and P=0.000 is less than 0.01. Thus, perceived value significantly correlates with purchase behaviour.

e. **Correlation Analysis of Social Influence and Purchase Behaviour**

The correlation coefficient r between social influence and purchase behaviour is 0.803, and P=0.000 is less than 0.01. Thus, social influence significantly correlates with purchase behavior

8. Research Result

Recent research looked at how convenience factors, social influence, and performance expectations affect the decisions of high school parents in Shaoxing when choosing online study courses. The results show that these factors play an essential role. Convenience is a significant factor. Parents who find online courses easy to access and flexible, with simple Learning tools and schedules, are more likely to want to buy these programs for their children. They prefer these options to avoid the difficulties of traditional schooling [20] Social influence also matters a lot. Parents are more likely to consider online education when they hear positive feedback from friends, family, and community members. Social network support and good reviews increase their confidence in making these choices [21] Performance expectations add to this. Parents who expect online courses to improve their children's grades and skills are more willing to invest in them. Parents look at how qualified instructors are and how successful other students have been, which affects their willingness to enroll their children [22] In summary, the research shows that convenience, social support, and expectations about performance all influence parents' decisions to purchase online courses. Addressing these areas will make online learning options more appealing for high school students in Shaoxing.

H1   There is a positive correlation between convenience factors and purchase intention in Shaoxing high school parents' purchase intention in online courses.

H2   There is a positive correlation between social influence and purchase intention in Shaoxing high school parents' purchase intention in online courses.

H3   There is a positive correlation between performance expectation and purchase intention in Shaoxing high school parents' purchase intention in online courses.

9. Conclusions

The impact of online high school courses on student education in China is significant, especially with the rapid changes in technology and society. To improve student learning outcomes

through online classes, schools and policymakers should focus on a few key areas. First, schools need to build a strong technology infrastructure. As online learning grows, providing students access to reliable internet and digital devices is essential. This investment will improve learning experiences and help reduce the digital divide among students from different backgrounds. The Chinese government has acknowledged the need to integrate technology into education and supports this goal. Second, creating high-quality online content is essential. Schools should develop engaging and interactive course materials that cater to different learning styles. This can include using multimedia resources, gamified activities, and adaptive learning that adjusts to each student's needs. Effective online learning environments can significantly increase student engagement and motivation, which are crucial for success. Additionally, training and support for teachers are essential. Educators need to learn how to deliver practical online lessons. Professional development should focus on best practices for online teaching, such as encouraging student interaction and keeping students engaged in a virtual setting [23] Training will help teachers use technology effectively and create a supportive student environment. Finally, building a sense of community among

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