

# Public Morality and Social Welfare Issues Caused by E-commerce

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**Abstract:** With the rapid growth of e-commerce, it not only stimulates economic development but also gives rise to a multitude of public morality and social welfare issues. This paper delves into the core concerns surrounding e-commerce, including intellectual property protection, fraudulent advertising and practices, unscrupulous competition, user privacy violations, inadequate consumer protection, tax evasion, job opportunities, and environmental sustainability. It proposes respective remedies to address these issues, aiming to serve as a valuable reference for policymakers, business operators, and consumers alike in fostering the healthy development of e-commerce.

**Keywords:** e-commerce, public ethics, social welfare, intellectual property, environmental protection and sustainable development

## 1. Introduction

As a product of the Internet age, e-commerce has permeated every aspect of daily life. It not only revolutionizes traditional business models but also provides consumers with unparalleled shopping experiences. However, with the swift progression of e-commerce, a multitude of public morality and social welfare issues have gradually emerged. These challenges not only impact the healthy growth of enterprises but also directly influence the fundamental interests of consumers and the overall welfare of society. Consequently, deeply exploring these issues and proposing effective solutions is of paramount importance for the long-term development of e-commerce and the maintenance of social harmony and stability.

## 2. Current situation of e-commerce

The current situation of e-commerce is witnessing a continuous improvement in its overall environment, thanks to the advancement of network infrastructure and the development of supporting environments such as third-party service institutions, financial services, and logistics services. With its convenient and efficient characteristics, e-commerce has progressively permeated into various aspects of people's daily lives, giving rise to a multitude of online shopping, online payment, and digital entertainment services, thereby offering consumers an array of choices and convenience. Nevertheless, alongside the growing popularity of e-commerce, various challenges have started to surface.

## 3. Public moral problems caused by e-commerce and countermeasures

### 3.1 Issues related to intellectual property protection

A large number of violations of intellectual property rights occur on e-commerce platforms, such as theft of intellectual property, illegal copying and distribution of copyrighted materials. This not only harms the interests of the originators, but also undermines the fair competitive environment of the market.

The rapidity at which information is replicated and disseminated across the Internet significantly facilitates the infringement of intellectual property rights. To address this issue, it is imperative to augment the regulatory obligations of e-commerce platforms and stringently counteract intellectual property violations. Concurrently, the public's cognizance of intellectual property protection should be elevated, and a greater number of individuals should comprehend the significance of intellectual property through educational and promotional initiatives.

### 3.2 False advertising and fraud

In order to attract consumers, some merchants use false and exaggerated advertising claims to misrepresent the actual situation of their products. This kind of behavior not only violates advertising laws, but also harm the rights and interests of consumers. In addition, some businesses use fraudulent means to defraud consumers of their money, such as misleading promotions and inadequate after-sales service.

To address this issue, it is imperative to establish a robust regulatory framework for conducting stringent reviews and

managing advertisements on e-commerce platforms. Furthermore, the penalties for fraudulent activities should be amplified, and the costs associated with violating the law should be elevated, thereby curtailing the recurrence of such misconduct. Concurrently, platforms should proactively fulfill their societal obligations and safeguard the rights, interests, and privacy of consumers and users.

### **3.3 Unfair competition**

In the e-commerce landscape, certain large platforms might leverage their resources and market clout to engage in unfair competition with small businesses and self-employed individuals. This includes price discrimination, limiting competitive behavior, and so on, which severely disrupts the fair competition order in the market.

In order to preserve a market environment characterized by fair competition, it is crucial to intensify supervision over e-commerce platforms to preclude them from exploiting their dominant market position to undermine fair competition and infringe upon consumers' rights and interests. Concurrently, enterprises are urged to foster the well-being of e-commerce via collaboration and innovation.

### **3.4 User privacy disclosure**

In e-commerce transactions, personal information of users often needs to be collected and processed. Nevertheless, some criminals might exploit this information, leading to the disclosure of user privacy. This involves the protection of personal privacy, as well as the ethical and legal guidelines that businesses and platforms should adhere to when gathering and utilizing user information[1]. Not only does it violate the privacy of users, but it may also trigger more severe societal issues.

To safeguard users' privacy rights, it is imperative to establish stringent data protection regulations that obligate e-commerce platforms to enhance the security and management of user data. Furthermore, reinforced supervision of data security on e-commerce platforms is necessary to preclude unauthorized access and misuse of user data.

### **3.5 Insufficient protection of consumer rights and interests**

Consumers are typically in a vulnerable position in e-commerce transactions. The virtuality and anonymity of e-commerce platforms may cause consumers to be vulnerable to fraud, false publicity, low price traps and other merchant behaviors of merchants.[2].

However, the existing consumer rights and interests protection mechanism in the e-commerce sector still has significant shortcomings and requires further enhancement. In order to safeguard the rights and interests of consumers, it is imperative to revise e-commerce regulations to define the rights and obligations of consumers clearly. Concurrently, the establishment of a robust consumer complaint and dispute resolution system provides consumers with a convenient avenue to protect their rights.

## **4. Social welfare issues caused by e-commerce and solutions**

### **4.1 Tax loss problem**

The anonymity and cross-regional characteristics of e-commerce activities pose significant challenges to tax regulation[3]. Some enterprises take advantage of e-commerce platforms to engage in tax avoidance, evasion, and other illegal activities, resulting in a substantial loss of national tax revenue. This issue not only impacts the distribution of social welfare but also reflects the demand for social public morality in terms of tax fairness and market order[4].

To address this issue, it is imperative to enhance collaboration with e-commerce platforms and develop an efficient tax regulatory framework. The government should fortify the oversight and collection of e-commerce-related taxes to mitigate tax evasion. Concurrently, it is essential to facilitate the innovation and enhancement of e-commerce tax policies to establish a favorable tax environment for the thriving development of e-commerce.

### **4.2 Employment opportunities**

The growth of e-commerce has led to a decline in employment opportunities in traditional retail, logistics, and other industries. Simultaneously, the competition on e-commerce platforms is becoming increasingly intense, posing challenges for many small businesses and entrepreneurs. These issues may exacerbate the pressure on social employment and potentially affect social stability.

To address this challenge, it is imperative to enhance the training and education of e-commerce professionals, elevate their proficiency and competitiveness, and aid workers in adapting to the evolving needs of the e-commerce era. Concurrently, enterprises are urged to augment investments in the e-commerce sector, thereby fostering additional job opportunities.

Furthermore, the government should amplify its support for e-commerce-related industries, stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship, and provide greater assistance to small enterprises and entrepreneurs.

### 4.3 Environmental sustainability issues

As e-commerce continues to expand, problems such as excessive consumption, disposable packaging, and logistics waste are becoming increasingly severe. While individuals benefit from the convenience of online shopping, they often overlook the environmental implications. The rapid growth of e-commerce has resulted in a significant increase in logistics demand, leading to a rise in carbon emissions.

To achieve environmental sustainability, e-commerce platforms and enterprises should actively endorse the concept of environmental protection and sustainable development, and motivate enterprises to embrace measures such as eco-friendly packaging and green logistics to minimize their ecological footprint. Concurrently, enhance the environmental oversight of e-commerce platforms to ensure that their business activities align with environmental standards. Furthermore, robustly support the advancement of the circular economy and the application of innovative technology to facilitate the green evolution of e-commerce.

## 5. Conclusion

As an emerging industry, e-commerce confronts numerous challenges and social responsibilities while fostering economic growth. By enhancing the establishment of laws and regulations, augmenting the regulatory accountability of platforms, elevating the level of protection for consumers' rights and interests, strengthening tax supervision and management, promoting employment transformation, and advocating environmental protection and sustainable development, the implementation of coping strategies can effectively address these issues and spur the healthy development of e-commerce. In the future, with the uninterrupted advancement of technology and societal progress, we anticipate e-commerce to achieve more substantial breakthroughs and progress in public morality and social welfare. Furthermore, we must persist in exploring and innovating to better grapple with the challenges presented by e-commerce. Only the collaborative efforts of the government, businesses, and consumers can foster the healthy development of e-commerce and confer greater societal well-being.

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