

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE «HOMEBODY ECONOMY» DURING COVID-19

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Since the beginning of 2020, COVID-19 has spread to countries around the world, turning into a «protracted war» for healthcare and the world economy. It has been two and a half years since the full-blown pandemic began, and the traditional offline industry has been negatively impacted. At the same time, with the development of digital economy and Internet technology, the «Homebody economy» has become a popular economic phenomenon. This paper analyzes the reasons for the popular of the «Homebody economy» and its development status, identifies its problems and gives corresponding suggestions.

Keywords: COVID-19; Homebody economy; digital economy.

РАЗВИТИЕ «ДОМАШНЕЙ ЭКОНОМИКИ» ВО ВРЕМЯ COVID-19

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С начала 2020 года COVID-19 распространился по странам мира, превратившись в «затяжную войну» против здравоохранения и мировой экономики. Прошло два с половиной года с момента начала полномасштабной пандемии, и традиционные офлайн-отрасли негативно пострадали. Между тем, с развитием цифровой экономики и интернет-технологий «Домашней экономики» стала популярным экономическим явлением. В данной статье анализируются причины популярности «Домашней экономики» и текущее состояние ее развития, указываются ее проблемы и даются соответствующие предложения.

Ключевые слова: COVID-19; домашняя экономика; цифровая экономика.

The spread of COVID-19 is widespread and complex, spreading very quickly, and as the virus continues to mutate, asymptomatic infections can occur, which means that it is very difficult to avoid infection in one's life. In this context, countries have introduced home quarantine policies, resulting in a huge impact on traditional brick and mortar shops. The «Homebody economy» is not a new phenomenon created by the epidemic, it originally originated in Japan, when the «Homebody economy» in a narrow sense was called the «otaku

economy», mainly referring to the cultural industry represented by anime and games [1]. The current «homebody economy» is an economic development model that uses the internet as a platform and internet technology as support, covering a wide range of areas such as work, study and entertainment for the general public [2]. After the outbreak of the epidemic, the «homebody economy» developed rapidly in a short period of time and became a major opportunity for economic development. To ensure the stable development of the «homebody economy», it is important to analyse its current situation.

1. The main causes of the 'homebody economy'

Firstly, the most obvious reason is the epidemic prevention policies of countries following the outbreak of COVID-19. In order to curb the spread of the epidemic, countries are encouraging people to reduce their recreational activities, travel plans and direct contact. This has affected the tourism, food and beverage, entertainment and retail sectors, but it has also led to a boom in the «homebody economy». Secondly, the development of the digital economy has laid the foundations of the «homebody economy». In COVID-19, digital has accelerated its penetration into every corner of the economy, showing a universal and social character which has laid the foundation for the development of the 'homebody economy'. The improvement of the information infrastructure has enabled people in any area to access the Internet, driving the digital transformation of many traditional industries and allowing people to work or spend money without leaving their homes.

2. The current situation of «homebody economy»

1) Increased demand for the «homebody economy» in the wake of the epidemic. COVID-19 has limited people's travel and confined all their lives to their homes, which means that all life and work will move online and the demand for the «homebody economy» will gradually expand. Online work and study, schools and businesses are places where there is a high turnover of people and when the epidemic breaks out the only way to ensure study and work is through online courses and cloud conferencing and cloud files. zoom is a multi-person cloud video conferencing software that helps students and staff create a hassle-free communication environment. zoom had only 10 million daily meeting participants before the outbreak, in December 2019, but in April 2020, zoom video communications has 300 million daily meeting participants worldwide [3]. The outbreak of COVID-19 has led to a rise in demand for the «home economy» as schools and businesses around the world embrace working and studying from home. 2) The «homebody economy» is developing in a variety of sectors. Prior to the outbreak, the «homebody economy» was dominated by online shopping and entertainment games, with a smaller group of people relying on the 'homebody economy', mostly teenagers. Although the rapid growth of the digital economy has recommended the digital transformation of many traditional industries, some areas are still developing more slowly. For vegetable and fruit retailing, where people would choose to buy offline enough for freshness and safety reasons, but now it's all online, facilitating the growth of fresh produce e-commerce. Data shows that during the Chinese New Year in 2020, sales of Daily Fresh and Dingdong grew by 350 % and 600 % respectively [4]. This means that the «homebody economy» is developing in a multi-field way.

3. Problems with the «homebody economy»

While the «homebody economy» has made life and marketing easier, some social news time has forced us to reflect on its problems. 1) Online shops exaggerate their products and falsify data. When the outbreak occurred and customers' choices could only be switched from offline to online, it became impossible to identify the products with the naked eye. The actual products received differed significantly from those in the online promotional images, and this behaviour infringed on the legitimate rights and interests of consumers. 2) The digital divide among older people, the «homebody economy» and home isolation have increased the reliance on the internet. However, most older people do not use smartphones or only use them to watch news and videos, and are unfamiliar with the more complex online shopping and online healthcare, which can make it impossible to lead a normal life. 3) Once the epidemic stabilises

and life returns to normal, people will be more eager to travel, which will lead to a slowdown in the development of the «homebody economy».

Conclusion and suggestions

The emergence of the «homebody economy» has mitigated the negative impact of the epidemic on the economy and brought convenience to people's lives. The outbreak of the epidemic has brought opportunities for the development of the «homebody economy», but the problems that have arisen must be addressed. 1) Increase market regulation to ensure customers' rights and interests. The state should introduce appropriate and effective punitive measures for false marketing by online shops to create a good market environment. 2) Simplify the process of buying everyday essentials, for example by making it possible to do so by voice. This would make it much easier for older people to buy their essentials. 3) The epidemic has been going on for a long time and people have become dependent on the «homebody economy», so when the epidemic is over, it is important to strengthen cooperation between industries and create new demand if the «homebody economy» is to be maintained.

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