

# The Integrated Development of Fan Economy and Social Welfare

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## Abstract

**During the epidemic, the fan economy helped many industries get out of the trough and achieve re-profitability. At the same time, star idols use their own advantages to guide the public to participate in public welfare activities, which greatly promotes the development of public welfare undertakings. However, the blind follow of fans and the social influence of inferior artists have also restricted the long-term development of the fan economy. Promoting the effective integration and development of fan economy and social welfare, realizing the dual value of economic development and social progress are the core competitiveness of the long-term development of fan economy.**

## Keywords

**Fan economy; Social welfare; Social influence.**

## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of the Internet and the popularization of media communication, the fan economy has become a sharp sword in the commercial market. The word "粉丝" is a transliteration of the English "fans" and it is a common cultural consumption pattern in contemporary society. In 2005, some girls who were originally unknown, such as Li Yuchun and Zhang Liangying, accumulated a large number of fans and gradually became popular. This has led some foreign media outlets to believe that a fan economy is officially emerging in China.

At the beginning of 2020, a sudden epidemic slowed down the global economic development, the customer flow of offline stores has dropped sharply, and the sales of goods have also fallen rapidly. At the same time, celebrities 'circled fans' through public welfare, not only by making donations and materials, but also by calling on fans to do charity. Though the epidemic has restricted the development of fan economic, it has also increased fan stickiness. During the epidemic, the fan economy helped many industries get out of trough and achieve re-profitability. At the same time, star/idols use their own advantages to guide the public to participate in public activities, which greatly promotes the development of public welfare undertakings.

## 2. The Mutual Promotion of Fan Economy and Social Welfare

At the moment of the epidemic, the performing arts industry is even more constrained by the gathering of performances and the sense of on-the-spot pursuit. According to statistics from the China Performance Industry Association, "From January to March 2020, nearly 20,000 performances have been cancelled or postponed nationwide, and the direct box office loss has

exceeded 2 billion yuan." The flow of people and income including offline meetings, concerts, airport transfers and other activities have been hit to varying degrees for safety reasons. Under the major impact of the epidemic, people are more inclined to meet basic needs and use limited income to satisfy appetites. The recovery cycle of spiritual consumption is longer in comparison, which is undoubtedly a hard hit.

Despite the huge impact the COVID-19 pandemic brings to restaurants and cinemas, fan welfare is also quietly established under the influence of idol welfare through the internet. In the late winter of 2020, while the virus was still raging, the number of confirmed cases was climbing at the same time, even reached the peak of 15,152 new cases daily reported. COVID-9 has not only affected peoples living, but also the lack of medical supplies and protective measures. At that time public welfare is undoubtedly a timely aid. According to the statistics, until 24:00 on April 26, 2020, Hubei Red Cross Society has received a total of 1,844,862 million yuan of donation for prevention and control of COVID-19, including millions of daily necessities and medical equipment. Without a doubt, celebrities played a leading role in public welfare activities their help goes beyond just material hope; they helped people relieve mental stress and call on the whole nation to fight the pandemic. On New Year Eve of 2020, the popular band Mayday held a free cloud concert in Taipei Arena. The online performances of Lang Lang, Taylor Swift, and other celebrities not only allowed the audience to enjoy the charm of the music scene without leaving home but also calmed the nervous mood of the public under the pandemic. In addition, celebrity charities use their influence to drive fans' charities, and fans use their advantages such as strong organizational and fast fundraising ability to raise the fund rapidly in order to maximize public benefits and help the 'soldiers' in the affected areas win the battle against COVID-19.

China's economic development faced new challenges after the peak of the pandemic. Although China resumed work and production in early April, many industries were affected by the pandemic. Online shopping, on the other hand, has brought convenience to people during the pandemic through the 'we media' platform. Everyone stays at home, video platforms had become a great media to kill time, also the main way to meet peoples demand for information. Livestream-selling had also become a new marketing method. After the pandemic, CCTV also joined the team of livestreaming. Since the show 'fight the pandemic together' was launched on January 27, 2020, the News channel jointly holds 11 livestreaming to help farmers with major e-commerce platforms; the original purpose was to accelerate the recovery of Hubei province-the main affected area from the impact of the pandemic. By April 1, 2020, CCTV News launched a public welfare activity 'thank you group-buying for Hubei' and on April 6, 2020, CCTV News launched a live-stream selling with the same name to promote and sell the agricultural and by-products made in Hubei. The group "Xiao Zhu Pei Qi" formed by Zhu Guangquan and Li Jiaqi is well appreciated, that day reached 4 million sales with the number of goods. In recent years, the effect of traditional advertising had been declining, while new media-livestream has become a vital way for the public to obtain product information. It is also a new channel for radio and television media to participate in poverty alleviation. With the cooperation of the e-commerce platform, the public can open a live room anytime anywhere to greatly promote the new economic development.

### **3. The Interaction Between Social Welfare and the Development of Fan Economy**

Fan economy is a double-edged sword. From the commercial point of view, this large number of fans can achieve the purpose of increasing the income of artists and their popularity by supporting their works or purchasing products advertised by them. "These consumption activities, in turn, continue to strengthen the identity of fans." For products endorsed by idols

or personally recommended by them, high user stickiness reduces the "shop around" of the normal consumption process. Fans, as consumers, are far less sensitive to prices than ordinary consumers. For instance, new products launched by Li Ning, a sportswear brand that is endorsed by a well-known Chinese actor Xiao Zhan, were snapped up by the fans as soon as the products were on sale. Some were even sold at a premium because the supply does not meet the tremendous demand. In fact, the reason behind this popularity is that the business has utilized the emotional adherence of enthusiastic fans to idols, thereby efficiently transforming the emotional dependence that fans place on idols into commercial value.

In order to help alleviate the disaster in Henan Province this year, the domestic sports brand Hongxingerke donated batches of materials worth 50 million (RMB), which stood out among donations from celebrities. However, such generous donation is just the tip of the iceberg of Hongxingerke's philanthropies. After experiencing serious fund operation problems in 2015, Hongxingerke insisted on doing charity. According to records, the cumulative donation exceeded 100 million (RMB). The hardships and efforts that made today's Hongxingerke were not known until some netizens discovered that its official Weibo did not even have a membership. This discovery was crucial. While average sports brands have membership in Weibo, Hongxingerke, on the contrary, does not, which depicts the image that this brand does not work on marketing but on making high-quality products and unknown charity work to the public. Although Hongxingerke's performance in 2020 was not satisfactory, the quality control of its products has been maintained at a high level. Moved by Hongxingerke's deeds, netizens spontaneously poured into its live broadcast to "snap up goods." By August 5th, the official store of Hongxingerke on Taobao has owned more than 12 million fans. In the face of enthusiastic support from consumers, the chairman of Hongxingerke personally came forward to call on the public to consume rationally.

At the same time, the feverish pursuit of idol by some fans with low education level will bring negative effects to idols, thus affecting the development of fan economy. For example, certain fanatic behaviors of TFBOYS's (i.e., a famous Chinese idol group) fans (e.g., picking their idols up in crowds has caused disorder in the airport), from the public's view, are closely related to the idol's conduct and quality, and even caused the phenomenon of "idol paying for the mistakes made by its fans". Driven by the benefits of idol's huge coverage, the negative behavior of these few extreme fans has been infinitely amplified and exposed by the media, causing the public to misunderstand and even resent the fan population, which eventually leads to the public's resistance to the idol itself. Once the image of an idol is damaged, its economic value will be greatly reduced.

On the other hand, lawbreakers will also use the fan economy to influence the market order. They endanger society by doing illegal activities, such as pretending to be Anti-fans to slander idols, organize crowds to deceive and divulge idols' private information, and so on.

Under this circumstance, these behaviors will cause panic among the public and stain the entertainment industry and affect the social atmosphere. What is more, delinquent artist's behavior will strongly impact society, especially to the fans. To accurately guide social values, idols involved in immoral and illegal behavior will force to withdraw from the entertainment industry, which is not a good sign for them as their economic value will disappear accordingly.

#### 4. Discussion

The essence of the fan economy is spiritual consumption which is a type of economy caused by spiritual needs. Fan economy involves various modes, such as film and television works, concerts, live streaming on the Internet. It meets people's basic needs and matches the consumer needs caused by fans' psychological and spiritual demands. Therefore, we should

make broad use of this fan economy of "paying for love" to promote the development of social welfare.

In summary, the Fan economy is a double-edged sword. Correct guidance and rational use of it will significantly promote the development of social public welfare efforts. There is also instability in the fan group. When the love of idol stars does not exist, the utility of the fan economy will disappear. That is why some lawbreakers use the fan economy to influence the market order and gain personal profit.

Therefore, the core competitiveness of the long-term development of the fan economy is to adhere to the mission and light the spiritual beacon to put the public social welfare in a critical position. At the same time, We must realize the dual value of economic development and social progress by promoting the effective integration and development of the fan economy and public social welfare.

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