

Research on the Laboring of Heads of Community Group Buying in the Post-Epidemic Era

Jingyi Zhao

School of Journalism and Communication, Northwest University, Xi'an, China.

1206896521@qq.com

Abstract. With the rise of the otaku economy and WeChat mini-programs in the post-epidemic era, community group buying has entered a new stage. Many Internet companies have spared no efforts to invest in developing community group buying in an attempt to seize market traffic. When participating in community group buying, the head of the group purchase is gradually employed by enterprises. By virtue of the research methods including cyber-ethnography and in-depth interviews, this paper explores the operation mode of group buying platform and the employed status of the head of group buying in some communities of Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. On the one hand, the platform controls the labor of the heads through a hidden operation mechanism; On the other hand, the heads as the employees carry out emotional labor in different stages of labor while being involved in capital production. Meanwhile, they also present a struggle against platform operation and algorithm mechanisms.

Keywords: Community Group Buying; Head; Digital Labor; Platform Labor.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Since 2019, the outbreak of the epidemic has changed our living habits and broken the normal business ecology in a short time. Quarantine and blockade have become a new daily life, giving birth to the otaku economy. WeChat mini-programs, the main economic force in this national quarantine, explain why community group buying is once again popular.

It is worth noting that the development of community group buying presents new characteristics during the epidemic. Firstly, it is the persistent consumption with WeChat as its medium and light social relations. With the help of the WeChat community, a platform with stable traffic, group buying takes the relationship of owners in the community as a stepping stone and utilizes the recommendations of acquaintances to rapidly enlarge its scale and reduce the cost of obtaining customers. In addition, some links between community group buying and retail platforms failed during the epidemic, which increased consumers' initiatives. The self-service sites for fetching goods are closed during the pandemic. Meanwhile, the retail platform is also restricted by insufficient capacity and limited storage and supply. The huge demand and broken platform attract many users to be heads of community group buying, responsible for coordinating the procurement and materials distribution, which shows the phenomenon of heads derived from users.

Currently, with the vigorous development of the digital economy, digital labor has become the frontier in communication labor research. In community group buying, the business model of "head of group buying + community" jumps on price advantage to involve groups on the Internet in the production activities of the digital economy. In this process, heads of group buying are gradually employed.

Based on the existing research results, the new features of community group buying in the post-epidemic era are revealed through cyber-ethnography and in-depth interviews. This paper studies the invisible exploitation created by the platform and the laboring behavior of the heads in the new business model of community group purchase up against the epidemic. It also discusses the anti-exploitation and resistance of heads in this process, providing more abundant case studies for the theory of digital labor and platform labor together with feasible suggestions for resisting the expansion of media and capital.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Research on Digital Labor and Platform Labor

(1) Digital Labor on the Internet

Dallas Smythe, a Canadian scholar, was the first to study the audience from the perspective of the political economy of communication. He put forward the audience commodities theory and started the research from the audience to labor. In the 1980s, The development of the Internet brought a brand-new context to audience research, inheriting the theoretical basis of audience commodities theory in the combination with the current Internet context. Fox has a relatively clear definition of digital labor in the book *Digital Labor and Karl Marx*. "As a part of the collective labor force such as the survival, use, and application of electronic media, digital labor is not a definite occupation and is defined by the industry he serves. In this industry, digital labors are exploited by capital." [1] That is to say, digital labor is still exploited in the new electronic media.

Domestic scholars pay attention to digital labor later than western scholars. At present, there are mainly two research contents. On the one hand, it combs and explains the theory of digital labor. The research conclusions of western scholars are also translated and summarized; On the other hand, it uses the theory of digital labor to analyze domestic social practice. In terms of theoretical research, Wu Dingming pointed out that the development of the Internet industry has formed a new economic development model focusing on netizens. Besides, communication behavior has also been transformed into digital labor with commercial value in this process, which promotes the appreciation of digital capital. [2] Two scholars, Yao Jianhua and Xu Sixiao combed the political economy evolution and latest achievements of global digital labor research from four aspects, including digital labor in manufacturing and service industries, integration of production and consumption, playmakers, and labor organizations. [3] In terms of practical analysis, the specific foothold of domestic case studies mainly focuses on two aspects, such as the media industry and its practitioners as well as the Internet platform and its users. Up against the commercialization of the media industry, Jin Cao, a professor at Fudan University, studied the labor of female editors in China's transition period. Based on the same social background, he also examined the political and economic context of the birth of the rhetoric "news workers". [4] Wu Dingming believes that "citizen journalists" spontaneously join the laboring of news crowdsourcing, and participate in news production and dissemination under the call of commercial ideology. They even become cheap or even free "digital workers".[5]

(2) Platform Labor

After entering the era of Web 2.0, digital labor is embedded in the new historical context, resulting in new problems. The Internet is no longer an ideal distributed network, but an aristocratic network condensed into a few core nodes. The Internet platform has gradually become the infrastructure of the global digital society, rewriting the behavior rules, production methods, and public policies of the network society. In this way, digital labor has developed into a platform-based labor mode with its scale of platform workers growing day by day, which has become an important force to promote economic and social development.

At present, platform-based digital labor research mainly includes three paths, that is, platform employment mode, labor process, and digital supervision. Platform employment mode pays attention to how platform organization affects labor relations and employment methods. For example, Diana Mulcahy believes that digital gigs have realized the separation of means of production with higher and more flexible independent choices compared with traditional digital labor.[6] Research on labor process and digital supervision emphasize how the platform system controls labor and how workers as subjects resist. Labor process research is often closely bound with the platform digital supervision. For example, Cai Runfang revealed that the circulation of the digital economy with a platform as the core is characterized by the monopoly and exploitation of platform capitalism by focusing on the platformization of the electronic game industry and the labor process of gamers in the platform economy. [7]

The focus of digital labor and platform labor lies in the research and analysis of the theory itself and the explanation of social reality. Some research perspective uses Marxist theory to critically study

the definition and manifestation of digital labor. Others focus on the perspective of spreading political economy and cultural theory to reflect or criticize production and consumption in the digital age, which mainly stresses the commercialization of media content, audience, and labor. [8]

1.2.2 Research on Community Group Buying and its Heads

Group buying was first proposed by Wind and Webster (1972). At present, there is no unified definition of the community group buying in academia. Huang Xi believed that the community group buying mode is based on the real offline community with the community leader as the distribution node. It organizes the group for pre-sale through mobile platform tools such as WeChat groups and mini-programs to collect the needs of people in the same community. After paying through WeChat and delivering goods uniformly to community, members of the group buying go to the self-service sites in the community to fetch goods. [9] Zhang Wei believed that group buying is community-centered, with goods provided by a group buying platform and group members ordering through mini-programs. It is a mode of selling goods based on acquaintances and friends. [10] Combining the online sales platform with the heads as the medium defined by Huang Xi and the selling mode relying on relations in community group purchase pointed out by Zhang Wei, we can conclude that the community group buying studied in this paper is a trading activity based on the relationship between acquaintances and friends through mobile media platforms such as WeChat or mini-programs, with the community as the unit and the heads as the medium.

At present, the research on community group buying has been abundant, which mainly focuses on the following three aspects, including the analysis of its essence, its commercial structure, its development status, and future trend. According to Wu Xing, community group buying is a socialization retail mode based on an interpersonal relationship chain, leading the offline community to online WeChat groups for sales [11]. Li Qianshu put forward basic requirements for the sustainable development of community group buying based on the new 4C rules [12]. With the rapid development of community group buying and the emergence of various platforms for group buying, Zheng Shaohua and Liu Ting came up with countermeasures and suggestions for its orderly management and the sustainable operation of the platforms.

In the epidemic era, the model of “e-commerce + self-service” has shown great value. Turning the research of community group buying to the management and operation of group buying platforms, scholars discussed community group buying in the background of platformization. According to Srnicek, the essence of the platform lies in serving as an intermediary connecting different user group such as customers, advertisers, and manufacturers to develop its own business and market by providing a series of tools and services for user groups.

It is worth noting that community group buying, as a platform, provides a series of necessary labor conditions such as interface and traffic for the heads, which brings these workers into the production of capital. Head is innovative in community group buying mode as the core figure. Moreover, as an important participant, it plays an important role in reducing the operating cost of the community group purchase, undercutting the uncertainty of supplier operation, and helping community group purchase to create a nice brand. Nowadays, there is little research on heads of the group buying. Le Yan and others analyzed the current situation of ill-hearted heads in Shanghai during the epidemic from the upsurge of group buying. [13] Defining this kind of labor of heads as emotional labor [14], Yan Daocheng and Li Fei pointed out the process of platform’s exploitation and alienation of heads in community group buying as labors, which made the perspective of its research gradually turn to digital labor.

However, in the existing research on the labor of the community group buying platform, most research the labored users of platforms. In addition, the research on the labored heads only analyzes the fact that they are exploited in the laboring process from a perspective of emotional labor, which does not conduct macro research from multi-angles in the whole process including the period before the head involved in the platform. In this paper, the head is analyzed as a new type of digital labor, providing a new possibility for the classification of digital labor such as writer and playmaker. At the same time, this paper also explores the new features of heads of group buying in the process of

platform labor in the post-epidemic era. This new feature is not only reflected in passive works but also in initiative and public welfare, which makes up for the shortage of platform labor in community group buying currently and offers more abundant cases for platform labor theory.

1.3 Research Methodology

The research methods of this paper are cyber-ethnography and interviews. As a crucial social research method, cyber-ethnography is a research activity based on research logic, which collects important data that can be publicly shared from cyberspace including mobile terminals before analyzing and presenting the data. Researchers should first select and enter a community in person, then obtain first-hand real data through participatory observation and in-depth interviews before sorting out and analyzing the collected information finally.[15] Interview, as a qualitative research method, has the advantages of obtaining more detailed information about interviewees, such as knowing more profound and unique thoughts of interviewees, etc. Through the observation of cyber-ethnography, this paper focuses on the labor status of heads in community group buying on various platforms up against epidemic, so as to understand and get familiar with the platform and the business operation mode of community group buying. Then, we have a deep understanding of the motivation, labor achievements, time, and mode of participating in the labor of the heads on platforms through interviews. In this way, we can analyze how the digital capital and platform capital organizes the heads to carry out content production and commercial profit.

Table 1. Phenomenal Analysis and Theoretical Induction

number	Name	gender	time	area	Way	duration
M01	YJP	male	2022.04.16	Chang'an District Vanke City Phase I	WeChat	36 minutes
M02	ZY	Female	2022.04.16	Chang'an District Smart City Community	WeChat	47 minutes
M03	LY	Female	2022.04.16	Chang'an District Guose Tianxiang Community	WeChat	43 minutes
M04	WZH	male	2022.04.19	Tangrenli Community, Qujiang New District	WeChat	56 minutes
M05	BXY	Female	2022.04.29	Yanta District Huacheng Vientiane	WeChat	40 minutes
M06	DXR	male	2022.04.27	Jinhui World City, Qujiang New District	Telephone	32 minutes
M07	MXX	male	2022.05.18	Eaton Mansion, Beilin District	WeChat	44 minutes
M08	WTW	Female	2022.05.18	Rongcheng Community, Beilin District	WeChat	43 minutes
M09	DZH	Female	2022.05.20	West City Jiayuan, Lianhu District	WeChat	39 minutes
M10	ZRH	male	2022.05.23	Guanghua Community, Weiyang District	Telephone	53 minutes

The research is divided into two parts in terms of concrete operation. The first is online observation. From April 2022 to June 2022, the author observed the WeChat content of 12 groups of the community group buying and 12 heads for 2 months. Due to the outbreak of a large-scale epidemic in Shaanxi at the end of 2021 attracting wide social attention, community group buying industry has become the trend of mass media. Thus, the author mainly selects 12 heads from different communities in different districts and counties of Xi'an, Shaanxi province. The platform of community group buying is mainly based on the Meituan Good Choice, More Vegetable Buying firstly established in Xi'an, and Rainbow Planet Agricultural Cooperative which is known as the community version of Hema Fresh. The second is in-depth interviews. In order to further deepen the observation content, the author conducted in-depth interviews with 10 heads through WeChat from May to June of 2022, which lasted for 20 minutes to 1 hour. Interviews are mainly conducted in the forms of WeChat text and telephone. After collecting the interview data, the core topics and key concepts were extracted. Finally, phenomenon analysis and theoretical induction were conducted.

2. Community Group Buying Platform and Its Labor Control

2.1 Hidden Labor Control in the Operation Mode of Community Group Buying Platform

2.2.1 Labor Admission: Manufacturing Consent and Myth of Getting Rich

In the evolution of labor process theory, Burawoy thinks the study of labor process should examine workers' experience, that is, workers' consent to exploitation.[16] The content and technical rules of the platform generate a normative practice internalized into daily behavior and work. Under the ideological control of the platform, the active excess labor of workers is justified and rationalized. The ideological control of the platform is to shape the individual's active consent by promoting the vision of "becoming famous and rich" to the workers. Binding the personal dreams of the workers with the interests of the platform encourages and attracts all kinds of workers to willingly participate in the platform labor.

Economic income is one of the most influential factors. Meituan Good Choice proposed the payment in its recent recruitment as follows. "2,000-3,000 yuan per month at least, 10,000-30,000 yuan per month with efforts. Moreover, the highest sales commission ratio of the heads can reach 20%." According to its platform, you will earn so much money by working hard for one month, so why not work hard? (M2) Enterprises and e-commerce companies attract workers to serve the platform desperately through huge money. Besides, they recruit enterprising people who have just entered the industry and use the needs of job seekers to reach employment relationships and improve the work efficiency and enthusiasm of the heads.

The rendering of the "myth of getting rich" and "business start-up by hard-working" ignite everyone's desire to be the leading figure in the industry. This kind of advertisement enlarges the fame and income of the heads but obscures the uncertain reality. After the epidemic, the competition for heads by major platforms has obviously cooled down. Nowadays, the elimination rate of the heads is very high. "At the end of 2020, there were more than 20 heads in the community but now only three or four left." Moreover, respondent M2 said that the platform salary is different from expected. "I didn't get rich, which can't even be considered a least rich. Just like the previous job, I just changed places to work for others."

In the early stage, the enterprise only pursues quantity regardless of quality. When the market does not develop, it begins to eliminate those heads who do not have orders. Workers actively form a culture of self-control, under which they are disciplined by market logic and regard the aggressive culture of exploiting themselves as the only opportunity to gain meaning and value. Therefore, they even ignore or deny the exploitation and injustice that may be encountered in the process of labor.[17]

2.2.2 Labor Process: Time Colonization and Rights Transfer

The entry requirements of the community group buying industry are low, and the employed person can enter this industry without having certain or proprietary working skills. In the digital capitalist society, the production time is constantly prolonged, and the physical boundaries and social moral boundaries are repeatedly broken. Besides, boundaries between working and non-working days are increasingly blurred, which colonizes the living time. [18]

Due to the progress of information technology, digital workers continue to deal with their work during their rest time until they achieve their performance appraisal goals. Sometimes, they even take time to learn new job skills. This part of the time spent on labor, which was originally used for rest, is not included in the paid labor time. Apart from that, they sell not only goods but also their eyes, ears, brain power, and time permanently on work. The labor control of platform capital extends more to form a kind of remote monitoring.

In the process of labor, the heads also transferred their rights. Signing contracts with enterprises or platforms and obeying the rules formulated by platforms is the prerequisite for the access of the heads. By transferring the ownership and using the right of inventory space in exchange for the management right provided by the platform. "I joined the community group buying platform through ground promotion. They came to the community to talk to me several times, asking me if I would

like to use the space on the second floor of my laundry room to receive goods to be more convenient to be a head of group buying. Thus, I agreed. (M7) Many group leaders have more or less transferred some of their rights before becoming officially employed, which is a condition for them to join the group buying platform to some extent. It misappropriates the rights belonging to laborers and makes them become resources for further expansion and development of capital, which is a right transferred into the additional economic value of its own existence and sets the change of this value as a seemingly reasonable entry condition. However, it is the exploitation of laborers in fact.

2.2.3 Labor Outcome: Sales Ranking and Evaluation Feedback Mechanism

Internet platform relies on digital media technology to accurately measure labor achievements and adopt a market-oriented quantitative assessment system. This performance-based pay system gives workers a sense of fairness and triggers their active consent. [19]

The group buying platform will rate and bonus the heads at the end of the month, which is strictly divided according to its monthly sales. The monthly sales of heads are measured and ranked. The higher the ranking, the higher the subsidies and bonuses they enjoy. The division of the ranking of heads is closely related to the brand or product discounts next month, which makes heads increase their sales as much as possible in order to increase their income. This game-based incentive mode is realized through platform algorithm technology. The platform skillfully combines the realization of the self-worth of the heads with the management of labor by capital, unconsciously shaping the rationalization of the algorithm. "I think this is an incentive mechanism. It is normal for workers who do more work to earn more money. We also need this competition mechanism among our heads." Respondent M6 takes the rise of ranking and the realization of self-worth for granted, which invisibly gives a universal, internalized, and reasonable explanation for algorithm exploitation. With the intervention of algorithms, the original organizational control becomes more nuanced, and the labor process of workers is divided into more detailed and computable operation forms.

In addition to the game-based incentive mode, the platform also adopts the customer evaluation and feedback mechanism. The feedback includes the service attitude of the heads, the delivery time and speed, the quality of the goods, etc. Users can evaluate it through the community group purchase mini-programs or QR codes. Meanwhile, the platform delegates the performance evaluation of heads to customers to form a supervision mechanism. "We sometimes ask for praise and remind ourselves to be nice when serving others in order to have satisfying user feedback on the platform. (M3)" In the face of consumer complaints, their only solution is to get higher scores by providing some additional labor, such as helping consumers take garbage downstairs and helping to look after temporary storage.

3. Digital Labor of Community Group Buying Platform: Heads of Group Buying

3.1 Exploited Heads

3.1.1 Focusing on Heads: Commercialization of Social Capital

Bourdieu, a French sociologist, believes that "social capital exists in individual specific working relations, group relations and organizational relations, which is a product that needs long-term investment.[20] Individuals or groups will intentionally or unintentionally invest a certain amount of time and energy to stabilize their social relations. When this social relationship is mobilized for some needs, the potential social capital is transformed into real social capital.

As for heads, the number of group members is a vital business capital and a major source of potential consumers. Community group buying mode turns heads who belong to consumer groups into their own agents, relying on their social resources to create value for enterprises. Thanks to the heads and community residents who belong to the same community and even know each other well, this natural proximity and trust makes it relatively easy for them to invite neighbors to join the group or sell goods in the group. By using the accumulated contacts, they can provide a certain base of

existing consumers and potential consumers for the platform and reduce costs in expanding consumers and users.

Respondent M4 was one of the first heads of community group buying. Before becoming the head, he operated a courier delivery site, so he met many residents in the community. After joining the community group purchase, he added these residents' WeChat account one after another by expressing delivery or face-to-face consultation before adding them in the group. He said, "group buying is mainly based on fresh products with very high requirements of quality. The customers who purchased are also for the sake of my trust. However, as the customers who promoted to potential customers in the group, the number of customers who bought goods increased. Now it has formed a stable customer source."

Most heads of group buying gather consumer resources in this way in the early stage and attract more users to the platform. "One of the production changes brought about by labor in the Internet age is that the whole human society has been transformed into a production workshop of digital labor by the Internet industry. In this huge processing factory, culture, history, social relations, friendship, emotion, etc. can be commercialized, monetized, and labored to become the driving force of raw materials for capital appreciation and industrial development.[21] When affection and friendship are driven by the Internet and capital, it seems to be a process of attracting regular customers. However, it's essentially the platform and capital competition for customers' consumption habits and market through heads, which is a rush game based on exploitation.

3.1.2 Guided by Heads of Group Buying: Labor of Emotional Maintenance

Residents who join the community group purchase have close ties with the heads in reality, so they have a trust foundation for the heads. To maintain this trust, they need more emotional management.

Putting forward the theory of emotional labor, American sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild believes it is a labor process where workers consciously manage their emotions in order to get rewards and consumers' satisfaction by creating a certain emotional state.[22]

Because the community group buying runs on the online platform, the offline interactive mode of maintaining emotions is also intentionally transplanted to the Internet by the heads. After new users are added in the group chat, heads will first conduct a welcoming ceremony to mobilize emotions in the group chat by sending red envelopes and stickers. At the same time, relational language symbols such as "family", "sister", and "baby" have also become strategic words for the heads to promote the relationship with consumers when recommending goods. In this way, the heads construct a seemingly warm collective emotional atmosphere, quickly endow new members with a collective identity, and strengthen their sense of existence and participation. In addition, 10 respondents privately added many consumers as friends, which increased the visible frequency of heads in consumers' circle of friends through the praise and comment in the posts, which made up for the alienation of relationship caused by daily busyness and maintained the strong relationships between primary groups.[23]

This kind of maintenance is different from communication without return in real life. However, it is a kind of emotional labor with the performance at its core. As far as the heads of group buying are concerned, they are completing emotional labor with the goal of performing in the whole process from receiving orders to selling and even maintaining customers. They will show some emotions that meet social expectations or organizational requirements. In essence, it is a way in which the subject of emotional presentation adjusts or even suppresses inappropriate feelings and displays appropriate emotions pretendingly.[24] "It's to socialize with disguise and react differently to various people. If you don't know what to do, just apologize. (M1)" These displayed or suppressed emotional movements are the embodiment of commercialization of emotions. When emotions are fully devoted to commercial purposes, they are no longer the expression of personal true feelings but commodities after organized manipulation and discipline.

3.2 Anti-exploitation Heads of Group Buying

3.2.1 Emotional and Money Feedback

A field investigation launched by Sun Ping and Tian Ye found that workers are not completely passive in the process of labor. [25] The labor process of heads is not a one-way exploited labor, but a double harvest of emotion and money is obtained. Customers who often buy goods with heads of group buying will often give them rewards. The most common is to give gifts. Some special products brought by customers from business trips or tours will be distributed to the heads. Even some customers will have dinner with the heads.

These interactions have turned the general relationship between workers and customers into a more private and close friend relationship, endowing the heads with emotional feedback. In addition, the traffic brought by group buying can also be transformed into the consumption drive of the main business. "Of course, I know that I am working for the platform, but I also get something beneficial to me, besides salary. Before I became the head, the laundry I opened at the gate of the community was not noticeable because of its small scale. However, due to the reason of stocking and picking up goods, many people came to us to pick up goods, only to know that the store could also dry cleaning and wash clothes, which help my business. (M4)" When consumers pick up goods, they will also buy some daily needs, improving and the store business. In the process of labor, heads enjoyed the more attractive double gains of love and money besides the salary they deserved. Workers do not think that they are controlled by the platform, but gradually understand and become familiar with the operating rules and laws of the platform through daily labor practice. By virtue of this reverse engineering, that is, bottom-up labor practice, heads of group buying realize the maximization of self-labor rights and interests.

Concerning these interactions, the relationship between heads and customers has surpassed the relationship between workers and customers in the general service industry, expanding from the labor process to daily life to a certain extent. So far, the price strategy used to attract customers in the early days has been unconsciously transformed into an emotional offensive to stabilize and deepen customer relations.

3.2.2 Heads of Group Buying Characterized by Public Welfare

In the post-epidemic era, there have been different types of heads featuring public welfare who do not earn any fees. Different from the heads formed in the process of building a business model in the past, the head featuring public welfare has become an integral part of the struggle in the labor of the group buying platform.

This kind of head is not completely passively and unconsciously exploited. They join the community group buying independently. During the epidemic, due to shopping difficulties and inconvenient life, they launched community group buying with mutual assistance as its nature among the people. This is an active and independent mode of mutual assistance, which relieves the pressure of material distribution of grassroots social workers to a certain extent and greatly relieves residents' anxiety about basic living security. "At that time, I thought about making my tiny contribution. In fact, I was quite nervous when I took over as the head because I was engaged in risk control and even made a temporary risk list. As a result, problems still emerged one after another. Group buying involves a large number of goods, which took an hour to collect statistics. (M6)" These volunteered heads offset the failure of the intermediate links of community group buying during the epidemic, which turned an individual's self-realization labor into selflessness of achieving the self-value. It was also an invisible confrontation with the digital labor of community group buying platforms during the epidemic as well as the conscious and independent labor of workers. In this process, the platform is no longer a hidden exploiter, but a dedication opportunity for the heads. The head of group buying facilitates the shopping and delivery process through the use mode of the platform, which truly realizes his self-worth.

4. Conclusion

This paper analyzes the laboring of community group buying from two perspectives, including the platform of community group buying and the employed heads in the platform. The hidden labor control of the platform is mainly reflected in three aspects, that is, labor admission, labor process, and labor result. As the core figure, the head has become a powerful tool to realize capital appreciation. They are not only digital workers exploited by capital but also have characteristics of anti-exploitation and struggle. When labor is all over the world nowadays, clarifying the value of labor on the platform should be taken into account.

The progress of media technology is control disguised as empowerment, which is trying to relax the physical discipline of workers and seek more hidden consciousness discipline instead. Facing the increasingly common integration of daily use of media and digital labor together with the comprehensive penetration of capitalism into daily life, there are more and more platform workers like heads of group buying. How to organize the expansion of digital labor as much as possible has become a problem worthy of in-depth discussion and research. From the perspective of different subjects in society, we can pay attention to the following aspects.

First of all, it is necessary to formulate relevant laws. Based on the existing anti-monopoly law, the legislature can break the monopoly of the large-scale digital platform caused by excessive profit-seeking of capital by virtue of strengthening the effectiveness of legal norms. At the same time, under the restriction of relevant laws, in addition to formulating basic norms and supervising the market behavior of the platform, the government should protect the legitimate rights and interests of workers from being excessively exploited, and help workers get rid of the domination and control of the monopoly digital platform. Secondly, media literacy education should be included in compulsory education for all. Digital capital is penetrating into all aspects of human life, while exploited workers often fail to accurately identify the discipline and constraints of the media platform because of their limited cognition and understanding of the media. Therefore, it is necessary to bring media literacy education into compulsory education. Only by fully awakening users' subjective consciousness in education can they distinguish the hidden inducement and deception under capital discourse.

Technology is a transforming force, but it also brings some new problems. Therefore, it is vital to work out corresponding countermeasures around the changes in labor practice, curb the barbarians in the labor market, and fill the gap of platform governance by national public rights.

References

- [1] Schramm, W. (1990). Mass media and national development. Trans. Jin, Yanning. Beijing: Huaxia Publishing House, 41-44.
- [2] Wu, D. M. (2017). Laborization of network audience: Research on the industrial status of network audience from the perspective of political economy of communication. *Chinese Journal of Journalism & Communication*, 39(06), 124-137. doi:10.13495/j.cnki.cjjc.2017.06.007.
- [3] Yao, J. H. & Xu, S. X. (2019). Global digital labor studies and the Chinese context: A critical review. *Journal of Social Science of Hunan Normal University*, 48(05), 141-149. doi:10.19503/j.cnki.1000-2529.2019.05.017.
- [4] Cao, J. & Cao, M. (2017). Analysis of the rhetoric of "News Workers" from the perspective of politics and economics. *Contemporary Communication*, (06), 32-36.
- [5] Wu, D. M. (2015). Reflection on political economy of communication of "citizen journalists" from the perspective of "digital labors" theory. *Journalism and Mass Communication Monthly*, (23), 4-9. doi:10.15897/j.cnki.cn51-1046/g2.2015.23.001.
- [6] Mulcahy, D. (2017). The gig economy. Trans. Chen, Guifang. Beijing: CITIC Press Corporation.
- [7] Cai, R. F. (2018). Monopoly and exploitation logic of platform capitalism – On the platformization of game industry and the laborization of players. *Journalism and Mass Communication Monthly*, (02), 73-81. doi:10.15897/j.cnki.cn51-1046/g2.2018.02.009.

- [8] Mosco, V. (2013). Political economy of communication. Trans. Hu, Chunyang. Shanghai: Shanghai Translation Publishing House.
- [9] Huang, X. (2019). Analysis of community group buying mode based on mobile platform. *Modern Management Review*, (01), 99.
- [10] Zhang, W. (2019). Research on the operation mode of community group buying under the trend of new retail. *Business & Economy*, (11), 66-88. doi:10.19905/j.cnki.syjj1982.2019.11.023.
- [11] Wu, X. (2019). Analysis of market competitiveness of community group buying mode under new retail competition. *China Economic & Trade Herald*, (07), 80-82.
- [12] Li, Q. S. (2020). Research on sustainable marketing mode of community group buying based on “new 4C rule.” *Journal of Jinan Vocational College*, (05), 97-99, 102.
- [13] Le, Y. et al. (2022, May 9). Ill-heated heads of group buying earn 10,000 yuan a day? How long can the group buying boom in Shanghai last? *First Financial Daily*, A07. doi:10.28207/n.cnki.ndycj.2022.001676.
- [14] Yan, D. C. & Li, F. (2021). Creation of regular customers: Intention of online emotional marketing in the era of social media – A case of the “head” of community group purchase. *Modern Communication (Journal of Communication University of China)*, 43(07): 129-134.
- [15] Wang, Y. J. (2021). Research on digital labor of Chinese cyber literature writer in terms of the political economy perspective. Jinan: Master Thesis of Shandong University. doi:10.27272/d.cnki.gshdu.2021.004850.
- [16] Liu, Z. W. & Li, A. A. (2021). Independence and compromise: “Manufacturing consent” in the labor of platform media content creators. *Shanghai Journalism Review*, (08), 61-72. doi:10.16057/j.cnki.31-1171/g2.2021.08.007.
- [17] Feng, R. (2019). The labor: An anthropological investigation of documentary freelancers. *Modern Communication (Journal of Communication University of China)*, 41 (11), 117-121.
- [18] Li, Y. (2021). On digital capitalist society: Analysis based on Marx’s labor theory of value. Jilin: Doctoral Thesis of Jilin University. doi:10.27162/d.cnki.gjlin.2021.000583.
- [19] Liu, Z. W., Liu, M. Z. & Li, A. A. From “rush game” to “boss game”: A study of labor control over freelance writers on Internet platform. *Journalism & Communication*, 29(01), 66-85, 127.
- [20] Xiong, H. (2009). On the components the individual’s social capital. *Journal of Hubei Polytechnic University(Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 26(02), 60-63.
- [21] Lin, Y. & Wu, D. M. (2017). The absorption and labor of netizens’ emotion: On the formation and exploitation of “emotional labor” in Internet industry. *Modern Communication (Journal of Communication University of China)*, 39(06), 21-25.
- [22] Horchschild, A. R. (2020). The managed heart commercialization of human feeling. Trans. Cheng, Boqing., Dan, Weijun. & Wang, J. P. Shanghai: Joint Publishing, 28.
- [23] Yan, D. C. & Li, F. (2021). Creation of regular customers: Intention of online emotional marketing in the era of social media – A case of the “head” of community group purchase. *Modern Communication (Journal of Communication University of China)*, 43(07): 129-134.
- [24] Yu, X. Y. & He, T. P. (2022). “Paid Companionship”: An exploration of the performance strategies of games escorts under the threshold of affective labors. *Journalism Evolution*, (03), 45-52.
- [25] Sun, P. (2019). Digital labor under “algorithm logic”: A study of takeaway food delivery staff under platform economy. *Thinking*, 45(06), 50-57.