

The great winter  
jacket debate:

**affordability**  
**VS** **style**



—Hellorf



#### Ding Yining

**D**ong Weiming, who has been producing cotton overcoats for over a decade, is relatively surprised that online shops are ordering cotton-padded jackets during the recent cold spell.

Dong said his factory in Zibo, Shandong Province, wholesales sweaters and winter overcoats for seniors at retail stores, but this year's online demand was surprising.

"We ordered a dozen extra sewing machines to meet demand after selling 300,000 thick cotton coats with huge flower motifs since early winter," Dong said.

As the cold weather swept across the country, the cost-effective north Chinese traditional garment became popular among young people for its practicality.

Traditional Chinese quilted jackets with flowery patterns and military-style overcoats are winning over college students this winter.

Chloe Chen, a sophomore at the Hangzhou-based China Academy of Art, said nearly a dozen of her classmates have bought the military-style overcoats.

"It covers most parts of the body and is cost-effective," Chen said. "Also, I don't have to be concerned about stains because it's easier to clean than pricey coats."

In the six weeks since early November, the average number of searches for military-style overcoats on 1688.com, Alibaba's integrated domestic wholesale platform, increased by more than 230 percent, while the number of buyers for quilted jackets with floral patterns increased by 50 percent.

Eyebrows were raised, and customers questioned the rationale of a local

emerging down jacket brand charging more than 5,000 yuan (US\$704).

Skypeople, created in 2022 in Beijing, put a hefty price tag of up to 7,000 yuan on a down jacket, sparking online debate.

This prompted many to wonder how much a winter coat should cost and whether Chinese companies should compete in the luxury market for down jackets.

Recent discussions have also revealed differing perspectives on what consumers genuinely want. Functionality, cost-effectiveness, adaptability to local preferences, or innovative technology materials?

According to a study conducted by Xinhua News Agency, more than two-thirds of respondents felt down coats were costly.

A separate iiMedia poll found that around one-third of customers are willing to choose a down jacket priced between 500 and 1,200 yuan.

But around 37 percent favored international brands with comparable price levels to domestic brands, while 33 percent preferred local brands with fair quality and a reasonable price.

Domestic data service provider Moojing Marketing Intelligence believes 182 million down jackets were sold between November 2022 and October 2023, with a total sales value of 83.6



A winter apparel factory rushes to cope with online orders. — Ti Gong