

THE IMPACT OF PERCEIVED VALUE ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION OF CULTURAL AND CREATIVE PRODUCTS WITH MEDIATOR CULTURE AND MODERATOR TECHNOLOGY IN HUBEI, CHINA

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Abstract

Cultural and creative products, as objects that re-create cultural resources by using creative and technological means, not only reflect cultural connotations but also meet consumers' perceived needs for culture. At the same time, due to the development of Internet digital technology, the proportion of online sales of cultural and creative products is getting higher and higher. Modern technology has become the driving force to promote the development of cultural and creative products. Therefore, this study builds a theoretical model of the influence of perceived value on consumer purchase intention of cultural and creative products. In this model, culture is the mediating variable and technology is the moderating variable. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between perceived value, culture, technology, and consumer purchase intention of cultural and creative products. In addition, his research is to provide references and suggestions for further research on improving consumer purchase intention of cultural and creative products.

Keywords: Cultural and Creative Products; Consumer Purchase Intention; Perceived Value; Culture; Technology

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definition

In the cultural and creative industries, UNESCO believes that cultural and creative products generally refer to consumer goods that spread ideas, symbols, and lifestyles. They can provide information and entertainment and thus form creative and cultural behaviour that people agree with (Wang, 2020). Cultural and creative products go beyond products in the traditional sense because of their cultural symbolic value (Chen, 2022). The design of cultural and creative products focuses on humanistic feelings and endows products with emotional connotations through systematic integration, analysis, and refinement of culture. According to the nature and category of sales, cultural and creative products can be divided into business marketing products, museum cultural and creative products, entertainment and art derivatives products, tourism memorial experiences products, activities, and exhibition promotion products (Zhou & Xu, 2021).

1.2 Development and Consumption

With the increasing status of cultural and creative products in world trade, all countries have made great efforts to develop creative industries and enhance the value of cultural and creative products (Wang, 2020). Cultural and creative industries developed earlier in many countries in Europe, the United States, and Asia, such as the United States, Britain, France, and Japan. In these countries, cultural and creative products account for a large proportion of revenue. Meanwhile, the media, government, and enterprises are participating in the development of cultural and creative industries in many aspects (Chen, 2022).

The development of cultural and creative products in China is relatively late, but it has maintained stable development since 2014, and the per capita consumption amount has also increased rapidly. Take Hubei Province as an example: the cultural consumer price index of Hubei residents in 2020–2021 was 14.7 US dollars, an increase of 0.7 US dollars compared with the previous period (China Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

As for the reasons for the rapid development of Chinese cultural and creative products, firstly, China has accumulated a large number of traditional cultural resources in its long history. The traditional cultural resources can stimulate the development of a large number of cultural and creative products. Secondly, the rapid development of China's economy has brought about the upgrading of residents' consumption structures. The demand for products has begun to transition from the material level to the spiritual level. Chinese consumers have an increasingly high demand for culture, so material consumption has turned into an era of culture and experience consumption. This has also promoted the rapid development of China's cultural and creative industries (Ruan, 2021). Thirdly, due to the development of modern technology, mobile payment technology makes people's consumption experiences more convenient and efficient. Taking the payment methods of consumers in Hubei Province as an example, the overall payment channel of consumers in Hubei Province for cultural consumption is mainly "mobile terminal", accounting for 61.59%. The main payment method for cultural consumption is "mobile payment", accounting for 49.68%. It can be seen that technology not only changes the way Chinese consumers buy but also promotes the development of cultural consumption (China Tourism Academy, 2022).

1.3 Problem Statement

China's cultural and creative products have encountered many problems in the development process, mainly manifested as consumer purchase intention has been affected. That resulted in a sharp decline in sales of some popular cultural and creative products and even the closure of production lines (Xinhua Net, 2018). This problem is not conducive to the long-term healthy development of China's cultural and creative products. According to relevant research, consumers tend to make purchasing decisions based on the perceived value of products or services provided by suppliers. In order to stabilize and enhance consumer purchase intentions, companies and institutions must know how to highlight the perceived value of their products and services in an appropriate and visible way. Therefore, combined with the cultural needs of consumers and the consumption mode of mobile payment, the purpose of this research is to

study the relationship between perceived value, mediating variable culture, regulating variable technology, and the purchase intention of consumers of cultural and creative products. In addition, some guidance is provided to enhance the purchase intention of Hubei consumers for cultural and creative products.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Underpinning Theories

- Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). It is the successor to the theory of rational behavior (TRA) proposed by Ajzen and Fishbein (Luo, 2021). The theory of planned behavior is the development of the theory of rational behavior. It is mainly used to explain that consumer purchase intention is the most direct factor affecting consumer purchase behavior (Luo Wei, 2021). Because the theory of rational behavior assumes that individual behavior is controlled by will, it seriously restricts its wide application. Therefore, in order to expand the applicable scope of the theory, Ajzen put forward the theory of planned behavior (TPB for short) in 1991, adding the antecedent variable "perceived behavioral control" that affects the individual's behavioral intention.
- Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The technology acceptance model was first proposed in Davis' doctoral thesis in 1986. The model is mainly used to predict the behavior pattern of users accepting information systems in the workplace. And it also provides an influential theoretical basis for explaining users' motivation to use technology. Based on the theory of rational behavior, Davis proposed the technology acceptance model (Davis et al., 1989) after absorbing the three variables of behavior attitude, behavior intention, and actual behavior (Davis et al., 1989). The continuous evolution of the technology acceptance model laid the foundation for specific applied research. Because the current digital environment is constantly changing, research objects and application areas are also constantly changing.
- Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). Arnould and Thompson (2005) summarised the research content of CCT into four themes: consumer identity, market culture, social and historical models of consumption, market ideology systems under mass media, and consumer interpretation strategies. They define CCT as exploring how consumers can actively reshape and transform the symbolic meanings implied in advertising, branding, the environment, and physical products. In this way, the theory of their individuality, identity, social position, and living goal can be embodied.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

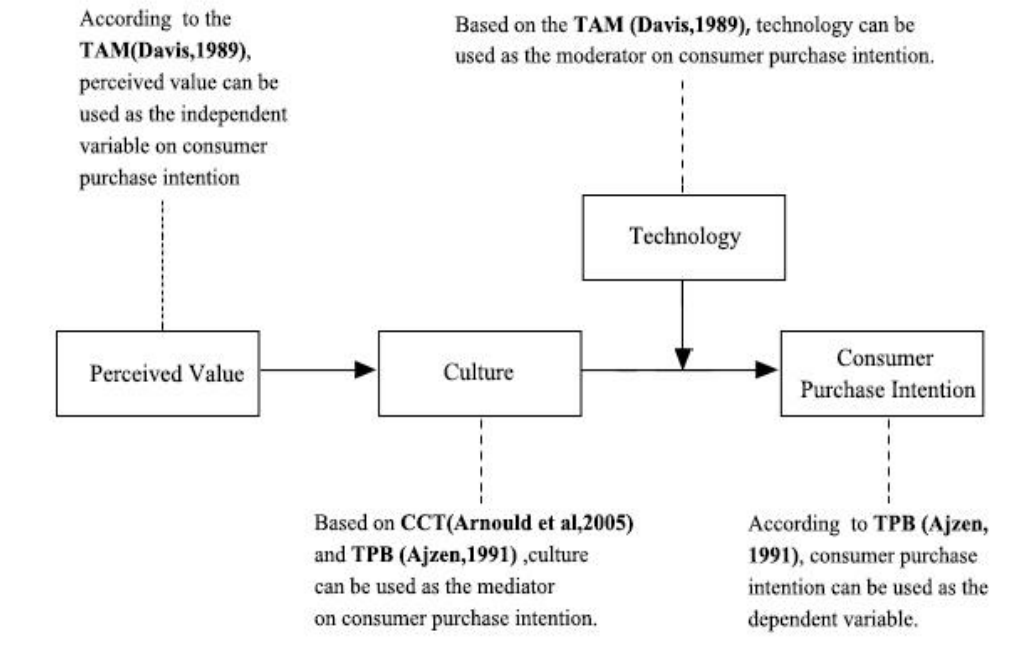


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Perceived Value

Perceived value is a consumer's overall evaluation of the gains and losses caused by the purchase of products or services based on subjective perception. It is a key index to predict consumer psychology and behavior. In order to explain the relationship between consumers' perceived value and their behavioral motivation, preference, and behavior, scholars have divided perceived value into dimensions from multiple perspectives based on different research contexts (Guo et al., 2022). For example, scholars Sheth et al. (1991) constructed a consumption value model including five dimensions: functional value, cognitive value, emotional value, social value, and conditional value. On this basis, Sweeney and Soutar (2001) proposed a consumer perceived value model consisting of four dimensions: social value, emotional value, quality value, and price (Peng et al., 2019). Based on these perceived value models, scholars have explored the action mechanism or prediction effect of different dimensions of perceived value on consumer behavioral intention and preference. Cultural and creative products have certain particularities. Compared with ordinary products, they have a higher intrinsic spiritual value, etc. When consumers buy cultural and creative products, they tend to feel spiritual satisfaction and have more demands for perceived value (Yang, 2019). In the related research on perceived value, many scholars introduced perceived value as an external variable based on the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to study its relationship with purchase intention. Based on TAM, Wang (2020) demonstrated that perceived value has a positive impact on the purchasing attitude of consumers of cultural and creative products. At the same time, it can directly have a positive impact on consumer purchase intention. Therefore,

this research studies the relationship between perceived value as an external variable and purchase intention based on TPB.

2.2.2 Culture

Culture is the core of cultural and creative products, which are first developed based on cultural resources and then created and produced through other forms such as innovation and aesthetics (Guo, 2019). Culture provides inspiration and materials for the research and development of cultural and creative products. It is also the vitality that enables the sustainable development of cultural creative products (Yang, 2019). Lin et al. (2018) put forward six major criteria for influencing tourists' purchase of cultural and creative products in scenic spots. Among them, culture is the core influence criterion (Luo, 2019). Cultural consumption is often accompanied by consumers' identification with product culture. Based on consumer culture theory (CCT), a number of scholars have conducted relevant studies on the factors affecting consumer purchase intention from the perspectives of traditional culture, organizational culture, and brand culture. For example, Li et al. (2021), based on CCT, found that emotional identification, attribution identification, and self-esteem identification have a positive impact on clothing consumer purchase intention. Therefore, this study will study the influence of culture as a mediating variable based on CCT.

2.2.3 Technology

With the development of modern technology, a new channel of online purchase has emerged in consumers' purchasing behavior. Consumers' purchasing forms are divided into online shopping and offline shopping. Online shopping can be divided into electronic products such as computers, mobile phones, or tablets according to the differences in operating terminals, and payment forms can be divided into online payment, telephone payment, and mobile payment. When consumers do online shopping, the technology in this operation can give them the experience of perceived ease of use (Li et al., 2019). Due to the development of technologies such as new media and mobile payment, China's large number of online consumers also provides a very large market for the consumption channels of cultural and creative products. Due to technology, consumers in Hubei Province mainly use mobile phones as the payment channel for cultural consumption, which is more convenient and efficient (China Internet Network Information Centre, 2019). In the study of technical factors based on the technology acceptance model (TAM), TAM has always been regarded as the most effective model to explain users' willingness to accept and use new technologies. This suggests that the easier information technology is to use, the more users perceive its usefulness. Obviously, both usefulness and simplicity are affected by external factors. (Ye et al., 2022). Therefore, this study will study the relationship between purchase intention and TAM technology as a moderating variable.

2.2.4 Consumer Purchase Intention

In his study, Peng (2022) summarized willingness as the subjective possibility of an individual taking a specific action. As an extension of the same concept, consumer purchase intention refers to the probability that consumers are willing to carry out a certain purchase behavior.

Purchase intention leads to purchase behavior, so what factors affect purchase intention is also the focus of scholars' research. Feng et al. (2018) studied the purchase intention of domestic and foreign scholars and summarized five influencing factors, namely consumer personality characteristics, product internal cues, product external cues, consumption context factors, and socio-economic factors (Feng et al., 2018). A number of scholars have studied purchase intention and purchase behavior in combination with theory of planned behavior (TPB). For example, Wang (2020), based on TPB research, takes purchase intention as the dependent variable and introduces perceived value as the independent variable, proving the indirect and direct relationship between them. Therefore, this research will study the relationship between external factors and purchase intention based on TPB.

2.3 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: *Perceived value has a significant impact on consumer purchase intention through the mediating effect of culture.*

When consumers buy cultural and creative products to meet their spiritual needs, the culture of the products is their primary consideration. This is because, compared with other products, cultural and creative products themselves are produced around core cultural elements and contain culture-related spiritual values. Therefore, in order to meet perceived value needs, consumers will seek cultural features and symbolic meanings in cultural and creative products before purchasing them (Yang, 2019). Cultural and creative products have profound cultural connotations and have significant advantages in meeting the needs of consumers. Influenced by social culture, consumers' associations with cultural characteristics of products can trigger relevant marketing effects (Lv Q. H. et al., 2019).

Hypothesis 2: *Culture mediates between perceived value, innovation, aesthetic, and quality and consumer purchase intention.*

Culture, as a non-market factor, is becoming more and more important to consumer purchasing behavior and plays a direct role in forming consumer purchasing intention. Cultural factors have been proven to be an important variable affecting consumer behavior. The cultural connotation of consumer goods purchased by people is actually the result of the integration and development of social culture, brand culture, etc. Consumer purchase intention or behavior for products based on cultural factors exceeds their utilitarian characteristics and commercial value. This also reflects consumers' cultural affiliation and consumption criteria, forming their consumption preferences and attitudes and significantly influencing their cognition and behavior (Chen, Zheng & Liu, 2013).

Hypothesis 3: *Perceived value has a direct relationship with consumer purchase intention.*

Studies have shown that consumers' perceived value significantly affects their purchase intention (Sheth, 1991). Consumers have different perceived values for different kinds of products, and the degree of influence on purchase intention is not consistent. Previous studies have demonstrated the influence of brand attributes such as product quality and price on purchase intention. A brand or manufacturer, based on market demand, produces and circulates

the product in the market, indicating that the product itself has a certain functional value. Consumers decide whether to buy a new product by speculating on the functional value it can bring.

Hypothesis 4: *Technology has a moderating effect on consumer purchase intention.*

Technology has changed the way and environment of consumers' economic activities, and a convenient and comfortable consumption experience also helps to enhance consumer purchase intention. This is because the popularity of smart phones has made everyone connected, and Internet-based technology has promoted the way people consume while helping to upgrade consumption. This kind of change has also manifested itself in daily life. When consumers buy products, they hope to obtain a more comfortable, convenient, and digital consumption experience in their daily lives. Therefore, mobile Internet and modern digital technology further stimulate consumer purchase intention. In this environment, cultural and creative industry will develop more rapidly in the digital age (Yi, 2022). Cultural and creative cooperation with e-commerce is the new direction of future development. At present, the combination of cultural and creative e-commerce has shown great vitality. That makes cultural and creative designers feel hopeful and also increases the income of the cultural and creative industries (Chen, 2022).

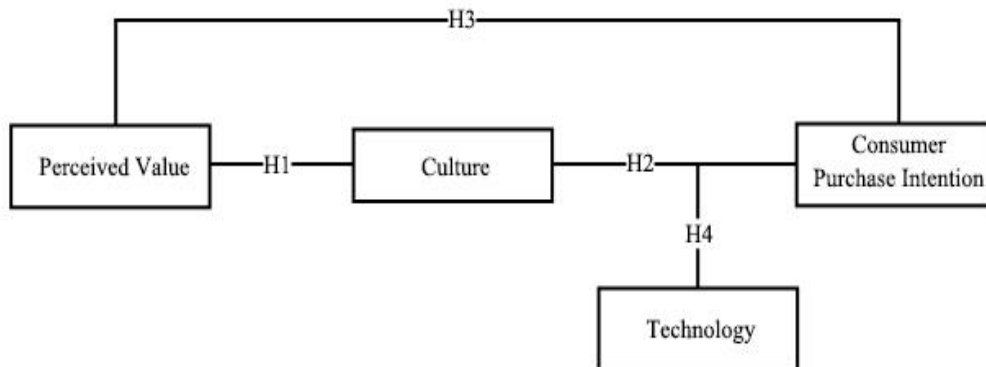


Figure 2: Conceptual Model

This research introduced perceived value as an independent variable and studied its relationship with the intermediary variable culture, the moderating variable technology, and the consumer's perceived value, as shown in Figure 2.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Measurement

In this study, a questionnaire was made into a five-level Likert scale and distributed online. The first part of the questionnaire is to introduce the purpose and content of the questionnaire and the contact information of the author. The second part is to understand the respondents' personal information, channels of purchasing cultural and creative products, and their feelings about the consumption process. The first question is set to "Have you ever purchased cultural and creative

products". The purpose of this question is to screen out consumers who have purchased cultural and creative products. The third part is the main body of the questionnaire, which measures perceived value, culture, technology, and consumer purchase intention. Each variable corresponds to a measurement scale of 4 items, and each measurement content is illustrated by the Likert five-point method, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

The online questionnaire of this research refers to the forwarding of multiple chat groups through WeChat, a popular chat software in China. After the survey is completed, the data can be immediately recycled and uploaded. The overall statistical data can be seen in the background. Finally, Smart PLS 4.0 will be used for data analysis.

Table 1: Measurement Scale of Influencing Factors on Consumer Purchase Intention of Cultural and Creative Products

Variables	Measurement Topic and Code	Source
Perceived Value (Independent Variable)	PV1: I believe that the purchased cultural and creative products is worthwhile in relation to the cost of money. PV2: I believe that the purchased cultural and creative products is worthwhile with the product of design is in trend. PV3: I believe that the purchased cultural and creative products have an improve in terms of functionality. PV4: I believe that cultural and creative products have traditional and cultural value.	Wang (2020)
Culture (Mediating Variable)	C1: I consider the current cultural and creative products to be quite unique. C2: I believe that the current cultural and creative products are quite dynamic. C3: I believe that the current cultural and creative products are distinctive and fascinating. C4: I believe that cultural and creative products reflect on the contemporary culture due to changes over time.	Guo (2018)
Technology (Moderating Variable)	T1: Purchasing cultural and creative products online is convenient. T2: It is quite easy to find cultural and creative products on the internet. T3: It is quite simple to learn all about cultural and creative products online. T4: Purchasing a cultural and creative product online could be more of a value for the cost.	Davis (1991)
Consumers Purchase Intention (Dependent Variable)	CPI1: I am motivated to purchase cultural and creative products that are of interest to me because of the value as a whole. CPI2: Even if the price of cultural and creative products increases, I will still purchase them. CPI3: I will share my experience of cultural and creative products with people. CPI4: I will encourage my family and friends to purchase cultural and creative products.	Ruan (2021)

3.2 Sampling

First of all, this study targets Hubei consumers in China, and the target group is Generation Z in Hubei. Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2010, are natives of digital technology, and the Internet and digital products are part of their innate and daily lives. The reasons for selecting this target group in this study are as follows: Sun (2022) mentioned that Generation Z is an important consumer group of cultural and creative products. They have a strong sense of independence, an easy willingness to accept new things.

Secondly, this research randomly selects Hubei universities for sample research. Because college students, including undergraduates and postgraduates, belong to Generation Z, their age and personality characteristics are in line with the characteristics of the target population. Sun (2022) mentioned that the student group of Generation Z is the main consumer of cultural and creative products.

Thirdly, this study will issue questionnaires to the students of this university to complete the pilot study. The pilot study is designed to revise the questionnaire, test the logic, rigour, and internal consistency of the questionnaire content, and reduce the risk and error of the formal investigation. In the pilot study of this research, the sample size was set at 30 people. Isaac and Michael (1995) suggested that “samples with N’s between 10 and 30 have many practical advantages” (p. 101).

Finally, after determining the sample size, this study will issue online questionnaires to college students in Hubei province through a random sampling method. Because the main way of cultural consumption for Generation Z consumers in Hubei is through online purchases. The main online distribution channel is mass distribution to students at universities in Hubei on the chat app WeChat.

The sample size for this study was 377. The reference sample size was based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) literature. In this research, Hubei University was randomly selected among the universities in Hubei. According to 2022 statistics, the number of students in the school is 21,600. When the number reached 20,000, the sample size was 377. Therefore, it can be concluded that the sample size of this study is 377 (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

In the pilot study of this study, a simple random sampling method will be used to issue online questionnaires. Then, after data collection by survey, Smart PLS 4.0 will be used to test the reliability and validity of the survey question scale. The main goal is to make certain amendments and improvements to the items in the survey question scale so as to provide references for subsequent in-depth research and model testing. Finally, questionnaires will be issued from June to August 2023 to collect formal data, and Smart PLS 4.0 will be used to analyse the data.

3.3 Pilot Study

In this paper, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are used in Smart PLS 4.0 to evaluate the internal consistency of the same concept item and measure whether it meets the general reliability test standard.

The reliability standard of this study is Cronbach's $\alpha \geq 0.70$, composite reliability ≥ 0.70 . Hair (2019) suggested that the values of composite reliability and Cronbach alpha between 0.60 to 0.70 are acceptable, while in more advanced stage the value have to be higher than 0.70, AVE value should exceed 0.50 so that it is adequate for convergent validity (Hair et al, 2019).

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Analysis for Pilot Study

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
PV	0.877	0.879	0.915	0.730
CULT	0.910	0.911	0.937	0.788
TECH	0.901	0.902	0.931	0.771
CPI	0.849	0.851	0.898	0.689

In the pilot study, the generation Z consumers in Hubei were targeted. 35 online questionnaires were randomly distributed in colleges and universities in Hubei, and 30 valid questionnaires were collected. The analysis in Smart PLS 4.0 software draws a conclusion: as shown in Table 2, the values of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability are above 0.70. AVE values exceed 0.50. The overall result is qualified and meets the reliability standard. The results confirm the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, which can be used for follow-up research.

4. CONCLUSION

This research builds a model. In the model, perceived value affects consumer purchase intention of cultural and creative products, in which culture is the mediating variable. Technology is the regulating variable. The supporting theories are the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), the technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989), and the consumer culture theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005),

In terms of research methods, this study chooses quantitative research methods. The five-level Likert scale is used as a measuring tool to make online questionnaires, and conducts data collection and analysis through random sampling. Among them, since the target population in this study was the generation Z of Hubei, the college students of Hubei universities were randomly selected for sampling. According to Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) literature reference, the sample size was 377. In the Pilot study, 35 samples were collected, 30 valid questionnaires were recovered. Smart PLS 4.0 was used for analysis, which confirmed the reliability and validity of the questionnaire and could be used for subsequent in-depth research.

The purpose of this research is to enhance consumer purchase intention of cultural and creative products and to provide management suggestions for the long-term healthy development of cultural and creative products. The theoretical significance of this study is that it can further deepen and enrich the existing theory of consumer purchase intention for cultural and creative products. In addition, it also could deeply understand the relationship between the factors that affect consumer purchase intention. Practical significance lies in the fact that this study could ultimately enhance consumer purchase intention for cultural and creative products. Meanwhile it could further promote the sales of cultural and creative products in Hubei province and even

in China. Institutions and companies related to cultural and creative products can not only develop and produce more products that meet the needs of consumers in various aspects, but also carry forward and spread traditional culture through more cultural and creative products derived from culture.

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