

A Conceptual Model for Revitalizing Shenyang's Cultural Heritage: Enhancing Customer Engagement via Social Media Branding

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a conceptual framework focused on reviving cultural heritage using social media branding strategies. Based on the case study of Shenyang, China, it focuses on how traditional cultural practices can best handle the challenges facing dealing with the shifting world of the internet. As we operate in the fast-moving digital world, it is increasingly more challenging for traditional cultural practices to move in pace with digital evolution. According to social networks, a gap exists between preserving cultural values and adapting a customer's modern behavior. This paper presents a framework for cultural preservation, digital marketing, and consumer participation. This paper stresses that social media can be viewed as a cultural heritage promotion enabler while engaging consumers in this framework. Core features include the digitalization of critical cultural elements, the development of cultural heritage-related online communities through social media, the increase of interaction of people with culturally created content, and so on. This framework offers a path to renewing the cultural landscape by incorporating digital strategies. It also acknowledges challenges like potential commodification and loss of authenticity. The insights will benefit policymakers, cultural institutions, and businesses while guiding further empirical research on social media's role in cultural preservation.

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Contribution/Originality: This study extends existing work by offering a comprehensive theoretical model integrating social media branding and customer engagement strategies that would specifically apply to the revitalization of Shenyang's cultural heritage, presenting both theoretical and practical contributions that attempt to bridge existing gaps to enhance cultural preservation in the digital age.

1. Introduction

Social media communication has transformed how brands deal with their customers in the digital age through readily available platforms to engage the audience. However, it is essential to realize that the impact of social media branding strategies may differ in different cultures, and thus, cultural influences must be considered. To this end, this study will set its perspective on the Chinese city of Shenyang, with its diverse cultural manifestations, to understand the interdependent relationship between culture and customer interactions with brand design on social media platforms. However, the literature is relatively scanty on the particular effects of specific local cultures on social media marketing, even though social media is now global to its extent. Due to its distinct cultural characteristics, these dynamics can be studied in Shenyang. Learning how local culture influences present-day customers, especially external consumers, will be helpful for marketers aiming to adapt their communication strategies to different cultural environments (De Vries et al., 2017; Hollebeek et al., 2014).

Previous research has also highlighted that social media engagement is a complex cognitive, affective, and behavioral phenomenon (Trunfio & Rossi, 2021). Researchers pointed out that brand engagement on social media platforms means more than just the purchase; it forms a community and loyalty (Kumar & Pansari, 2016; Pansari & Kumar, 2017). Also, the influence of cultural considerations in social media marketing has been highlighted, including the fact that localized marketing with cultural facets incorporated improves user engagement (Zhang & Zhang, 2021).

This study addresses two primary issues: generalizable findings regarding the role of Shenyang's local culture in the specific context of social media brand marketing and a desired focus on applying local cultural features to improve customer interactions. Through exploring these topics, the research aims to contribute to the theory building of intercultural marketing, especially that of brand design and brand management in China (Trunfio & Rossi, 2021). Incorporating these cultural dimensions in branding has positively affected branding loyalty and equity. Highly successful digital marketing strategies intentionally integrate social media platforms and other relevant digital tools while being sensitive to cultural influence on brand design and customer relations (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Herhausen et al., 2020).

This paper also aims at creating and presenting an overall framework in an attempt to see how social media branding strategies could be used to increase the levels of engagement of the citizens of Shenyang, China, and even the world, with cultural heritage with the view of creating a model that complements traditional cultural practices in today's digital world. To this end, it aims to build on existing theories of cultural sustainability, digital marketing, and customer engagement while looking at the associated barriers and opportunities in Chinese social media environments to offer applied and normative recommendations to cultural institutions, businesses, and policymakers on the appropriate ways of preserving cultural assets and promoting them through social media. Overall, it is expected that the role of the cultural dimensions in social media branding will be emphasized to assist the brands in communicating effectively with customers in culturally sensitive markets. By investigating Shenyang's overall cultural environment, this research attempts to unveil findings that may be of global relevance to other culturally diverse cities in establishing, marketing, and branding themselves on Social Media platforms for business and public consumption. This study intends to contribute

significantly to the extensive knowledge of intercultural marketing and social media branding.

1.1. Research Background

Branding through social media has become essential in promoting cultural values and involving customers in the current societies. This is especially the case with cities with historical heritages, such as Shenyang, which boast vibrant cultural attractions and performances but need to appeal to a contemporary but diverse audience. The credibility of such branding initiatives depends on intercultural sensitivity and customer participation in digital platforms (De Vries et al., 2017; Hollebeek et al., 2014). Other empirical studies have indicated related attributes that affect customer involvement in cross-cultural internet marketing and brand creation. These factors can be further decomposed into attitudes, knowledge and skill, and internal outcomes (Kumar & Pansari, 2016; Trunfio & Rossi, 2021). However, there is a gap in the research specifically addressing how these factors can be leveraged to rejuvenate the cultural heritage in Sanyang, primarily through a social media branding strategy to promote customer interaction.

Perceptual attitudes like respect, openness, or curiosity are essential in customer engagement. The high-quality content creates respect for the web-based platforms and the communities created and managed by their members in a trustworthy manner (Seraj, 2012). Openness, which reflects a propensity to approach new experiences and obtain valuable goods or resources, is positively related to sociability and interaction online (Marbach et al., 2019). The desire to know pushes marketers to come up with entertaining and appealing campaigns that, in return, elicit positive attitudes and ad evaluations (Daume & Huttl-Maack, 2019; Dodoo & Youn, 2021).

Knowledge and skill are two critical determinants intimately involved in cross-cultural branding. Ethnic identification, similar to cultural self-consciousness, has a positive effect on attitudes toward Web advertising and purchase intentions (Becerra & Korgaonkar, 2010). Values, heroes, rituals, and symbols from Deep cultural knowledge affect behavior resulting from cultural impact (Luna & Forquer Gupta, 2001). Perceived communicative competence is argued to mediate audience engagement as an aspect of sociolinguistic awareness (Rennekamp & Witz, 2021). The presented listening, observing, evaluation, analysis, interpretation, and relation skills foster a social presence and psychological involvement in online communications (Holt, 2010; Yu, 2020).

Internal outcomes, or locational variables, which include adaptability, flexibility, ethno-relative views, and empathy, play a critical role in customer engagement. Local adaptation of website characteristics influences consumer perceptions and behavioral intentions for website interactivity (Singh et al., 2006). Flexibility through rich media and cross-media can improve the level of interest (Davis et al., 2019; Voorveld, et al., 2018). Ethno-relative beliefs support the postmodern and pluralistic approach to consuming (Nair & Little, 2016), while empathy helps to develop an emotional bond with the customers through brand narrations (Dessart & Pitardi, 2019).

Therefore, intercultural competence and online customer engagement are related to brand experience, which comprises sensory, cognitive, and affective factors and brand-related behaviors (Chen et al., 2021). Moreover, contextual factors and individual cultural characteristics incorporating social and cultural dimensions mediate the associations

between intercultural competence and customer interactions (Nair & Little, 2016). Furthermore, one can identify digital literacy as a critical moderator. It moderately impacts customers by altering their online activities and knowledge of the social media context (Guess & Munger, 2023; Van Deursen & Van Dijk, 2014). For this reason, examining digital literacy as a moderator between knowledge, skills, and customer engagement from a sociocultural perspective is crucial to unearthing the nature of social media branding involvement in revitalizing Shenyang's cultural heritage (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Herhausen et al., 2020).

Incorporating cultural dimensions within brand design has demonstrated benefits on brand identity, loyalty, and reputation. Sustainable approaches to digital promotional activities skillfully incorporate social media avenues and digital tools with recognition of cultural impacts on branding and the customer experience (Zhang & Zhang, 2021). Nonetheless, some of these strategies may be effective on one social media platform and less effective on another, indicating that social media branding needs customized solutions to yield the best results (Jha & Verma, 2024; Pansari & Kumar, 2017). This research, therefore, seeks to fill the existing knowledge gap on the influence of Shenyang's local culture on user participation in social media brand marketing and the importance of developing strategies that fully utilize local cultural factors to increase customer engagement. By addressing these questions, the research aims to contribute to the theoretical advancement of intercultural marketing, specifically in brand management in China, where the cultural dynamics significantly differ from those seen in Western societies.

1.2. Problem Statement

The research gap in the literature on the effects of cultural factors within the Shenyang context on user engagement in social media brand marketing must be considered. Cultural factors are known to play an essential role in the brand marketing process. This study identified a research gap in understanding the effects of the local culture of Shenyang on social media users. This gap is problematic for brands wanting to leverage cultural aspects to positively impact user engagement and brand loyalty (Kim et al., 2019; Zhang, 2023). Social media marketing strategies are mainly based on global or national research insights, which are insufficient to capture the local cultural subtleties to ensure high customer engagement. This flaw weakens the impact of brand communication in culturally dependent locations like Shenyang (Trunfio & Rossi, 2021; Zhang & Zhang, 2021). Current studies are needed to understand how social media branding strategies can be best tailored to fit the Shenyang cultural context, as this would help brands achieve higher levels of user engagement (De Vries et al., 2017; Kumar & Pansari, 2016).

In addition, the local-style brand must recognize the specific national culture they are attached to while using social media marketing strategies. This balance is the need to create a local image and, at the same time, appeal to national consumers based on a joint and unified cultural background. Studying the organic unity of localization and nationalization of brand culture is an urgent strategic problem of integrating local cultural brands in Shenyang (Dwivedi et al., 2021). The task is further complicated by the need to understand and respond to the national and regional, even global, brand processes influencing consumers' attitudes and behaviors (Herhausen et al., 2020; Jha & Verma, 2024). Nevertheless, the practical gap in effectively balancing these local and national cultural dimensions, particularly for cultural heritage revitalization through social media branding in Chinese cities like Shenyang, is markedly large. This also applies to practical

digital strategies that can once preserve local culture's uniqueness and draw larger national audiences.

Appreciating these interconnections is vital for the brands to ensure they differentiate themselves, create a proper positioning within the cultural context of Shenyang, and formulate appropriate social network marketing strategies in China. This work seeks to identify dimensions that can help brands navigate the challenges of cultural dynamics in social media marketing to enhance user engagement and brand loyalty at the local and national levels (Pansari & Kumar, 2017; Voorveld et al., 2018). Moreover, this is also compounded by the fact that brand experience, especially affordances for perceptual experience relating directly to customers' sensual perceptions through localized symbols, mediates intercultural competence and online customer engagement (Chen et al., 2021). Furthermore, the analysis of the moderating impact of digital literacy on the relationship between knowledge, skill, and customer engagement in a socio-cultural context. This research aims to fill these gaps by examining the effects of Shenyang's local culture on customer engagement on social media, the best ways brands can harness local culture in their social media marketing strategies, and how they can manage local and national cultural factors to enhance customer engagement and brand loyalty.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cultural Traditions of Shenyang

This literature review is based on the research question of how the cultural traditions of Shenyang, social media branding strategies, and customer engagement are linked to visual communication design. It is, therefore, essential to understand the use of social media branding in engaging customers with the traditional cultural heritage of cities such as Shenyang, which is rich in cultural heritage (De Vries et al., 2017; Hollebeek et al., 2014). Shenyang City of Liaoning Province is culturally rich due to its over two thousand years of history. The city has a long history as a capital of the Qing dynasty and an industrial city (Cui et al., 2013). All these are seen in the architectural designs, foods, arts, and behaviors inherited from preceding generations. Architecture has always been one of the main factors defining Shenyang's culture. Shenyang Imperial Palace (Mukden Palace) and Fuling Tomb are two of the historical sites that remain a vital part of the city and a significant source of cultural tourism both from within and outside the country (Zhang & Wang, 2023). These structures are a perfect combination of Manchu, Han, and Mongolian architectural designs, which are evidence of the cultural diversity of Shenyang. Additionally, traditional performing arts or intangible cultural heritage, such as the Shenyang Pingju Opera and Northeast Errenzhuan, are essential to the city's cultural profile. Manchu culture, especially folk dances, is unique in the culture of Liaoning, as a "cultural gene" between the present and the past (Zhang & Zhang, 2021).

However, like many rapidly developing cities, Shenyang has heritage conservation problems. Rapid city development and economic growth result in the demolition of historical buildings and the disappearance of cultures. The current world requires new measures to conserve and transform culture into an urban environment and contemporary life (Kruglikova, 2020). Scholars have recently paid attention to the use of digital technologies in the preservation of cultural heritage. Nevertheless, there is a limited gap in the literature on how digital technologies, mainly social media branding, can be adopted to revitalize and conserve Shenyang's cultural heritage for contemporary audiences. Moreover, Cui et al. (2013) focus on the architectural heritage of Shenyang as

a cultural destination, while [Grytsiak and Khlopchyk \(2022\)](#) focus on the multicultural aspect of this heritage. However, [Kruglikova \(2020\)](#) indicates that most rapidly growing urban areas struggle to preserve traditional culture, thus suggesting this gap for innovative methods in cultural preservation.

2.2. Social Media Branding

Social media has gradually evolved into one of the most effective channels through which brands convey information and interact with consumers. According to [Kumar and Pansari \(2016\)](#), social media branding is the management of brand equity through platforms to create and sustain brands, reputations, and relationships with the target audience. Social media applications such as WeChat, Weibo, and Douyin have greatly influenced consumer behavior and brand image in China. Additionally, visual content is very effective in social media branding as this form of content tends to receive higher engagement than posts that only contain text ([Russmann & Svensson, 2016](#)). This trend shows the need to incorporate visual communication design in formulating social media branding strategies owing to the need to integrate cultural identity with digital media ([Shen et al., 2017](#)).

[Holt's \(2010\)](#) concept of cultural branding holds that brands achieve cultural legitimacy by linking with cultural stories and narratives. The above approach can be helpful when integrated with visuals, especially on social media platforms. According to [Zhou \(2023\)](#), Chinese brands have achieved cultural branding in their social media marketing by creating emotions that build a strong relationship between the brand and the consumer and create a unique market niche. The importance of social media in brand communication and customer interaction is undeniable ([De Vries et al., 2017](#); [Kumar & Pansari, 2016](#)). [Russmann and Svensson \(2016\)](#) and [Kim and Yang \(2017\)](#) also point out that visual content is much more effective on social media in terms of engagement. In this regard, [Shen et al. \(2017\)](#) show that it is possible to incorporate tradition into contemporary brand visuals on social media and create a brand with a unique identity that can target both the local and international markets.

There are notable gaps in existing studies on cultural branding and using visual content in social media in Shenyang. Studies should examine how these strategies can revitalize local cultural heritage, balance localization, and nationalization in the digital sphere, and engage contemporary audiences with historical content in a modern urban environment. The neglect of city preservation and promotion of cultural heritage using social media branding under speedy development such as Shenyang is also overlooked. While emotional connections in branding are established, building these connections, especially towards local cultural distinctiveness through social media, needs to be better comprehended.

2.3. Customer Engagement

Customer engagement is the customer's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to the brands ([Hollebeek et al., 2014](#)). In cultural heritage and social media branding, these dimensions can be translated as customers gaining knowledge of a city's history. Social media has shifted the relationship between brands and customers to involve the flow of information, interactivity, and the creation of value ([Javornik et al., 2022](#)). This interactivity is in congruence with customer engagement theories, especially those regarding cultural organizations and city marketing strategies ([Dwivedi et al., 2023](#)). Visual content benefits customer engagement on social media because image and video

content generate more engagement than written content (Kim & Yang, 2017). This trend highlights the significance of visual communication design in the context of social media for promoting cultural heritage (Herhausen et al., 2020). Holt's (2010) cultural branding theory, which postulates that brands find meaning in cultural narratives and ideologies, explains how cultural heritage can be used in branding. Jian et al. (2019) bring this concept to the Chinese context and demonstrate how brands have strategically included culture in their social media marketing to build emotional relationships with the consumer. Javornik et al. (2022) build on the interactivity of social media and its connection with the customer engagement concept, particularly in cultural institutions and city branding campaigns.

2.4. Integrating Cultural Traditions, Social Media Branding, and Customer Engagement

Using Shenyang's cultural imprint in social media branding to attract customer attention is another vast but knowledge-intensive area of research in visual communication design. It can be conceptualized in several ways, and each concept has different possibilities for cultural sustainability and public interest in the age of digital media and digital platforms (Jha & Verma, 2024). When posting content about Shenyang's cultural experience, one cannot overlook the aspect of visual communications design. This is because it is easier for designers to pass cultural features through the modern designs in transmitting content for Shenyang with traditional features that would make the current generation understand (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). Opportunely, social media platforms active and static components can be used to boost interaction with Shenyang's cultural legacy. Live tours, digital timelines, and AR applications can enhance cultural heritage education in the virtual environment while engaging users in active participation (Zhang & Xu, 2024). User-generated content campaigns can stimulate engagement, as people are asked to voice their perception of Shenyang's cultural heritage. This approach enhances people's interests and ensures that cultures are constantly reinvented and adapted within society (Jenkins et al., 2013). New media technology in social networks considers the audience's individual preferences and interests, which enhances the possibility of personalizing the approaches used to introduce audiences to cultural experiences. With the help of machine learning, it is possible to evaluate which visual attraction of Shenyang's cultural heritage responds to the specific target groups. This improves the targeting and effectiveness of further communication (Saulite et al., 2022).

Cultural practices, social media branding, and customer engagement are, therefore, a rich and challenging area of research. Researchers illustrate how incorporating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in cultural heritage and traditions can increase users' engagement with them (Stiti & Ben Rajeb, 2022; Zhang et al., 2022). According to Jenkins et al. (2013), this is because, through social media, cultural heritage can be preserved and made relevant to the new culture. Wang (2022) reveals the possibilities of data-driven methods; they argue that machine learning models can help to determine which visual features of cultural heritage are most relevant to different audiences. This opens doors to the idea that there may be more detailed and efficient approaches to communicating cultural heritage and traditions. In summary, it highlights the importance of the gaps in incorporating cultural dimensions with social media in online customer engagement through branding in Shenyang.

2.5. Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Although using cultural heritage associated with social media branding and customer engagement has many potential benefits, it also brings several risks and concerns. These include balancing authenticity with commercialization, addressing inclusivity issues and the digital divide, and navigating data privacy and cultural sensitivity concerns (Ng et al., 2024). Therefore, this paper identifies the problem areas and the need to balance cultural practices, social media marketing, and customer engagement. More research and discussions are needed to define the best practices regarding leveraging digital engagement opportunities without undermining cultural identity and ethical issues (Voorveld et al., 2018). Though utilizing digital technologies has benefits, some researchers explain vital concerns that need consideration. As the focus of this paper, Ng et al. (2024) discuss the risks and issues regarding the commercialization of culture and how this affects cultural significance. Han et al. (2023) delineate challenges to data privacy and cultural diplomacy regarding individualized cultural encounters.

Although there is some literature on cultural heritage, social media branding, and customer engagement, some research gaps can be identified. In particular, more research should be conducted on Shenyang's cultural heritage and its digitization process. Future research could also examine how social media branding can be used to promote the culture of Shenyang and the resultant influence on consumer relations. Furthermore, the ethical considerations of digitizing cultural heritage, especially regarding social media branding, need further research. Further study is required to establish how best to achieve the twin goals of maintaining authenticity and coping with forces of commercialization and how to ensure that digital cultural heritage initiatives are inclusive. Therefore, the work is concluded by discussing the opportunities for effective use of social media branding in the context of cultural traditions and customer interactions. However, it also raises the question of how to use the elements of traditional culture conscientiously and appropriately in the contemporary digital atmosphere. Thus, future work and discussions will remain paramount to forming guidelines on harnessing the positive aspect of digital interaction without compromising the traditional culture.

3. Research Method

This study uses a critical literature review as its primary research method to develop a robust conceptual model for revitalizing Shenyang's cultural heritage through social media branding driven by enhanced customer engagement. As a comprehensive synthesis of previous research on Shenyang cultural heritage revitalization and online customer engagement, this review evaluates and integrates research findings to derive new insights and formulate theoretical frameworks appropriate for the Shenyang local context. It illuminates appropriate methods of social media use to promote meaningful recreation between heritage organizations and the community. It serves as a source of inspiration for developing a conceptual model in cultural heritage management that satisfies the field's scholarly and practical demands (Elsbach & Van Knippenberg, 2020).

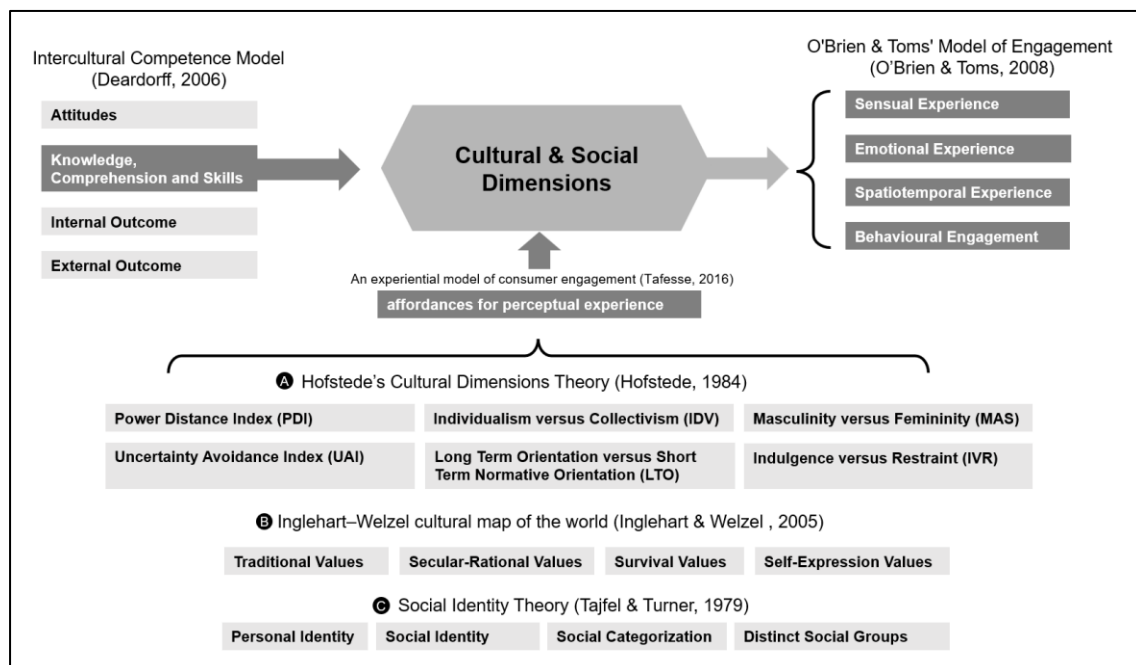
The themes to be elucidated include the influence of digital media on heritage promotion, best marketing tactics in the digital environment, and tested strategies for encouraging customers' involvement and participation in heritage works (Fabbricatti et al., 2020; Goldman et al., 2021; Li et al., 2020). This method will also critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of current practices and models; such evaluations will determine gaps in the existing literature that serve to be filled by the conceptual model (Drummond et al.,

2020). The purpose is to encompass more sources to understand how social media can help consumers engage and aid the sustainable development of Shenyang's cultural heritage towards policy and practice recommendations. By integrating cross-disciplinary perspectives, the conceptual model will be grounded in contemporary research and applicable to real-world challenges of cultural heritage organizations (Blut et al., 2023).

3.1. Theoretical Framework

As shown in Figure 1, the presented theoretical framework synthesizes some of the most relevant models to explain the relations between cultural dimensions, social media brand identity, and customer involvement within Shenyang. The framework is grounded in the basis of the Intercultural Competence Model (ICM) by Deardorff (2009), who argues that attitude, knowledge, skills, and internal and external outcomes help develop intercultural competencies. These components operate in a continuous, cyclical improvement process, suggesting that intercultural competence is an ongoing journey rather than a fixed destination. Interculturally speaking, Deardorff (2009) listed these components, especially an informed frame of reference shift (i.e., internal outcome), which involves using cultural knowledge to mentally adopt another cultural perspective, assess situations through that lens, and adapt behavior and communication accordingly. In other words, effective online branding requires tailoring engagement strategies based on understanding customers' cultural values, which implies the fundamental relationships between value behavior and communication for effective intercultural engagement. These have been considered a goal of ICM in developing content for social media that would capture the richness of Shenyang culture but sufficiently 'hooked' for pluralistic modernity.

Figure 1: The Relationships Between Proposed Theories Developed for This Study



Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (HCDT) by Hofstede (2001) identifies the core values at the individualism-collectivism level that feature the most trivial levels of manifestation in any society across communication norms and iconographic cultural signs and symbols. The framework, however, brings a somewhat more relativistic view to

overcome the limitations of the solid cultural dimensions. According to [Ting-Toomey \(2010\)](#), culture should be viewed as a continuous variable instead of a categorical bipartite structure; therefore, successful communicators should possess variable, flexible, and creative elements to cope with contextual variabilities. Thus, the given model has involved the Inglehart-Welzel Cultural Map (IWCM) ([Inglehart & Welzel, 2005](#)), which shows the changes in society's values between traditional / secular-rational on the one hand and survival/self-expression on the other to fulfill the need for a more elaborate approach toward cultural change. By incorporating IWCM into HCDT, the framework provides a broader perspective on what form Shenyang's cultural values might take with the set digital transformation and use of social media. Moreover, Social Identity Theory (SIT), developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner ([Tajfel & Turner, 2004, 1985](#)), focuses on how individuals define themselves based on their membership in social groups ([Butgel Tunali, 2016](#)). It emphasizes that people's self-concepts are shaped by their connections with social organizations and groups ([Lam et al., 2010](#)). SIT can help explain the formation and dynamics of brand communities on social media, where consumers may develop strong attachments to brands that align with their cultural values and social identities ([Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001](#)). By examining how cultural factors shape social identities and, in turn, influence customer engagement, this theoretical framework provides a solid foundation for investigating the cultural dimension and brand design of social media engagement.

Furthermore, it also adopts the user engagement model developed by [O'Brien and Toms \(2008\)](#), which helps identify different engagement aspects in a digital environment. This model characterizes engagement in three dimensions: erotic, affective, and spatial and temporal. Thus, a context within which it could be analyzed how social media branding can foster brand relationships with users around cultural content was offered. Mapping cultural values from HCDT and IWCM onto these engagement attributes offered the framework a different perspective on how social media branding can help refurbish Shenyang culture.

Integrated strategy for cultural models in social media branding and customer relations creates a better opportunity for a differential approach to branding and brand building. [Deardorff \(2009\)](#) and [Ting-Toomey \(2010\)](#) state that integrating the models enhances the communicators' awareness, empathy, adaptability, and skills toward intercultural communication competence. It is also of further assistance in establishing cultural relevance within the numerous facets of digital experience design, user values, and their characteristics concerning engagement. Additionally, cultural context is the interpretation system based on the formation of symbolic language, i.e., cultural symbols or visual images with conventional cultural content and cultural images relating to the archetypal content of the collective unconscious, such as the way of visual imagination leading to abstract concepts; strikingly, [Tafesse \(2016\)](#) observes brand pages with vivid sensory stimuli that facilitated an increased proportion of affordances for perceptual experience attained higher levels of consumer engagement by creating powerful sensory impressions. Therefore, the perception of cultural symbols expands the influence of cultural dimensions on customer engagement.

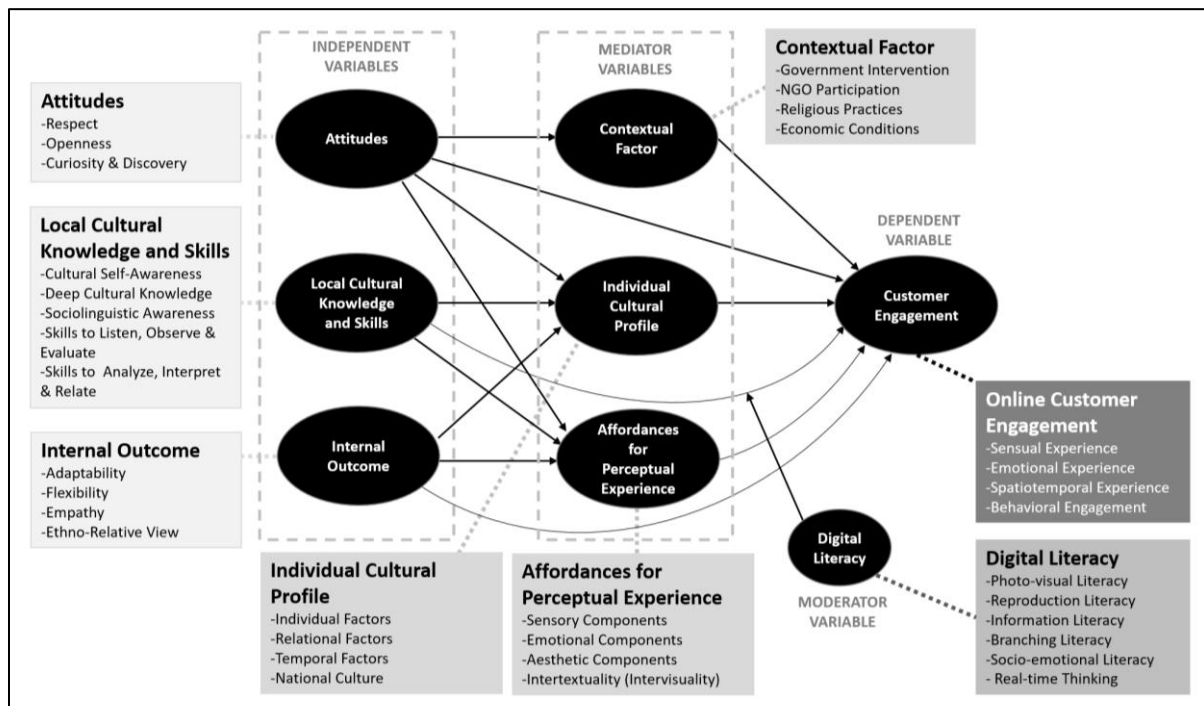
In this context, the following framework will help establish a solid foundation for investigating the intertwining dynamics of cultural heritage conservation, new media communication, and customer interaction during cultural regeneration in Shenyang. It is helpful because it also takes a multiple view of a culture because culture is not a static concept. Hence, branding in social media must offer digitally malleable experiences that

are appreciable in different cultures. It would help determine how cultural factors manifest in users' behaviors on social media platforms and how well the branding strategies in getting the cultural aspects right to revive the city's cultural heritage through engaging on social media platforms.

3.2. Conceptual Framework

This study's subsequent conceptual framework (Figure 2) shows the impact of social media branding on consumers in rejuvenating Shenyang's cultural heritage. It is based on heuristics of visual communication design, cultural heritage preservation, and digital marketing, which allow for a wide-based view of the analysis of social network dynamics of cultural revival. It is based on cultural engagement through digital branding, which has three major dimensions: the semiosis of cultural roots, the effectiveness of social networking sites, and customer engagement patterns.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework Developed for This Study



The intended framework aims to examine intercultural competence as a likely precursor of online intercultural customer engagement in brand design based on ICM, which includes attitudes (respect, openness, curiosity, and discovery), local cultural knowledge and skills (cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, sociolinguistic awareness, and abilities to listen, observe, evaluate, analyze, interpret, and relate), and internal outcomes (adaptability, flexibility, empathy, and ethno-relative views) (Deardorff, 2006), and Additionally, online intercultural customer engagement is conceptualized across four dimensions: the sensual experience, the emotional experience, the spatiotemporal experience, and behavioral engagement. The sub-dimension analyzed in the investigation of this dimension categorizes and considers specific characteristics of several widespread social media platforms in Shenyang, such as their content formats, which may include short videos, interactive posts, or lengthy articles; the behaviors of algorithms comprising influencers; user demographic distributions; and multiple others related to social media platform dynamics.

Moreover, the research delves into how contextual, cultural, and perceptual variables involving social and personal relationships might mediate online engagement. Within this framework, the mediating and moderating variables would be cultural literacy, which means a comprehensive understanding of local and national cultural practices; digital literacy, which means the ability to use specific components of a social media platform; and compatibility, which describes an individual-level connection with the cultural content on a social media platform. Therefore, Cultural factors, named individual cultural profile through the perspective of social identity theory, encompass individual, relational, temporal, and national cultural elements. Contextual aspects encompass government involvement, NGO activity, religious life, and economic conditions (Nair & Little, 2016). On the other hand, the dimension of user interaction patterns illustrates how users engage with and utilize cultural content on social media. Engagement will involve liking, sharing, commenting, and sharing content created by the users around the cultural heritage of Shenyang, involvement of influencers, and a social community that has the potential to increase engagement on cultural content. These two constructs integrate components associated with cultural and social dimensions from an individual perspective, drawing on HCDT, IWCM, and SIT and enhancing them with a dynamic development approach.

Additionally, perceptual variables focus on sensory, emotional, aesthetic, and intertextual/intervisual categories, primarily through visual means. The dimension of visual representation shows how the cultural traditions of Shenyang are being transferred to digital content: traditional ornaments and colors that are rather genuine in terms of culture but are also attractive in present-day terms. The framework creates visually exciting media artifacts considering classic beauty and modern design concepts through the mediator of affordances for perceptual experience (Tafesse, 2016). Lastly, a study focuses on how the moderating role of digital literacy, which encompasses photo-visual literacy, reproduction literacy, information literacy, branching literacy, socio-emotional literacy, and real-time thinking skills, impacts the field (Eshet, 2012). These unequal distributions of the digital platforms they use are also moderating variables, including generational factors, socio-economic status, and degrees of urbanization.

This conceptual framework, therefore, offers grounds on which an investigation could be conducted on how social media branding can be deployed in a strategy that can be used to reinstate cultural heritage practices in Shenyang by increasing customers' feedback. It offers the complex connection between cultural values on the one hand and sophisticated contemporary promotion models on the other hand for cultural stewardship and marketing in the digital context.

4. Conclusion

Based on this study, a complete framework for revitalizing Shenyang's cultural heritage via social media branding and visual communication design is proposed. The core strategy leverages digital platforms to create immersive and contextually sensitive content, combining traditional practices with modern digital mediums. This framework uses visual communication design as a primary tool to increase engagement with local cultural traditions while proactively responding to ethical considerations by utilizing a data-driven approach to analyze user preferences and interaction patterns.

This has a high potential impact and is mainly multifaceted. Serving as an alternative means of emotional sustenance and revitalization of cultural heritage amidst the

accelerating urbanization processes, it will expand Shenyang's audience for its artistic heritage, both locally and internationally. Such increased engagement might have economic spinoffs, such as increased cultural tourism driving local cultural industry. Moreover, the findings could illuminate how cultural preservation policies should orient themselves within the digital age. However, this research has broader implications. The proposed framework can act as a model for other similar cities where cultural heritage preservation is compromised by rapid city development, which makes cultural revitalization more responsible and sustainable.

As a necessary foundation for leveraging social media branding to connect consumers with local cultural traditions, this study comes when Shenyang embarks on a digital transformation of its cultural industries. This paper provides marketers, designers, and cultural institutions with helpful insight into the factors driving customer engagement with online cultural content. A closer examination of these digital techniques will shed light on their added role in cultural preservation and community building in Shenyang and other global urban centers under the double pressure of fast urban development and cultural conservation. This research then presents a novel, potentially impactful approach to the challenge of cultural heritage preservation in the digital age. Integrating traditional cultural elements with modern digital strategies offers a promising path forward for Shenyang and other urban environments, where development demands wax while cultural conservation calls.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

Not applicable.

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