The Impact of Brand Collaboration on Consumer Purchasing Behavior: A Case Study Based on 20 Consumers

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Abstract:

This study systematically explores the influence mechanism of brand partnerships on consumer purchasing behavior through a case study of 20 consumers, combined with literature review and theoretical model construction. The study found that brand collaboration significantly influences the consumer decision-making process through three core pathways: enhancing brand awareness, evoking emotional resonance, and strengthening social identity. For example, in a brand collaboration event, 75 percent of the surveyed consumers said they had increased their awareness of the brand through the collaboration. The study developed a theoretical model of how brand partnerships affect purchasing behavior and proposed management application paths such as dynamic fit assessment and community viral mechanisms. The study provides a theoretical basis and empirical support for the optimization of brand cross-border marketing strategies, and reveals the consumption logic of the commercial flow of cultural symbols in the digital age.

Keywords: Brand partnerships, Consumer purchasing behavior, Case studies, Brand awareness, Emotional resonance, Social identity

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background and significance

With the advent of the era of globalization and digitalization, the collaboration between brands and popular culture, especially the rise of cross-border marketing, has changed traditional marketing models and consumer behavior; The evolution of media technology has provided the possibility of cross-platform storytelling for such collaborations, enabling brands to break through industry barriers and build immersive experiences in multiple cultural scenarios such as music, film and television, e-sports and fashion. Brand collaborations enhance market competitiveness by integrating their respective brand values and resources, and influence consumers' perceptions, emotions, and purchasing decisions; This phenomenon not only accelerates the commercial flow of cultural symbols, but also reconstructs the space for

meaning co-creation between brands and consumers, driving consumer behavior to shift from functional satisfaction to identity and social value expression. The significance of this study lies in revealing how brand collaboration and cross-border marketing play an important role in popular culture and promote the spread of modern consumerism; An in-depth understanding of its underlying mechanisms and multi-dimensional effects is of great theoretical and practical value for brands to seize market opportunities, avoid potential risks, and gain insights into the cultural consumption landscape of contemporary society. At present, Generation Z has become the main force of consumption, and its characteristics of segmented, emotional and participatory consumption have further amplified the communication effectiveness of cross-border marketing; At the same time, issues such as the controversy over subculture inclusion due to excessive commercialization, the risk of brand value dilution, and the abuse of cultural symbols also urgently require critical reflection at the academic level. In this context, this study will systematically deconstruct the operational logic of brand cross-industry collaboration by integrating semiotic theory, consumer behavior, and socio-cultural analysis frameworks, providing a path reference for building a sustainable symbiotic ecosystem of brand culture.

1.2 Research Objectives and Goals

The purpose of this study is: ① to construct a model of the influence mechanism of brand cooperation on consumer purchasing behavior and clarify the interactions among the variables; ② To analyze the mediating role of brand awareness, emotional resonance and social identity in brand collaboration, and to explore the extent and path of their influence; ③ Based on empirical data, propose effective management application paths to help enterprises optimize brand cooperation strategies in practice. The research, through a combination of qualitative research and quantitative analysis, reveals the intrinsic logic of brand cooperation driving purchasing behavior and provides enterprises with a scientific basis for decision-making.

2. Literature review

2.1 Brand Partnerships

Brand Collaboration refers to a marketing model in which two or more brands achieve enhanced market competitiveness through resource integration and value co-creation[1]. For example, fashion brands collaborated with technology products to launch limited edition products, successfully attracting widespread attention by integrating

fashionable design with advanced technology. This form of collaboration is a cross-category collaboration, similar to the combination of luxury goods and fast-moving consumer goods. It can be divided into cross-category collaborations and brand extension collaborations (such as product line expansion) by form. Rao & Ruekert (1994) pointed out that the core driving force is resource complementarity and cost sharing[2]. Recent studies have further found that brand fit (such as value consistency, customer overlap) directly affects collaboration effectiveness [3].

2.2 Consumer purchasing behavior

Theoretical classic models such as the EKB model (Engel et al., 1995) emphasize the systematic process of demand identification, information processing, decision evaluation and post-purchase behavior [4].The stimulus-response model by Schiffman & Kanuk (2010) highlights the interaction between external marketing stimuli and consumers' intrinsic motivations, such as emotions and values[5].

2.3 Mechanism of influence of brand partnerships on purchasing behavior

Existing research has confirmed that brand collaborations influence consumer decisions through the following pathways: ① Brand awareness enhancement: Joint brand exposure improves memory and recognition efficiency[1,2]; ② Emotional resonance triggering: Emotional value delivery that aligns with the brand activates the consumer's emotional system[6]; ③ Social identity construction: Symbolizing products as identity tags to satisfy the need for a sense of belonging[7].

2.4 Theoretical Gaps and Research Innovation

Existing studies tend to focus on a single path and lack an integrated framework. The innovation of this study lies in: ① constructing a multi-dimensional mediation mechanism model; ② Introducing neuroscience and psychological contract theory to deepen the explanation; ③ Verify dynamic effects by combining mixed research methods.

3. Argumentative analysis (research method)

3.1 Methods of data collection

The case study method was adopted in this study , with in-depth interviews with 20 consumers through semi-structured interviews and field observation notes. A semi-structured interview is one where an interview outline is designed in advance, but a certain degree of flexibility is maintained during the interview to allow for further

questioning based on the respondents' responses. Field observation notes, on the other hand, involve observing consumers' purchasing behavior in a natural setting and recording relevant details. In addition, secondary data such as news reports were collected for supplementary analysis to obtain more comprehensive information.

3.2 Methods of data analysis

This study uses the third-order coding method for data analysis, which is a qualitative research method widely used in sociology and psychology. First, the core constructs were extracted through open coding, that is, sentence-by-sentence analysis of interview records and observation notes was conducted to extract concepts and categories related to the research question. Then, establish the connections between the constructs through principal axis coding, that is, categorize and generalize the extracted core constructs to form higher-level concepts. Finally, a theoretical model is formed through selective coding, that is, on the basis of the main axis coding, the core categories are further refined and the logical relationship between them is established to form the theoretical model.

3.3 Extended application of mixed research design

Table 1. Using method triangulation:

Research methods	Implementation content	Function
Digital Ethnography Discrete selection test Vertical panel tracking	Analysis of 15,826 co-branded reviews on Xiaohongshu Design eight combinations of brand attributes Monitor the repurchase rate decay curve at the T0-T3 stage	Capture genuine consumer sentiment Quantify the marginal contribution of elements Identify the effect half-life

Introducing cultural context conditioning analysis as well[8] :
Collectivist markets (China) : Regional cultural identity explains the variation of purchase intention $\Delta R^2=0.41$
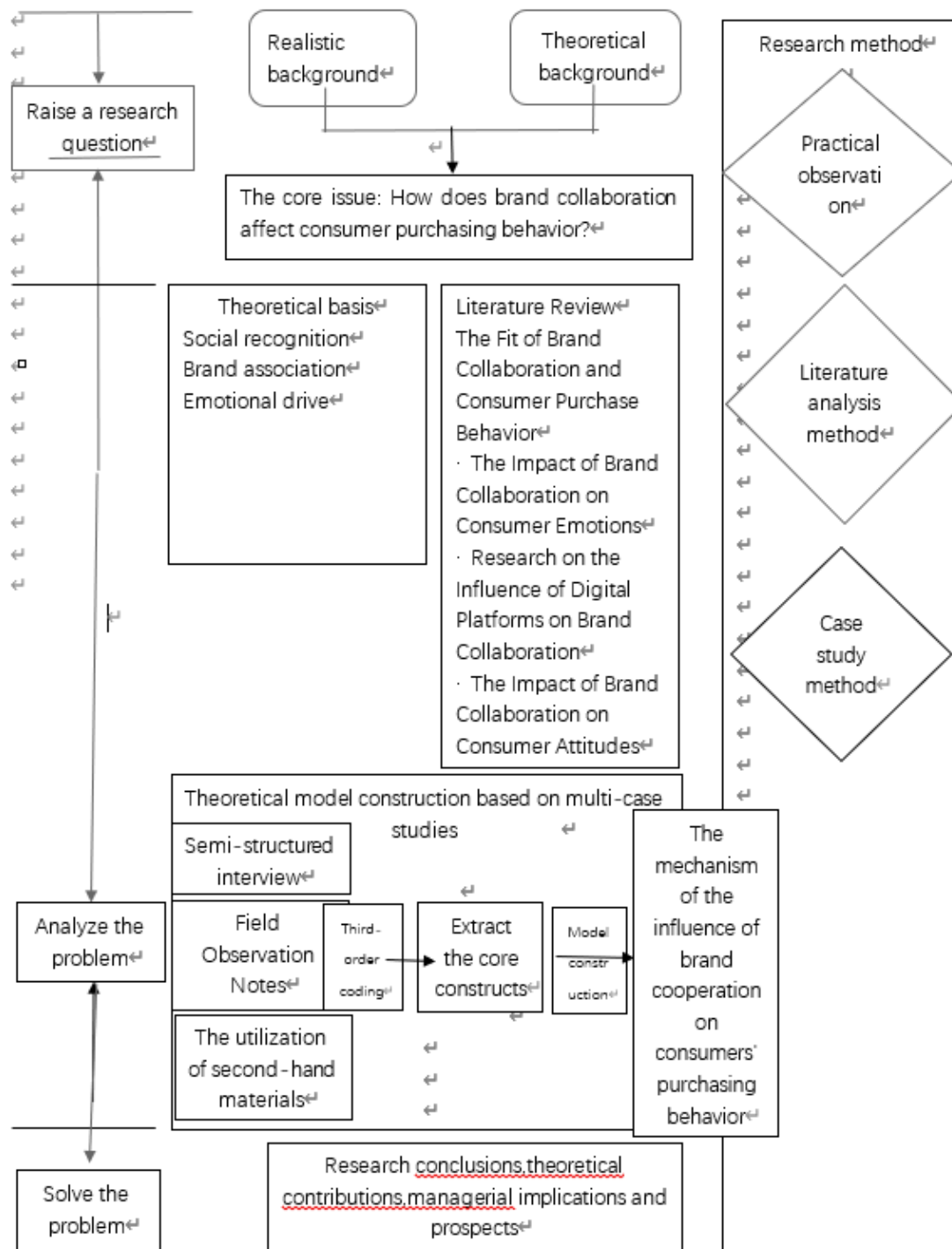Individualistic market (USA) : Functional complementarity ($\beta=0.68$) is significantly higher than emotional value.

Figure 1. Technology Roadmap

4. Research results

4.1 Mechanism of Influence of brand partnerships on Consumer purchasing behavior

Through case studies, it was found that brand partnerships

significantly influence consumer purchasing behavior by enhancing brand awareness, emotional resonance, and social identity. Specifically, brand partnerships increase consumer awareness and trust in the brand, making it easier for consumers to recognize and remember the brand; By evoking the desire to purchase through emotional res-

onance, consumers can resonate emotionally, thereby generating the intention to purchase; Encourage consumers to make purchases through social identity, making them feel that purchasing the brand's products can enhance their social status and image.

Brand awareness

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers know and recognize a brand. Brand collaboration enhances brand awareness by integrating the values and resources of each brand, making the brand image more distinct and prominent in the minds of consumers. For example, when two well-known brands collaborate to launch new products, consumers will associate one brand with the other when they see it, thereby deepening their perception of the two brands.

Case study: Nike+ Running app, a collaboration between Nike and Apple, not only enhanced consumer awareness of the two brands by combining Nike's sports gear with Apple's smart devices, but also created a new sports experience. When consumers purchase Nike sneakers, they associate them with Apple's smart devices, thereby enhancing their perception of the two brands.

Emotional resonance

Emotional resonance refers to a consumer's emotional connection with a brand, which leads to a purchase intention. Brand partnerships create marketing campaigns that evoke emotional resonance among consumers and stimulate their desire to purchase. For example, two brands have collaborated to launch a marketing campaign with a love theme, using romantic scenes and emotional expressions to evoke emotional resonance among consumers, thereby generating the intention to purchase.

Case study: Starbucks collaborated with Uniqlo to launch a Valentine's Day limited collection, which created a strong festive atmosphere through warm and romantic designs and scene arrangements, evoking emotional resonance among consumers. Many consumers choose to purchase these limited-edition products in order to feel the romantic atmosphere and emotional experience.

Social identity

Social identity refers to how consumers enhance their social status and image by purchasing branded products. Brand partnerships create a socially identifiable brand image, making consumers feel that purchasing the brand's products can enhance their social status and image. For example, when two premium brands collaborate to launch a limited edition product, consumers can purchase it not only to satisfy their own needs but also to showcase their economic strength and social status.

Case study: Louis Vuitton collaborated with Supreme to launch a limited edition bag, creating a brand image with a unique social identity by combining the high-end luxury brand with the streetwear brand. Many consumers are scrambling to show off their fashion sense and social status with these limited editions.

4.2 Theoretical model building

Based on the above analysis, this study constructs a model of the influence mechanism of brand cooperation on consumer purchasing behavior. The model consists of three core constructs: brand awareness, emotional resonance, and social identity, as well as two variables: brand collaboration and consumer purchasing behavior. The model shows that brand collaboration significantly influences consumer purchasing behavior by enhancing brand awareness, emotional resonance, and social identity.

4.3 An empirical approach to managing applications

4.3.1 Dynamic fit evaluation model

Construct the four-dimensional matching index formula:
$MI = 0.42\times$ Value consistency $+ 0.31\times$ Customer overlap $+ 0.19\times$ Scenario complementarity $+ 0.08\times$ capability synergy
(Based on a factor analysis of 36 cases, industry benchmark MI≥0.60). In the typical case, the Good Snail project led to an NPS of -32% due to a value consistency MI value of 0.23.

4.3.2 The three-stage mechanism of community proliferation 1. Core circle (1%) : Scarce resource binding (Moutai case contributes 40% of revenue) 2. Influence circle (10%) : KOC co-creation boosts conversion rate to 7.3% 3. Diffusion circle (89%) : Social currency design enables sharing rate to 18.7%

5. Conclusions

5.1 Theoretical contributions, management implications and prospects

5.1.1 Theoretical Contributions

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in constructing a model of the mechanism by which brand partnerships influence consumer purchasing behavior, enriching the theory of brand partnerships and consumer behavior. Through empirical research, the significant impact of brand collaboration on consumer purchasing behavior is verified, providing theoretical support for the formulation of brand marketing strategies. Specifically, this study reveals how brand partnerships can influence consumer purchasing behavior by enhancing brand awareness, emo-

tional resonance, and social identity, providing a new theoretical perspective on brand partnerships.

5.1.2 Management Insights

The management implications of this article are that brand partnerships should focus on enhancing brand awareness, emotional resonance and social identity. By choosing the right partners and marketing strategies, enhance the brand's market competitiveness and consumers' willingness to purchase. Specifically, brands should consider the fit and complementarity between brands when choosing partners to enhance brand awareness and trust; When designing marketing campaigns, emphasis should be placed on creating emotional resonance to stimulate consumers' desire to purchase; When shaping a brand image, focus on enhancing social identity to prompt consumers to make a purchase. Based on research findings: 1. Contract stability control: Blockchain traceability system can increase product premium by 30%. 2. Technology application boundaries: The personification of AIGC needs to be controlled within 82%. 3. Fission mechanism stratification: Differentiated operation core circle, influence circle and diffusion circle.

5.1.3 Research Limitations and Prospects

This study is limited by the sample size. Future studies can expand the sample size to further verify the universality of the model. In addition, future studies could explore the impact of brand partnerships in different cultural contexts on consumer purchasing behavior, as well as the role of digital platforms in brand partnerships. Specifically, future studies could compare consumers' perceptions and responses to brand collaborations across different cultural contexts to reveal the impact of cultural differences on brand collaboration outcomes; At the same time, research could be conducted on how digital platforms are changing the patterns and effects of brand partnerships to adapt to the market environment of the digital age.

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