

Customer Loyalty towards Traditional Cultural Drama in Chengdu, China

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Abstract: This paper investigated the drivers of consumer loyalty to traditional cultural dramas in Chengdu, China, as mediated by perceived value and customer satisfaction as dependent on perceived quality, customer expectations and content of television series. To accomplish it a mixed methods design was used, which involved a combination of quantitative data (403 questionnaire respondents) whose selection was done using proportional convenience sampling to the various districts of Chengdu and qualitative data (15 in depth interviews). The model was tested and hypotheses were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the goodness of fit. Findings revealed that the perceived quality of dramas which included traditional cultural aspects had a significant effect on viewer loyalty because the audience showed high interest in authentic and meaningful representations that transcended into superficial representations. Loyalty was further enhanced by high perceived value, whereby the viewers wanted to see meaningful portrayals that would provide them with a distinctive experience in the process of viewing. Higher satisfaction levels were observed to be highly linked to higher levels of loyalty in the Chinese context today, a fact that highlights the central role played by customer satisfaction in ensuring continued attention of the audience to traditional cultural dramas.

Keywords: Customer loyalty; traditional cultural drama; customer loyalty; content television series; traditional cultural drama management; Chengdu, China

1. Introduction

Customer satisfaction is a significant aspect of customer retention, profitability, and the general business management and marketing plan (Chao, 2015; Tsai, 2015; Han & Kim, 2021). Customer satisfaction has a strong relationship with customer loyalty, low price, less transaction costs, lower customer acquisition cost, positive corporate reputation, lower cost of failure, and improved defense against competition (Hanzaee & Rezaeeyeh, 2013). The importance of satisfying consumer needs and desires is an important factor among the core principles in marketing and business management (Amin & Nasharuddin, 2013). In the highly competitive television drama industry, especially after the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, achieving customer satisfaction has become an important research focus. Film and television production firms are able to develop a sustainable competitive advantage through the implementation of an extensive customer satisfaction-based strategy in the production of drama (Gupta & Singharia, 2021).

A satisfaction survey is a professional way to understand the quality of the programming, what is popular among viewers, and what they rate higher than other programs. The idea of having television series satisfaction surveys was initially tested by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and by using the index of appreciation, the preference of viewers towards a particular program is determined, which is later adapted in other countries of the world (Gupta & Singharia, 2021). Various areas have also created their own versions of this measure, such as the Index of Attraction in the United States of America, the Index of Enjoyment in Canada, the Quality Rating in Japan, the Interested Index in France, and the survey on the Appreciation Index in Hong Kong, China (Peleja et al., 2013). By comparison, drama



satisfaction surveys utilize a wider spectrum of opinions of viewer, providing unique benefits over expert reviews on determining the quality of a series. Through these surveys, production companies can enhance content and viewer satisfaction, and eventually achieve more profitable results (Lepori, 2015; Kim and Kim, 2021).

The translation of classic literary works into film and television productions has been a major subject in the media. These adaptations are aimed at attracting viewers to the content they already know and enriching artistic expression, as well as increasing the scope of classic works and opportunities to find them through the means of film and television (Gilardi et al., 2018). Among the numerous adaptations, four great masterpieces are immortal classics, one of which is the most famous, *Dream of the Red Chamber*. Such variations of this work as the 2010 version directed by Shaohong Li represent the artistic reflections and cultural backgrounds of the epochs (Hu et al., 2014; Zhang & Ryan, 2018). The recent adaptation of the *Dream of the Red Chamber* in 2010 aroused a lot of attention, criticism and debate among the viewers. However, behind the diverse opinions lie positive aspects of this drama, including its portrayal and promotion of etiquette culture, faithfulness to the original work, exquisite makeup, and elaborate costumes (Kaminski, 2017). Through the exploration of these productions, researchers can gain insights into viewers' perspectives on the transmission of traditional Chinese etiquette through cultural dramas, facilitating a deeper understanding and wider distribution of its culture (Wang & Davis, 2006).

In the research exploring the impact of Chinese TV series consumption on Thai audiences' cultural knowledge, it was found that cultural products play a significant role in international trade, economic development, and cultural communication. Chinese TV series are widely popular in Thailand, which is of great significance for the dissemination of culture (Tirasawasdichai et al., 2022). The satisfaction levels of TV dramas and movies, the attractiveness of celebrities, and social groups in different countries such as South Korea, China, and Thailand have all had a significant impact on consumers' purchase intentions for products and their travel intentions (Jiang et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2019). Simultaneously, the study of consumer loyalty in relation to traditional cultural drama contributes to the establishment of a strong brand influence for the dramas, enabling producers to more effectively meet consumers' needs (Ju, 2020).

In the post-pandemic television industry, customer satisfaction is crucial for loyalty. This study focuses on the intersection of traditional cultural drama management and consumer behavior in Chengdu, China, an area underexplored in existing research. While prior literature highlights the roles of perceived quality, customer expectations, and content in viewer engagement, there is a lack of empirical research on their combined impact on loyalty in culturally rooted dramas. Moreover, the mediating roles of perceived value and satisfaction need further study.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the factors that impact customer loyalty in Chengdu, China.
2. To analyze the mediating roles of perceived value and customer satisfaction via perceived quality customer expectations, content of the television series and customer loyalty.
3. To develop the customer loyalty regarding traditional cultural drama management in in Chengdu, China.

2. Literature review

This study is based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, Expectancy-Value Theory, Use and Gratifications Theory, the Sweden Customer Satisfaction Barometer, Dramatic Theory, the American Customer Satisfaction Index, and the China Customer Satisfaction Index. The following literature review aims to synthesize existing research on Chinese cultural dramas and identifies gaps in the current literature.

2.1. Chinese traditional cultural drama

Traditional cultural dramas are set in ancient times, with characters doing costumes and reflecting the customs of past civilizations. These dramas embrace a wide spectrum of genres, including martial arts, historical, mythological, fantasy, courtroom, crossover, palace-related, and biographical ones (Allern et al., 2022). Since 2001, the Chinese

government has actively promoted the dissemination of Chinese traditional cultural dramas in Southeast Asia. The 2013 “Belt and Road” Initiative further propelled this effort, marking a new stage in the film and television cooperation between China and Southeast Asian countries (Xin, 2020). For instance, in 2015, China's Yunnan Radio and Television Media Group and Cambodia's National Television signed a strategic cooperation memorandum, facilitating collaborative drama production. Guangxi, capitalizing on its unique geo - cultural advantages, has partnered with Myanmar and Cambodia to organize joint programs for the distribution of Chinese TV series in Southeast Asia. Besides government-led initiatives, private media enterprises and industry associations have also played a significant role, supplementing the efforts of state-owned media. These collaborations have coincided with the growing popularity of Chinese traditional cultural dramas in Southeast Asia. Along with the government initiatives, the role of private media enterprises and industry associations has also been important, to complement the work of the state-owned media. These partnerships have been accompanied by the rise in the popularity of the Chinese traditional cultural dramas in the Southeast Asian region.

Despite the fact that the Southeast Asian audiences tend to receive Chinese traditional cultural dramas, they have different preferences regarding distinct genres. Drama, especially historical, palace themed and fairy - tale - based, is particularly popular (Gilardi et al., 2018). Interestingly, the revival of these types of dramas in Thailand, since 2010, includes mythology, fantasy, wuxia, romance, palace intrigue, history, comedy, detective and suspense, as a reaction to the change in content preferences of the audience. The Chinese traditional cultural dramas are supported by various organizations such as official institutions, the state- owned and privately owned enterprises and industry associations. This support is multi-pronged and this has diversified their distribution in Southeast Asia (Kato et al., 2017). As more and more people worldwide embrace such dramas, the trend is likely to increase, hence the importance of film and television marketing management.

Film and television marketing management presupposes the overall supervision of the industry, which includes such areas as development, production, distribution, and promotion (Lee, 2020; Eichner and Esser, 2020). Its essence is to make sure the content is demanded by the audience and is effectively distributed and advertised. This is a comprehensive process that involves program development, production, creation of distribution channel, promotion, market research, talent and financial management, as well as adoption of new technology, all geared towards satisfying the audiences and ensuring effective penetration of the market.

2.2. Related literature review

2.2.1. Perceived quality, customer expectations, content of the television series and perceived value

Perceived quality is the evaluation of the general excellence of an entity made by consumers and is not the same as objective quality which involves the features of a product. Perceived service quality, an attitude, which is different but relates to satisfaction, is created when consumers compare expectations with the service performance perception.

The value that consumers subjectively assign to the overall benefits of a product or service as compared to its price is known as the concept of perceived value which is a fundamental concept of marketing (Eggert & Ulaga, 2002). It extends beyond the price, including functional, emotional, and social benefits that are included in decision making when purchasing (Tukiran et al., 2021).

Products that are perceived to be of high quality are perceived to be more valuable. A price can be justified by superior attributes, dependable performance or fine craftsmanship and perceived value will increase. In addition, perceived value may also affect quality judgments (Samudro et al., 2020; Channuwong et al., 2026). Quality is determined by perceived value and a high - value - - cost product may be perceived to be high - quality. Price has a bi-directional influence on perceived quality and value (Snoj et al., 2004).

Customer expectations, shaped by personal needs, past experiences, others' opinions, and marketing (Awwad, 2012), are beliefs about a product or service. The relationship between these expectations and perceived value is complex and impacts consumers' product or service perception. Expectations, influenced by prior experiences, word

- of - mouth, etc. (Terblanche, 2006), focus on anticipated benefits. Perceived value, a trade - off between benefits and costs (Susanti et al., 2019), is also affected by these factors.

Like customer expectations, the content of a TV series, including plot, characters, and production quality, influences viewers' perceived value, which is subjective and depends on entertainment level, emotional engagement, and how well it meets preferences. In summary, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Perceived quality has a significant positive impact on perceived value.

H3: Customer expectation has a significant positive impact on perceived value.

H5: Content of the television series has a significant positive impact on perceived value.

2.2.2. Perceived quality, customer expectations, content of the television series and customer satisfaction

Perceived quality plays a significant role in influencing satisfaction, as it directly impacts customers' perceptions of a product or service. Whenever customers perceive a product or service to be of high quality, satisfy their needs, and deliver as promised, chances are high that they will feel satisfied with the purchase. This is a quality perception on which they base their satisfaction, which means that the product/service did not only meet but perhaps even surpassed their expectations (Prasadh, 2018). Also, perceived quality can be used to compare actual performance of a product or a service. In cases where actual performance is lower than the perceived quality, customers have a higher likelihood of being satisfied with their experience (Bruin et al., 2021).

Customer expectations serve as an important indicator to gauge the actual performance or experience that is received. When a product or service meets or exceeds customers' expectations, it leads to heightened levels of satisfaction. Conversely, if the actual performance falls short of expectations, it may result in dissatisfaction. At a fundamental level, meeting basic expectations is imperative in achieving customer satisfaction (Ali et al., 2015). Although meeting these minimum requirements helps prevent dissatisfaction, it may not necessarily translate to high levels of satisfaction. Fulfilling baseline expectations establishes a foundation for organizations to strive to surpass expectations and enhance satisfaction (Tukiran et al., 2021).

The content of a television series is a significant determining factor in viewers' satisfaction with the series. Li (2020) examined the satisfaction and influencing factors of Chinese IP adapted dramas, finding that the content has a notable positive impact on audience satisfaction. Li & Wang (2020) explored the viewing habits and satisfaction levels of audiences of ancient costume-themed series, concluding that the content substantially influences audience satisfaction, with a positive effect. The content of a series directly influences satisfaction, as viewers' perceptions of and experiences with the content affect their satisfaction levels. Television series with well-developed storylines can engage viewers and maintain their interest (Dawi et al., 2018). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Perceived quality has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H4: Customer expectation has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H6: Content of the television series has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

2.2.3. Perceived value, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty

In the domain of consumer behavior, the relationships among perceived value, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty are of great significance. Perceived value, as defined by Semler (1997), is consumers' assessment of the overall worth of a product or service relative to its cost. It includes functional features such as product performance as well as a psychological feature such as the sense of status that it gives. Consumers are more likely to be satisfied when they feel there is a high value. According to Kim and Kim (2018), when the product fulfills or surpasses expectations and presents a good value, the level of satisfaction increases. To illustrate, a smart phone with advanced features, reliable performance which meets the efficiency and status requirement of a customer will most likely result in high satisfaction. Moreover, customers who are satisfied, according to Samudro et al. (2020), tend to believe that they have got what they have paid.

Perceived value is also related to customer loyalty. According to Howat and Assaker (2013), perceived value is a subjective assessment that takes into consideration all the expenses. It is influenced by such factors as product quality, customer service, and brand reputation (Samudro et al., 2020). Customer loyalty is based on customer satisfaction, which is affected by the quality of the products, service, and value - for - money (Türkyilmaz & Özkan, 2007; Situmorang & Harmawan, 2022; Anisa & Tjhin, 2023). El-Adly and Eid (2016) discovered that the level of satisfaction has a direct relationship with the level of loyalty. Once a customer is satisfied, he or she will buy again and the brand, thus making a chain of repeat business. According to the views provided above, the next hypotheses are formulated:

H7: Perceived value has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H8: Perceived value has a significant positive impact on customer loyalty.

H9: Customer satisfaction has a significant positive impact on customer loyalty.

2.2.4. The mediating effect of perceived value among perceived quality, customer expectations, the content of television series, and customer loyalty

Perceived value in television drama is a subjective judgement of the value of a drama in the eyes of viewers, the perceived benefits. As it is subjective, it differs in people. In drama, customer loyalty refers to the emotional, trust and loyalty of the viewers to a certain show. They are likely to re-watch it and refer it. Perceived value plays a vital role in the development of such loyalty since the perceived value that viewers have acquired in a drama influences their attachment (Kim and Kim, 2018).

Promotions, reviews, or previous experience give consumers expectations when it comes to choosing a TV series. These influence genre, theme and narrative preferences. The visions regarding content, such as production, script, acting, and images, are important. When they are met or more than met, they result in positive perceived value. Viewers want to be emotionally invested by having relatable storylines, engaging characters, or world building. The satisfaction of these needs makes the emotional attachment stronger and perceived value higher (Combes and Glevarec, 2021).

An effective story-telling, involving interesting plot lines, character growth, and story lines, can contribute to perceived value and loyalty. Incorporating meaningful themes further boosts value, strengthening loyalty as viewers relate to social or moral aspects. Technical aspects such as cinematography, visual effects and quality of production also play a big role in the perceived value. Good - quality production enhances the perception of the viewers, which results in favorable perceptions. The insights lead to the development of the following hypotheses:

H10a: Perceived value mediates the relationship between perceived quality and customer loyalty.

H10b: Perceived value mediates the relationship between customer expectations and customer loyalty.

H10c: Perceived value mediates the relationship between television series content and customer loyalty.

2.2.5. The mediating effect of customer satisfaction among perceived quality, customer expectations, the content of television series, and customer loyalty

Customer satisfaction is crucial for loyalty. When customers are satisfied, they will be more willing to purchase again and refer other people to their products or services, hence raising sales and revenue. They also have a lower likelihood of switching to competitors, reducing customer turnover and enhancing their lifetime value for the business.

Perceived quality is customers' subjective evaluation of a product or service's overall quality based on perceptions and expectations. For a television series, it's influenced by factors like customer expectations, which are shaped by past experiences, word - of - mouth, advertising, and brand reputation. When a series meets or exceeds these expectations, perceived quality is high; otherwise, it may be low.

The content elements of a television series, such as storyline, characters, and themes, play a significant role in perceived quality. Customers tend to prefer series that align with their genre or theme interests. Production values, including cinematography, sound design, and visual effects, also contribute. High-quality production can enhance the viewing experience and the impression of quality. Additionally, the acting quality of the cast members, along with plot strength, storytelling techniques, pacing, and narrative coherence, are key determinants of a series' perceived quality. In this regard, the following three hypotheses are proposed:

H11a: Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived quality and customer loyalty.

H11b: Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between customer expectations and customer loyalty.

H11c: Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between television series content and customer loyalty.

2.3. Conceptual framework

The illustration shows the conceptual framework in Figure 1.

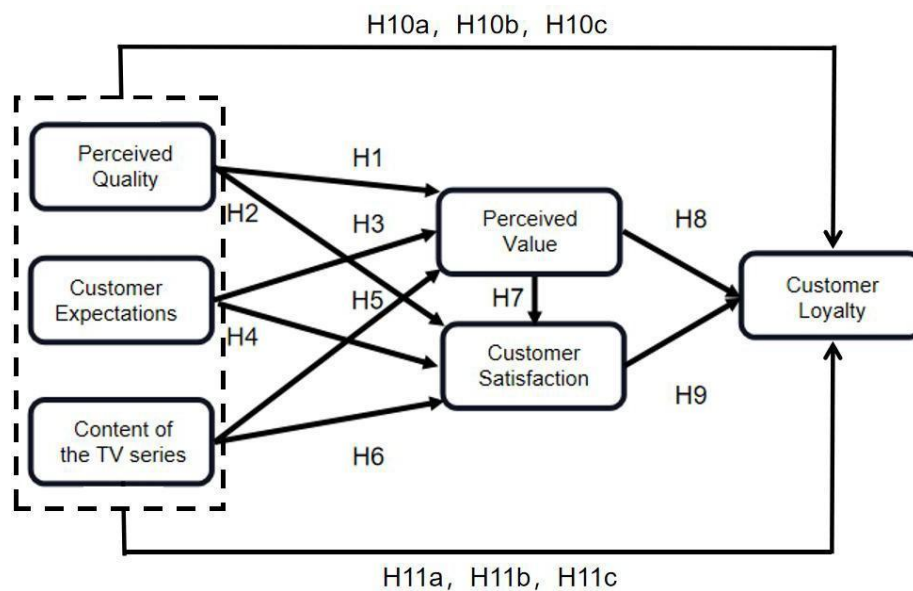


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework for this study

3. Research methodology

The study used a quantitative research approach that was used to generate numerical data. This study used structural models to study the relationship between variables that cannot be directly quantified numerically and studied the relationship between potential variables. The respondents included viewers of traditional Chinese cultural dramas aged 18-65.

3.1. Population

Chengdu is situated in the western part of Sichuan Province and is one of China's largest and most populous cities. It is the capital city of Sichuan Province and a key economic, cultural, and transportation hub in Southwest China. Chengdu spans an area of roughly 14,378 square kilometers (5,540 square miles) across 21 districts. The allocation of samples in this study was informed by the proportional distribution of the population across each district. For the year 2022, the integrated population coverage of television in Chengdu achieved an impressive 99.72%. The cable broadcasting and television coverage of the province were also at 18,225,000 subscribers, with Interactive Network Television (IPTV) subscribers totaling 27,850,000 households. This gave a total number of 46.075 million households (AsiaOTT, 2024).

In this research, only a particular section of the population in Chengdu was being considered. These were audiences that had been exposed to classical cultural drama. The cultural significance of the traditional cultural drama can appeal to the special group of viewers who may not have been well studied in terms of their viewing habits and preferences. The challenge of identifying and accessing all traditional culture drama spectators in Chengdu is a special problem because they might be scattered with no central database or a good source of identification. Thus, this study acknowledges the selected population as an unknown entity and merited careful consideration.

3.2. Sampling size and sampling methods

Kline (2015) assumes that the minimum sample size requirement for modeling the structural equation used 100 to 200. Anderson and Gerbing (1984) suggested that the minimum sample size should be 200 when using structural equation modeling (SEM). In addition, Williams et al. (2010) conclude that the minimum sample size of the complex model is 500 cases. More complex models suggest a need for larger sample sizes.

Through calculation, the maximum detectable result was 403, the minimum sample size of the model structure was 148, and the recommended minimum sample size was 403. Therefore, considering the efficiency of the questionnaire, 403 was selected as the sample size.

To enhance the representativeness of the research outcomes and ensure the feasibility of the sampling procedure, a two-stage sampling approach was employed in this study. Initially, proportional sampling was implemented in the first stage, with samples allocated in accordance with the population proportion of each district relative to the total population. Subsequently, convenient sampling was carried out in each district as per the predetermined sample assignments in the second stage.

3.3. Reliability and validity

Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is usually between 0 and 1. The closer Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to 1.0, the greater the internal consistency of items on the scale. Researchers suggest that Cronbach's Alpha can be used when the project response model has multiple scores, such as the Likert scale, and is the best tool to test reliability (Bardhoshi & Erford, 2017). In this study, Cronbach's alpha reliability was checked through a pilot test with 42 participants, all of whom completed the questionnaire via the internet. The results show that all items of the questionnaire meet the requirements of the standard value, which is greater than 0.6.

In this study, to verify the content validity of the questionnaire, IOC method was adopted and 5 experts in the industry were invited to audit the questionnaire. The results showed that all questions passed IOC and met the requirements of content validity.

Construct validity includes convergent validity and discriminant validity. This study used compound reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) to evaluate convergence efficiency. Compound reliability or CR value varied from 0 to 1. The higher the value, the higher the credibility.

The correlation between items of discriminant validity hypothesis should be higher than that between them and other items that are not theoretically related in other structures (Zait & Berteau, 2011). Testing for discriminant validity can be done using one of the following methods: O-sorting, the average variance extracted analysis (AVE), and chi-square difference test. O-sorting aims to separate items into the multidimensional structure according to specific fields (Storey et al., 2001). The structure is analyzed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which is usually used for effectiveness problems. The measurement model should be reflective and should be introduced into the analysis in pairs (Zait & Berteau, 2011). Appropriate average variance extracted (AVE) analysis can help researchers establish discriminant validity. During the average variance extracted (AVE), researchers test the square root of each average variance extracted (AVE) value of each potential structure to see if it is much greater than any correlation between any pair of potential structures (Zait & Berteau, 2011).

3.4. Data analysis

In the analysis of demographic information, descriptive statistics serve as the primary method employed. Conversely, for inferential statistics, hypothesis testing through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was utilized. The application of inferential statistics was executed using SPSS and AMOS.

4. Results

The researchers distributed 419 questionnaires to the participants. A total of 403 valid questionnaires were received (see Table 1).

Table 1: General information (N= 403)

Item	Description	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	173	42.93%
	Female	230	57.07%
Age	16-20	22	5.46%
	21-28	87	21.59%
	29-50	175	43.42%
	over 50 years old	119	29.53%
Highest Education	Primary	104	25.81%
	Secondary	158	39.20%
	University	99	24.57%
	Graduate and above	42	10.42%

4.1 Exploration factor analysis

The pattern matrix of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) has 32 observed variables and six factors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy obtained a value of 0.914 this was above the recommended value of 0.600. Moreover, Bartlett test of sphericity came up with statistically significant outcome, with Chi-square of 9106.599, degrees of freedom of 406 and a p-value of 0.000. The total variance of the six factors was 77.323, which is higher than the suggested 60.00.

4.2 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) yielded results that NFI value is 0.891, which is below the 0.9 mark, hence the need to revise the model. To improve the model, modification indices were evaluated, which resulted in a change. The error terms which indicated a high number of covariances were supposed to be correlated due to their theoretical importance. Interestingly, there were correlations between e18 (errors in CTV2) and e19 (errors in CTV1) as part and parcel of the organized content in the television series. Similarly, it was observed that there are correlations between E23 (CS3 errors) and E24 (CS2 errors) within the customer satisfaction framework. After revision, all the factor loadings were above 0.7 and their statistical significance was $p=0.000$. As a result, there were no variables left out of the model. The updated model was found to show a better performance in different goodness-of fit measures, which are acceptable.

Table 2: Measurement of Scale Items for all variables

Latent Variable	Observed Variable	Description	Factor Loading	Extraction	Cronbach alpha
Perceived quality	PQ1	This costume drama has great graphics.	0.854	0.805	0.913
	PQ2	This costume drama has great sound effects.	0.764	0.638	
	PQ3	This costume drama has great props and costumes for the actors.	0.846	0.760	

	PQ4	This costume drama has great editing.	0.853	0.791	
	PQ5	This costume drama has great casting.	0.848	0.776	
	PQ6	This costume drama has great acting.	0.857	0.790	
	PQ7	This costume drama has a very good overall perceived quality.	0.852	0.817	
Perceived value	PV1	Drama series incorporating traditional Chinese culture are of high viewing value.	0.846	0.816	0.821
	PV2	Paying to watch TV dramas that incorporate traditional Chinese culture provides value for money.	0.830	0.825	
	PV3	The price I pay from watching TV dramas that incorporate traditional Chinese culture provides me with value.	0.827	0.828	
	PV4	Overall, the value of watching TV series that incorporate traditional Chinese culture is high	0.871	0.872	
	PV5	TV dramas offer a good balance between price and viewing effect.	0.782	0.854	
Customer expectations	CE1	Before I watch it, I expected the series performance to be excellent.	0.842	0.769	0.836
	CE2	Before I watch it, I expected its ability to reliably and accurately execute the promised quality of the film to be excellent.	0.838	0.751	
	CE3	Before I watch it, I expect its ability to meet my personal viewing needs will be excellent	0.796	0.722	
	CE4	It's important to me that the show lives up to its advertising promises and claims.	0.709	0.774	
	CE5	When forming expectations for TV dramas, I attach great importance to the reputation and image of TV dramas.	0.713	0.739	
Content of the TV series	CTV1	The content of this costume drama is thought-provoking.	0.861	0.797	0.886
	CTV 2	I was very moved by the content of this costume drama.	0.839	0.748	
	CTV 3	I was impressed by the content of this costume drama.	0.863	0.801	
	CTV 4	The content of this costume drama is something I will never forget.	0.843	0.778	
	CTV 5	This costume drama is very interesting.	0.839	0.759	
	CS1	This is a masterpiece of costume drama.	0.800	0.790	0.905

Customer satisfaction	CS2	I would love to see this costume drama again.	0.639	0.606	
	CS3	This costume drama experience exceeds expectations.	0.95	0.666	
	CS4	I would recommend this film to others.	0.726	0.691	
	CS5	I will talk to others about the merits of the film	0.656	0.600	
	CS6	Overall, I was very pleased with the costume drama.	0.721	0.645	
Customer loyalty	CL1	I watch this costume drama because I like it very much.	0.766	0.734	0.890
	CL2	I am happy to watch this costume drama rather than other costume dramas.	0.809	0.773	
	CL3	I would recommend this show to friends, family or colleagues.	0.733	0.668	
	CL4	I am more interested in this costume drama than other costume dramas.	0.726	0.683	
	CL5	I will be looking forward to sequels and related productions of this TV series in the future.	0.708	0.679	

4.3. Structural equation model (SEM)

Before initiating any modifications, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was assessed. Following the guidelines proposed by Hair (2009) and Gefen et al. (2011), it is imperative for all outcomes to consistently meet predefined acceptable thresholds. The results indicated CMIN/DF = 2.858, GFI = 0.849, AGFI = 0.820, CFI = 0.924, TLI = 0.916, NFI = 0.888, RMR = 0.022, and RMSEA = 0.068. The Normed Fit Index (NFI) failed to meet the specified criteria for Goodness of Fit. An NFI score greater than 0.90 indicates a positive model fit, signaling the necessity for model modifications (Tasmin & Woods, 2008).

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis, after the model modification, revealed that the results were within the acceptable levels of outcome. The findings indicated a Chi - Square of 892.141, 362 degrees of freedom and P - value of 0.000 which is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Moreover, the value of CMIN/df was 2.464, which confirmed that the results were within acceptable levels. The model has a good fit after modification, as shown in the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) results, and the statistics are as follows: Goodness - of - fit statistic (GFI) = 0.870, Adjusted Goodness - of - fit statistic (AGFI) = 0.844, Normed - fit index (NFI) = 0.905 and the NFI score of 0.905 that is more than 0.90 can be said to be a good fit (Tasmin & Woods, 2008).

The adjusted measurement model with standardized loadings is shown in Figure 2

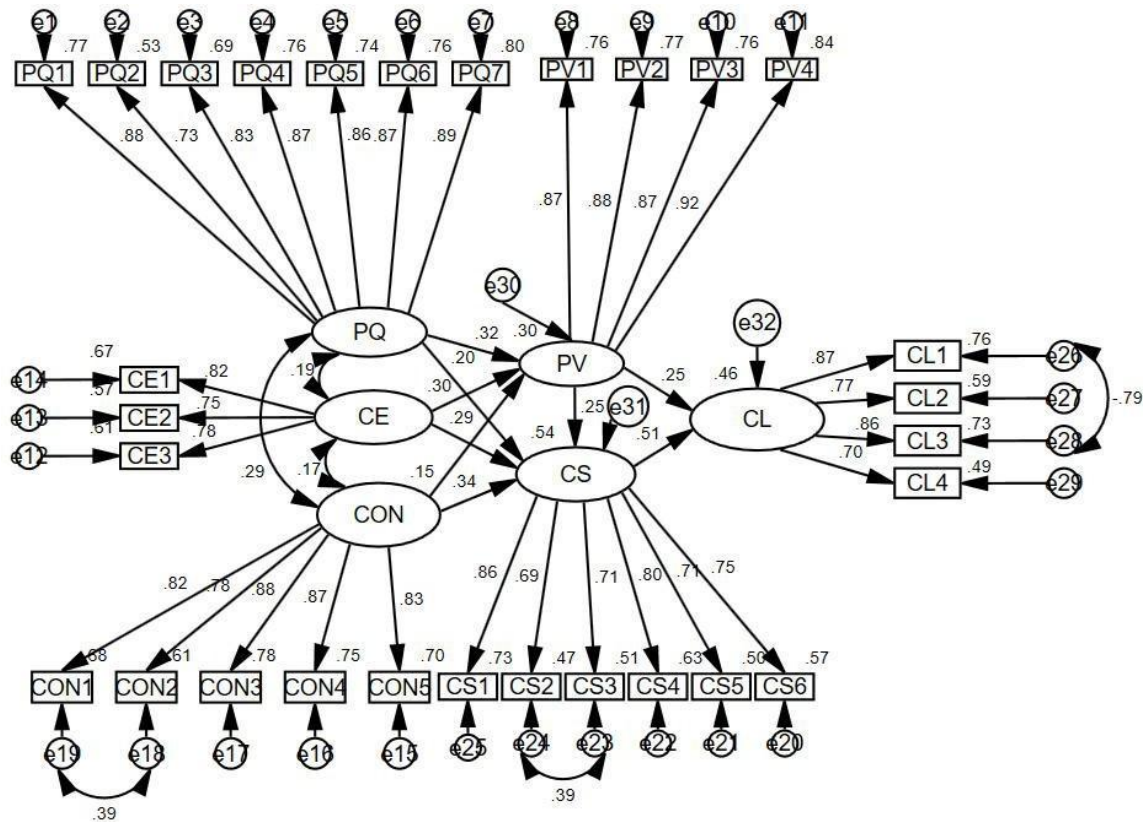


Fig. 2: Adjusted measurement model with standardized loading

4.4. Results of hypotheses testing

The significance of each variable in the research model is evaluated based on their regression weights and R^2 variances. In accordance with the findings presented in Table 2, all hypotheses were substantiated with statistical significance at $p=0.05$. Notably, the most influential factor identified was consumer loyalty, demonstrating a substantial regression weight of 0.508. The key determinants influencing viewer loyalty towards traditional cultural drama encompass perceived quality, perceived value, consumer expectations, content of the series, and consumer satisfaction.

Table 3 presents the hypothesis testing results of the SEM.

Table 3: Hypotheses result of the structural equation model

Hypotheses	Paths	Std.(β)	S.E.	Unstd.	t-value	Accepted / Rejected
H1	PQ→PV	0.32	0.042	0.272	6.398***	Accepted
H2	PQ→CS	0.203	0.162	0.037	4.336***	Accepted
H3	CE→PV	0.301	0.313	0.055	5.653***	Accepted
H4	CE→CS	0.286	0.279	0.05	5.535***	Accepted
H5	CTV→PV	0.152	0.14	0.046	3.065**	Accepted
H6	CTV→CS	0.339	0.293	0.041	7.155***	Accepted

H7	PV→CS	0.247	0.232	0.048	4.821***	Accepted
H8	PV→CL	0.249	0.27	0.056	4.848***	Accepted
H9	CS→CL	0.508	0.585	0.067	8.741***	Accepted

Note. *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

4.5. Mediating effects

Analysis in Table 4 shows that there are significant relationships between variables. For instance, perceived quality has a notable impact on consumer loyalty. The overall impact, calculated at 0.301 and a confidence interval of 0.168 -0.465 shows that there is a strong relationship. The direct impact of 0.211 (confidence interval: 0.102 - 0.404) indicates that high-perceived-quality dramas have a direct positive influence on loyalty, which is probably because of the improved viewing experiences. The indirect impact of 0.090 implies that the perceived quality has an impact on loyalty through mediating factors such as perceived value and customer satisfaction. Good dramas enhance the perceived value that subsequently influences satisfaction, which results in loyalty. The same has been found in the expectations of consumers and the content of television series. Their direct, indirect and total impacts are enormous, which substantiate the idea of partial mediation. The loyalty may be increased directly by high consumer expectations, maybe through the initial excitement. Meeting or surpassing expectations, indirectly, increases perceived value and satisfaction, thereby raising loyalty. In the case of content of series, content interest is a direct draw to loyal viewers and perceived value, which leads to satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 4: Results of the mediation effect test for hypothesis

Pathway	Effect	Impact estimate	P	95 Per cent Confidence Interval		Intermediary Effect
				Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
PQ→CL	Total effect	0.310	***	0.179	0.487	Accepted
PQ→CL	Direct effect	0.211	***	0.102	0.404	Accepted
PQ→PV→CL	Indirect effect	0.099	***	0.054	0.211	Accepted
CE→CL	Total effect	0.364	***	0.221	0.519	Accepted
CE→CL	Direct effect	0.233	***	0.106	0.420	Accepted
CE→PV→CL	Indirect effect	0.131	***	0.083	0.331	Accepted
CTV→CL	Total effect	0.237	***	0.119	0.437	Accepted
CTV→CL	Direct effect	0.140	***	0.084	0.307	Accepted
CTV→PV→CL	Indirect effect	0.097	**	0.020	0.239	Accepted
PQ→CS→CL	Indirect effect	0.090	**	0.017	0.224	Accepted
CE→CL	Total effect	0.351	***	0.204	0.479	Accepted

CE→CL	Direct effect	0.233	***	0.106	0.420	Accepted
CE→CS→CL	Indirect effect	0.118	***	0.072	0.295	Accepted
CTV→CL	Total effect	0.261	***	0.193	0.450	Accepted
CTV→CL	Direct effect	0.140	***	0.084	0.307	Accepted
CTV→CS→CL	Indirect effect	0.121	***	0.069	0.289	Accepted

Note. *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

5. Conclusion and discussion

The results of the current study suggest that the perceived quality of dramas incorporating traditional elements of culture is a key factor with regard to the viewer loyalty. The participants were very interested in the natural depiction of the traditional culture and their loyalty towards dramas became more significant when they thought that the content was of good quality. This implies that the audience is very demanding in terms of the correct portrayal of traditional culture and when these demands are fulfilled, then there are more chances that they will continue to watch the series.

The other important thing about the study was to understand how the content of dramas impacts viewer loyalty. The findings showed that the participants appreciated dramas that went beyond superficial representations of the traditional culture. They valued plots that explored cultural traditions, tackled current problems and interacted with traditional cultural communities. Viewer loyalty improved significantly because of the perceived value of the content that showed that the viewer seeks meaningful and insightful representations of traditional culture that can provide a unique viewing experience.

In understanding the connection between consumer satisfaction and viewer loyalty, the research evaluated satisfaction with television series that incorporate traditional culture. The results show that there is a positive relationship where the greater the level of satisfaction, the more the viewer loyalty. The more the audience is content with a TV series, the more they are willing to watch the series, refer others to the series, and even do other activities like subscribing to social media pages related to the series.

The research also confirmed that the perceived quality, customer expectations and content of the television series determine customer loyalty mediated by the perceived value and customer satisfaction. Perceived value is the value or the benefit that the customers feel they will get after viewing the traditional cultural drama and is determined by factors like perceived quality, customer expectations and content. Increased perception value results in customer satisfaction and loyalty. This depends on several factors such as perceived quality, expectations of the customers and content. The satisfaction of the audience with their experience increases their chances of being loyal to the dramas.

The results of the interview highlighted the positive and indirect role of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty to traditional cultural drama. This highlights the importance of meaningful insights and responses to the degree of consumer satisfaction to build loyalty. Moreover, the study indicates customer satisfaction as a mediator between perceived quality, customer expectations, content of the television series and customer loyalty. This implies that entertainment industry stakeholders need to be keen on aspects that lead to customer satisfaction. They can improve customer satisfaction through high perceived quality, customer expectations, presentation of engaging and captivating content, promoting customer loyalty by creating customer satisfaction.

5.1. Perceived quality and its impact on perceived value and customer satisfaction

Perceived quality measures play a vital role in improving the perception by the consumers that a television series offers them a better and enjoyable viewing experience (Snoj et al., 2004). Such perception, in its turn, raises the perceived value of the content, making the viewers more willing to invest time and emotional attachment, which, in turn, raises their perceived value of the series. As consumers realize that the production and cultural aspects of a series

are of high quality, it further enhances value that consumers place on a series, which results in increased perceived value (Samudro et al., 2020). Moreover, perceived quality has the potential to foster a deep emotional connection with the audience. Such an emotional appeal does not only augment the perceived value of the series but also makes consumers more likely to consume content that makes a lasting impression (Choi & Kim, 2013).

5.2. Customer expectations and their impact on perceived value and customer satisfaction

The high consumer expectations create a point of reference to measure the perceived value (Mostaghimi, 2016). A television series that fulfills or surpasses these expectations increases its perceived value through the provision of expected benefits, which include entertaining storytelling, cultural and historical authenticity, and visual stimulation (Kusumawati & Rahayu, 2020). Prior knowledge, word-of-mouth, promotional materials, and personal experiences tend to influence customer expectations. A series that meets these expectations strengthens its value proposition, leading to increased satisfaction. In the end, the more a series exceeds or meets the expectations of the customers, the more the viewers get a better experience and become more satisfied (Almsalam, 2014).

5.3. Content of the television series and its impact on perceived value and customer satisfaction

Conventional cultural dramas can inform and educate audiences on the historical and cultural aspects (Udeh et al., 2022). These series are made more valuable through offering insightful information, historical accuracy and educational value, as the viewer feels that they are not only learning but gaining cultural awareness through the series (Smith and Roy, 2008). Secondly, the material has to be interesting and entertaining. When a series has interesting story lines, suspense, humor or drama, it enhances its entertainment qualities and increases the interest of the audience. The positive attitude towards the value is created by the involvement of material, since viewers are absorbed by the series (Khuong, 2014).

5.4. Perceived value's impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty

Conventional cultural dramas can inform and educate audiences on the historical and cultural aspects (Udeh et al., 2022). These series are made more valuable through offering insightful information, historical accuracy and educational value, as the viewer feels that they are not only learning but gaining cultural awareness through the series (Smith and Roy, 2008). Secondly, the material has to be interesting and entertaining. When a series has interesting story lines, suspense, humor or drama, it enhances its entertainment qualities and increases the interest of the audience. The positive attitude towards the value is created by the involvement of material, since viewers are absorbed by the series (Khuong, 2014).

5.5. Customer satisfaction and its impact on customer loyalty

Satisfaction of customers plays a vital role in promoting continued interaction with the series. The more satisfied the viewers are with the content, the more likely they will watch and stick to the traditional cultural dramas (Khairawati, 2020). This prolonged interest develops loyalty because it will become a habit having the intention to sustain the good feelings that come as a result of watching the series. Satisfied viewers are also more likely to share their positive experiences, resulting in word-of-mouth and a wider social impact (Sagala et al., 2021). Further, customer satisfaction will lead to emotional and psychological satisfaction based on the series. When viewers get satisfied, they experience the feeling of enjoyment, cultural enrichment and general wellbeing, which also makes them remain loyal. This affective bond encourages them to continue watching traditional cultural dramas to maintain the positive feelings that they relate to them (Javed and Cheema, 2017).

5.6. The mediating role of perceived value in influencing customer loyalty through perceived quality, customer expectations, and content of the television series

Perceived value is the judgment of the customer regarding the value of a product and it includes the quality and the price. It is an intermediary between the perceived quality and customer loyalty, and it aids customers to rationalize their experiences and make well-informed decisions (Ojasalo, 2001). When the audience sees a high quality in the

classical cultural dramas, they attach more value to the content and this has a positive impact on their satisfaction and loyalty. Economically, when the customers feel that the quality of the series is worth the price, a positive relation between quality and perceived value will take place (AbuAlhaija et al., 2019). This attitude makes the customers have the impression that they are getting good value on their investment hence creating more satisfaction and loyalty. Essentially, the customers compare the advantages (perceived quality) to the expenditures (price) and when the perceived value is high, the chances of staying loyal are high (Chen, 2008).

The perception of value and loyalty towards traditional cultural dramas is greatly influenced by the customer expectations (Ojasalo, 2001). Great hopes about such factors as strong plot lines, cultural historical accuracy, and quality of production influence the evaluation of the series by the viewers. The drama that exceeds or matches these expectations leads to increased perceived value, positive feelings, satisfaction and loyalty. An example is a drama that satisfies the audience in terms of historical accuracy which will boost audience satisfaction and loyalty.

Customer satisfaction is the key that interconnects expectations and loyalty. A series that exceeds the expectations of viewers will result in satisfaction that will motivate loyalty (Ginting et al., 2023). This relationship is mediated by perceived value which determines satisfaction and affects loyalty. Customer satisfaction and loyalty can be improved by aligning customer expectations with the perceived value of the series.

In addition to that, mediating impact of perceived value underlines the prevalence of content in the process of customer perceptions and emotional reactions (Venkatakrishnan et al., 2023). By being able to fulfill the cultural, emotional, and intellectual expectations of the audience in an effective manner, the content may result in a strong connection, which later creates a high valuation and satisfaction. The positive indirect effect of perceived value on customer loyalty is in line with other industries. Customer loyalty has been found to be influenced by perceived value which is the perceived benefits in comparison to perceived costs of a product or service (Kaveh et al., 2012). This implies that the perceived value indirectly influences loyalty with other factors including the perceived quality, customer expectations, and series content. The indirect impact is often discussed in the literature that investigates the factors that affect customer loyalty.

5.7. The mediating role of customer satisfaction in influencing customer loyalty through perceived quality, customer expectations, and content of the television series

The perceived quality of the traditional cultural dramas includes a number of major factors, including the production value, performances, historical accuracy, and cultural authenticity (Yum and Kim, 2024). When these areas are perceived to be of high quality, it throws the groundwork on which more satisfaction is to be derived. As an example, in case the production value is high, paying precise attention to costumes, set design, and cinematography, the viewers will tend to have a positive perception of the series. The perceived quality of these dramas, in the context of traditional cultural values is closely intertwined with their historical and cultural authenticity. Correct depictions of the historical events, traditions, and cultural nuances contribute to the perceived quality of the series (Puspasari et al., 2022; Bangbon et al., 2026).

Customer satisfaction acts as a mediating factor which can be explained using cognitive and emotional reactions. When the viewers have a perception of high quality in the traditional cultural dramas, they have certain expectations about viewing experience. When such expectations are achieved or surpassed, this helps bring about a feeling of fulfillment and satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is a mediating variable between customer loyalty and perceived quality. When audiences feel content with the quality they perceive in a series, they become more inclined to become emotionally attached, which affects their choice to remain involved with and supporting the series in the long run (Severt et al., 2022).

Customer expectations also are important in their connection with customer loyalty as well as customer satisfaction. This creates a feeling of fulfillment and positive emotions when the expectations of the viewers are fulfilled and when they receive the feeling of high satisfaction. This emotional reaction is based on satisfaction with the content and results in greater loyalty. The mediation of customer satisfaction may be interpreted in terms of either

exceeding or fulfilling the expectations. The satisfaction of viewers makes their choice to repeatedly watch and follow the series stronger, as their expectations are met (Tran et al., 2022). On the other hand, failure to deliver performances beyond expectation with the series can result in disappointment or dissatisfaction, which can have adverse effects on loyalty. One of the determinants that will be used on whether to stick to the series or not is customer satisfaction. When viewers are satisfied, they will tend to develop an emotional bond with the show, which will enhance their loyalty (Yilmaz et al., 2021). Such an emotional attachment, which is anchored on the expectations being met, also affects their choice to watch and keep up with the series.

The series content is crucial in the overall viewer experience and perception. It is a combination of different aspects, including the plot, script, character growth, the quality of production, the visual appearance, and cultural originality. In the case of traditional cultural dramas, the content must be true to historical events, cultural traditions, language, costumes and behavior. It must be captivating to the audience by offering a sensual story that appeals to their interests and emotions (Udeh et al., 2022). Good content can be engaging to the audience, provide a feeling of being immersed, and be affected emotionally. The content, once it satisfies the expectations of the viewers, brings about satisfaction and improves the overall viewing experience.

Mediating factor such as customer satisfaction is an important factor that has been noted to relate content quality to viewer loyalty. The quality and the attractiveness of the content of the series directly affect satisfaction (Venkatakrishnan et al., 2023; Phasuk et al., 2026). When the viewers are interested in, real and attractive content, it empowers their emotional attachment and pleasure in the program. This attachment is an emotion fueled by content satisfaction, which solidifies their loyalty and dedication to the series.

Customer satisfaction is also a buffer to small content flaws. Although there is no perfect series, the more the viewers are satisfied, the more they will disregard the little problems because the overall pleasure and emotional attachment will be more important than the flaws. This highlights the significance of customer satisfaction in ensuring long-term loyalty and engagement (Terblanche, 2006). These findings, as with other studies, underscore the importance of customer satisfaction in establishing long-term loyalty. Satisfaction is indirectly related to loyalty with factors like perceived quality, customer expectation, and content. This method emphasizes the intricate interrelations of satisfaction and loyalty (Howat & Assaker, 2013; Youthao et al., 2026). The study can be further expanded in future by considering other variables like brand image or external factors in order to give a more elaborate picture of the correlation between customer satisfaction and loyalty (Choi & Kim, 2013).

6. Recommendations

In the context of business management, the application and exploitation of customer loyalty of the traditional culture drama management in Chengdu, China can bring considerable effects to production businesses, streaming services and marketing ventures. To begin with, it is important that businesses recognize the critical importance of perceived quality when it comes to customer loyalty. This outlines the importance of investing in production values, storytelling techniques and the general content quality. By constantly producing quality traditional culture dramas, the businesses will be able to boost customer perception and build customer loyalty.

Moreover, identification and control of customer expectations are crucial in ensuring that the offerings are adjusted to the desires of the consumers. Market research that allows companies to understand population tastes, culture, and history may allow them to optimize their content, thus exceeding or exceeding expectations of customers. Also, the successful selection of the series material to reflect the traditional culture and values is critical. This will require consultation with historians, cultural professionals and artistic professionals to make sure that there are accurate and respectful representations.

In the context of arts management, customer satisfaction is an essential aspect of encouraging audience interest and retention. Bringing in the sense of belonging and attachment to the viewers can be cultivated by investing in audience feedback mechanisms, post-viewing discussions, and community events. Arts management can increase

customer satisfaction and loyalty through the development of an immersive and participatory experience around the traditional culture drama.

Government policy is critical towards facilitating and encouraging the traditional culture drama management in Chengdu, China. Among these basics, there is the creation of a favorable environment towards high perceived quality through incentives to production firms, ease of access to heritage sites to film, and subsidies to research and development of traditional cultural content.

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Ethical considerations

Data was collected with informed consent from all volunteers. Data were utilized only for academic study and anonymity was maintained. Personally identifiable information was not gathered.

Author Contributions

YJ: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Investigation, Data curation, Writing -original draft. **SR:** Supervision, Methodology, Validation, Writing - review & editing, Formal analysis Project administration, Resources, Visualization.

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