

## Retraction

# Retracted: Media Influence and the Willingness to Buy Intangible Cultural Heritage Products: A Moderated Mediator Model

### Discrete Dynamics in Nature and Society

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This article has been retracted by Hindawi following an investigation undertaken by the publisher [1]. This investigation has uncovered evidence of one or more of the following indicators of systematic manipulation of the publication process:

- (1) Discrepancies in scope
- (2) Discrepancies in the description of the research reported
- (3) Discrepancies between the availability of data and the research described
- (4) Inappropriate citations
- (5) Incoherent, meaningless and/or irrelevant content included in the article
- (6) Peer-review manipulation

The presence of these indicators undermines our confidence in the integrity of the article's content and we cannot, therefore, vouch for its reliability. Please note that this notice is intended solely to alert readers that the content of this article is unreliable. We have not investigated whether authors were aware of or involved in the systematic manipulation of the publication process.

Wiley and Hindawi regrets that the usual quality checks did not identify these issues before publication and have since put additional measures in place to safeguard research integrity.

We wish to credit our own Research Integrity and Research Publishing teams and anonymous and named external researchers and research integrity experts for contributing to this investigation.

The corresponding author, as the representative of all authors, has been given the opportunity to register their agreement or disagreement to this retraction. We have kept a record of any response received.

### References

- [1] Y. Huang, Q. Lv, and J. Lin, "Media Influence and the Willingness to Buy Intangible Cultural Heritage Products: A Moderated Mediator Model," *Discrete Dynamics in Nature and Society*, vol. 2021, Article ID 4664998, 12 pages, 2021.

## Research Article

# Media Influence and the Willingness to Buy Intangible Cultural Heritage Products: A Moderated Mediator Model

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In the information society, the media exert a key influence on the consumer selection of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) products. Drawing on the literature of cultural identity, product involvement, and willingness to buy, this paper constructs and verifies the theoretical model of media influence-cultural identity-willingness to buy ICH products, with ICH product consumers as the objects. The results show that the media have a significantly positive effect on cultural identity, which in turn significantly promotes the willingness to buy, but the media do not significantly affect the willingness to buy. Cultural identity fully mediates the media influence on the willingness to buy. Referring to relevant studies on product involvement, the samples were divided into a set of high involvement and a set of low involvement. The moderating effect analysis reveals that the higher the product involvement, the more significant the effect of media on cultural identity and the more prominent the influence of cultural identity on the willingness to buy. Finally, the authors discussed the managerial implications of the research results for ICH inheritors and enterprises.

## 1. Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) products are productized, commercialized, or industrialized from intangible cultural resources. They are consumable products/services with use value, emotional value, and symbolic value. Typical ICH products include such intangible cultural exhibitions/shows as traditional music, traditional dance, traditional drama, folk music, acrobatics, and athletics, as well as the products related to ICHs like traditional skills, traditional arts, and traditional medicine. With rich cultural connotations, ICH products carry the self-esteem and pride of the nation and hog the media limelight.

With the diversification of channels for information dissemination, ICH products can now be transmitted in various new forms including films, television plays, variety shows, animations, games, live broadcasts, websites, and exhibitions, to name a few. The subtle influence of these media could enhance or suppress the viewers' willingness to buy ICH products [1]. Most ICH products can be converted

into an experience of media knowledge. On the dissemination of ICH products, the media influence the generation of consumer motivation by changing the cognition of consumers [2]. The media influence on consumers of ICH products is going deeper and wider. Therefore, it is of both theoretical and realistic significance to study the influence of the media on the willingness to buy ICH products.

The domestic and foreign studies on media influence on consumer behaviors mainly concentrate on the impacts of ads, for example, how ads influence consumers' brand attitude and willingness to buy [3], brand attitude and ads memories [4], and ads attitude and information evaluation [5]. On the media influence on ICHs, most scholars focus on protection and inheritance [6–8], creation of cultural space [9, 10], and so forth but rarely deal with ICH products. Besides, most of these studies are qualitative. There is a research gap concerning the mechanism of media influence on the willingness to buy ICH products.

Focusing on the relationship between media and the audience, Gerbner [11] mentioned that the public needs,

values, and ideology can be created, adapted, developed, and maintained with information. To a certain extent, the public gain a sense of identity through the continuous exposure to the information flow. ICH products have the potential to help consumers gain cultural identity, owing to their unique spiritual values and the natural connections with the country, the nation, and the region. The cultural identity in turn influences the willingness to buy ICH products.

In recent years, many scholars have started to examine the influence of product involvement, an important situation variable, on the media and consumers [12, 13]. It is generally believed that product involvement affects the information processing by consumers [14]. Depending on the specific level of involvement, consumer groups differ greatly in the processing of brand information, purchase behaviors, and brand loyalty [15]. Therefore, product involvement should be included to discuss how the media affect the willingness to buy ICH products.

Drawing on the theories of the media, identification, and product involvement, this paper constructs and verifies the theoretical model of media influence-cultural identity-willingness to buy ICH products, based on the survey data about 616 Chinese consumers of ICH products. Product involvement was introduced to the model as a mediator variable. The research aims to answer two important questions: (1) Do the media directly influence the willingness to buy ICH products or indirectly affect the willingness via cultural identity or both directly and indirectly impact the willingness? (2) When consumers process media information, does product involvement regulate the media influence on the willingness to buy ICH products? If yes, is the moderator effect positive or negative?

This research delves into the role of cultural identity in the media influence on the willingness to buy ICH products and clarifies the mediator effect of product involvement on the influence path. From the perspective of demand, our research expands the theoretical framework for media influence and ICH product consumer behaviors and inspires ICH product inheritors and manufacturers to enhance cultural identity, improve brand status and reputation, and boost the competitiveness of ICH products against modern entertainment cultural products in the modern media environment.

## 2. Theoretical Bases and Hypotheses

*2.1. Media Influence and Willingness to Buy ICH Products.* In the field of communication, the media are generally interpreted as the channels for information to disseminate from the source to the recipient, including traditional sources like newspapers, periodicals, radio, and television to emerging sources like the Internet and mobile phones. Zaware [16] summarized media influence as the type and frequency of media reports that shape the beliefs of consumers and discovered that the media significantly promote the purchase of green products in Pune, India. Pookulangara and Koesler [17] analyzed the effects of social network utilization on both the willingness to purchase products and the culture and found that social networks have become

mainstream media. Akar and Topçu [18] explored the influence of social media marketing on consumer attitude and identified the social media marketing variables that promote consumer attitude: social media knowledge, social media use, and the degree of influence from the Internet and social media. Millson [19] found that users of LinkedIn, Twitter, and company websites have a significant impact on individual willingness to buy, but only company websites exert a positive impact. Xu et al. [20] found that the publicity of rational contents, such as utility, practicality, and cost-effectiveness, can easily enhance consumers' willingness to buy, on new media platforms with a long psychological distance.

In the wave of modernization, many ICH products lack qualified successors and can easily capture the attention from various media, such as television, newspapers, radios, and (mobile) Internet. The information of ICH products is being disseminated to greater depth and width. With the popularity of live webcasting, quite a few ICH inheritors have tried to spread their skills or creations on platforms like TikTok, Kwai, WeChat, and Weibo. Both objective media reports on ICH products and the active spread by inheritors on social networks could draw more attention and interest from consumers and thus affect their willingness to buy. Through the above analysis, a hypothesis was put forward:

- (i) *H1*: The media positively affect the willingness to buy ICH products.

*2.2. Media Influence and Cultural Identity.* In the information society, media experience plays an increasingly important, if not central, role in the construction of individual identities [21]. From the symbolic level, the media are an important resource for constructing a collective cultural identity. The media possess a symbolic power, that is, the ability to intervene in event development, affect others' behaviors, and even create events through the production and transmission of symbolic contents [22]. By attending ceremonial activities that receive media information (e.g., listening to a radio program or watching a media report together), people can nurture a common cultural feeling and perceive other social members with the same experience. Salleh and Bauer [23] explored the process of Malaysian youth from watching television to cultural identity construction, pointing out that the meaning of television texts is generated under the effects of intention, selectivity, utilitarianism, and verbal expression. Dong and Hong [24] found that the Chinese cultural contents on sports media enhance the identity of the viewers with the Chinese culture in four dimensions: cognition, emotion, intention, and behavior. Straubhaar [25] noted that as culture is constantly changing, the audience's sense of identity will increase with the new, convincing cultural forms brought to them by the media.

As media channels continue to diversify, researchers interested in the media influence on identity construction have taken the media of different attributes into account. Langmia [26] held that when all parties on the social media share the same social and cultural contents, a sense of

identity will forge between the encoders and decoders, creating the concept of “we.” Zhu and Ren [27] learned that the media with different attributes play different roles in constructing the national identity of youngsters: the identity is promoted by traditional official media but significantly weakened by overseas media.

ICH products are valuable inheritors of deep cultural genes. Any ICH product is related to human factors like individuals and groups. In other words, ICH products have social features and demonstrate the difference, diversity, and individuality of traditional ethnic cultures. From the perspective of mass media, ICH and their products have attracted more and more attention from the society, owing to the improved quality of life and the marked growth of cultural demand. From the perspective of social media, there are many virtual communities, webcast platforms, WeChat groups, and QQ groups for ICH product lovers to learn from and communicate with each other. During the dissemination of ICH products, the media often choose the most representative scenes and features to attract the attention from consumers and resort to comments, topics, and webcasts to boost the participation of consumers. These approaches enhance the emotional ties between the media and consumers and evoke the emotional resonance and identity of consumers. Through the above analysis, a hypothesis was put forward:

- (i) *H2*: The media positively affect the cultural identity with ICH products.

**2.3. Cultural Identity and Willingness to Buy ICH Products.** Identity can affect how people interpret stimuli and in turn influence their secondary behaviors. The identity-based motivation (IBM) theory suggests that identity or self-concept will inspire people to pursue their goals. When the situation and the difficulties are consistent with the identity in the mind, people are more inclined to take actions [28]. The cultural identity with ICH products can be defined as follows: After acknowledging the values of the cultural connotations of ICH products, people develop positive emotions, for example, love, sense of belonging, and pride, toward ICH products and their cultural identity.

Based on relevant research [29–31], this paper summarizes the four dimensions of cultural identity: product cognition, emotional commitment, group identity, and cultural self-esteem. Product cognition reflects the ability of consumers to distinguish between ICH products and other products. Group identity manifests how consumers are affected by the regionality of ICH products and the sense of ceremony in consumption, laying the basis for cultural identity with ICH products. Emotional commitment, the core of cultural identity with ICH products, reflects the consumers’ emotional responses to ICH products, including the sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. Cultural self-esteem sublimates the cultural identity with ICH products, because it demonstrates the consumers’ pursuit of the cultural identity, national emotions, and group evaluation behind ICH products in the specific situation of China.

Some scholars took ICH products as the objects to evaluate the influence of cultural identity on the willingness to buy. Xavier [32] mentioned that tourists attending the ICH experience activities of Flamingo in Seville, Spain, aim to acquire social status, reputation, and cognition, distinguish themselves from other social groups, and thus construct their self-identity. Taking Beijing as an example, Shi [33] discovered that the identity with ICH projects positively affects the tourists’ consumption behaviors. Through experiments, Gao and Zhang [34] noticed that cultural identity directly promotes the willingness to buy ICH products, and the knowledge level of consumers mediates between cultural identity and consumers’ willingness to buy ICH products. Through the above analysis, a hypothesis was put forward:

- (i) *H3*: Cultural identity positively affects the willingness to buy ICH products.

**2.4. Moderating Effect of Product Involvement.** Zaichkowsky [35] defined product involvement as the degree of association between a product and a specific scenario, as perceived by consumers, that is, the relevancy of a product to consumers’ inner needs, interests, and values. Product involvement is the product of previous experience, self-concept, or personal features [36]. It is mostly dependent on subjective consciousness of individuals and is rarely affected by external scenarios. To avoid purchase risks, consumers with different levels of product involvement would choose different consultation methods and purchase means.

Clarke and Belk [37] believed that when a consumer plans to buy a product, he/she will consider the degree of involvement required of the product. Involvement is often divided into high and low levels. According to the theories of accessibility and reasoned action, if the product involvement is high, the information processing will be more systematic and associate belief and attitude with the outcome (behavior). If a consumer feels the need to be highly involved in the purchase, he/she will collect more information and consider the purchase more comprehensively than what is required to purchase low-involvement products. If the product involvement is low, the information processing may depend more on the long-term memory induced by the situation. The information will not be processed so carefully, because it is not that important to the outcome, behavior, or object perception. Thus, consumers would invest fewer energy and attention in the case of low product involvement. With different needs and values, consumers will change their willingness to buy with the situation (including product involvement) and thereby generate various behaviors [14].

The higher the involvement in ICH products is, the more it is likely for consumers to accept the information of ICH products disseminated on the media. In the case of high product involvement, consumers might even actively search for the information about such products. Then, the media exert an immense influence on cultural identity. When the involvement is low, the information of ICH products disseminated on the media tends to be submerged in the sea of information. In this case, the media have a limited impact on cultural identity. In [38], it was discovered that when the

cognition and emotion of a consumer are so involved in a sponsored event that he/she identifies with the event, the consumer will have a strong attachment to the sponsored brand and become more willing to buy the products [38]. Through the above analysis, a hypothesis was put forward:

- (i) *H4a*: Product involvement positively mediates the media influence on cultural identity, that is, the higher the product involvement, the stronger the positive media influence on cultural identity.
- (ii) *H4b*: Product involvement positively mediates the influence of cultural identity on the willingness to buy ICH products, that is, the higher the product involvement, the stronger the positive influence of cultural identity on the willingness to buy ICH products.

Figure 1 shows the structure of our model.

### 3. Methodology

**3.1. Objects and Sample Selection.** A small sample presurvey was carried out to verify the scientific nature of the compiled scales. A total of 153 valid questionnaires were obtained through the presurvey. Through question analysis, reliability test, and validity test, MI4 of media influence and PIn4 of product involvement were deleted to improve the questionnaire quality. The final formal questionnaire contains 27 questions. Some questions are about consumer behaviors, including the product name, type, and purpose of ICH consumption. Some questions are about the background of respondents, including gender, age, occupation, education level, monthly mean income, and birthplace. Some questions aim to evaluate such variables as media influence, cultural identity, product involvement, and willingness to buy against corresponding scales. All items were evaluated against a 7-point Likert scale. Scores 1–7 were assigned to the seven levels from totally disagree to totally agree, in turn. The higher the level, the higher the score of the corresponding variable. Table 1 lists the questions of the relevant variables.

The consumers who used to purchase ICH products were taken as the objects. These subjects differ slightly in age, region, and education level. However, our presurvey shows that some old consumers or less educated consumers have difficulty in understanding the various professional questions. Therefore, the formal survey mainly targets well-educated middle-aged and young consumers. The field survey was primarily carried out in Fujian Province, southeastern China. The survey in other regions was conducted simultaneously via wjx.cn, WeChat, and e-mail. Fujian was selected as the primary survey area for the following reasons: With an abundance of ICHs, Fujian is the first province in China to cover all types of ICHs mentioned in the ICH protection network of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). There are more ICH projects and inheritors in Fujian than any other province in China. To protect and preserve ICHs, Fujian has established a batch of national demonstration bases of ICHs productive protection and built many key units for the productive protection of representative ICH projects.

Overall, the province boasts a good foundation for the production, circulation, and sales of ICH products. It is reasonable to take Fujian as the site for the survey on consumers' willingness to buy ICH products.

The formal survey data were collected through online questionnaire survey and field questionnaire survey. The two parts of data were subjected to an independent-samples *t*-test with different means. The test results show that the *p* value for the *F*-statistic and *t*-statistic of all control variables and research variables was greater than 0.05; that is, the two parts of data are not significantly different, despite being collected via different methods. Hence, the two parts of data were merged for further analysis. In total, 800 online and offline questionnaires were distributed, and 781 were collected. Among them, 616 (77%) questionnaires are valid. Table 2 shows the demographics of the respondents.

**3.2. Variable Measurement.** The media influence consumers in a subtle way over a long period. The influence can be indirectly measured by the dependence on the media. Zhang and Zeng [39] defined Internet dependence as a psychological state of netizens for the Internet and suggested measuring the state with time and experience of Internet usage. Referring to Zhang's [40] consumer Internet dependence scale, this paper selects five items to measure the media influence. Referring to Shi's [33] ICH tourist identity scale, Mael and Ashforth's [41] organizational identification scale, Stokburger-Sauer et al.'s [42] consumer-brand identification scale, and Ji's [43] consumer-brand identification scale, combined with semistructured interviews with consumers, a cultural identity scale is designed for ICH products and used to measure the cultural identity of consumers with 15 items in four dimensions: product cognition, emotional commitment, group identity, and cultural self-esteem. In addition, product involvement was measured by five items, which are extended from [35] scale corrected by Hoonsopon and Purwat [14] and the items proposed by Kapferer and Laurent [44] to evaluate consumer involvement in product search, evaluation, time, money, and efforts. The explained variable of this research is the willingness to buy ICH products, which was measured by four items revised from Moon et al.'s [45] scale. The latter is widely adopted to study consumer behaviors.

**3.3. Data Testing.** As shown in Table 3, all variables were significantly correlated at the level of 0.01, and their correlation coefficients fell between 0.097 and 0.734; that is, the variables are weakly or moderately correlated (the normal criteria: <0.4 means low correlation; 0.4–0.7 means medium correlation; and >0.7 means high correlation). The collinearity test shows the following: The tolerance of the variables belonged to 0.452–0.967, satisfying the general standard of >0.1; the variance inflation factor (VIF) fell in 1.034–2.210, which is in line with the general standard of <10. Therefore, the collinearity between variables belongs to the acceptable range [46]. As shown in Table 1, the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficients of all variables were greater than 0.8, and the corrected item-total correlation (CITC) of each item was above 0.4.

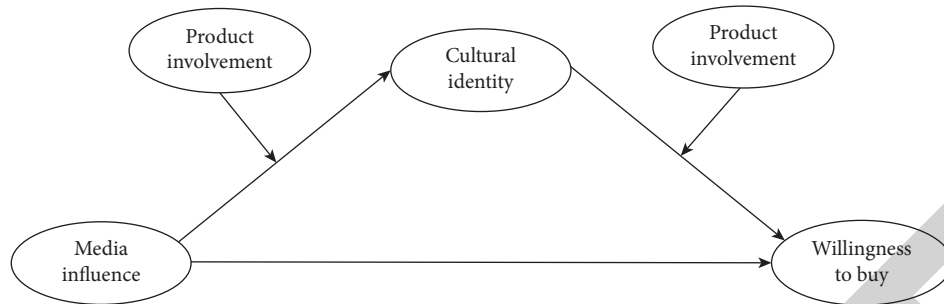


FIGURE 1: Our model.

After removing item M11, the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient increased. As a result, the two items were removed from the original scale.

Except for the variables of cultural identity, all variables in this research were measured against the scales modified from mature scales at home and abroad, in the light of the special features of ICH products. The statements in the scales were corrected by experts of ICH products and marketing and discussed repeatedly with doctors of cultural industry and marketing management. Before mass testing, a pre-survey was carried out on a small scale to remove the unnecessary items. The above practices provide a strong guarantee for the validity of the scale contents. The convergent validity of scales was tested by composite reliability (CR) and average variance explained (AVE). Table 3 shows that the CRs of all latent variables were above 0.8, and the AVEs were all greater than 0.5, suggesting that the scales have an ideal convergent validity. The root mean square of AVE of each variable was greater than the correlation coefficient between factors [47]. Therefore, our scales have good discriminatory validity.

#### 4. Data Analysis

**4.1. Model Fitting.** Since most of our variables are latent, the structural equation was adopted to reflect the relationship between factors and items and that between factors at the same time. The adoption of the equation avoids the problem of separately establishing a model. Through the theoretical derivation in the preceding parts, the relevant data were imported to Amos 17.0, creating model A (Figure 2). Wu [48] summarized the criteria for suitable fitness between model and sample data: chi-square/degrees of freedom (CMIN/DF) < 3 (2 in strict case and 5 in relaxed case); goodness of fit index (GFI), nonnormal fit index (NFI), and comparative fit index (CFI) > 0.9 (>0.8 is also acceptable); and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) < 0.08. Bagozzi and Yi [49] held that the ideal criteria for the fitness of structural equation model are CFI and CFI > 0.9 (>0.8 is also acceptable). Marsh et al. [50] believed that adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) > 0.8 means the fitness is acceptable. After releasing the error covariance between the indices of the same variable [51], the improved model A achieved the following results: CMIN/DF = 2.915, GFI = 0.932, AGFI = 0.900, NFI = 0.956, reproductive fitness index (RFI) = 0.942, incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.971,

Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = 0.961, CFI = 0.971, and RMSEA = 0.056.

As seen from Table 4, the standard path coefficient from media influence to cultural identity and that from cultural identity to the willingness to buy were both positive and significant at  $P < 0.001$ . Thus,  $H2$  and  $H3$  were proved valid. The standard path coefficient from media influence to the willingness to buy was negative, failing to reach the significance of  $P < 0.05$ . Hence,  $H1$  was not supported by our research data.

**4.2. Mediating Effect of Cultural Identity.** The operational program for mediating effect analysis of structural equation [52] was employed, and the relevant data were imported to Amos 17.0, creating a model  $M1$  without the mediator variable cultural identity. The fitness indices of  $M1$  were as follows: CMIN/DF = 1.693, GFI = 0.990, AGFI = 0.979, NFI = 0.993, RFI = 0.989, IFI = 0.997, TLI = 0.995, CFI = 0.997, and RMSEA = 0.034, indicating the good fitness of the model. The fitting results show that the standard path coefficient  $c$  from media influence to willingness to buy was 0.116 and it was significant at  $P < 0.05$ . Both variables are eligible for mediating effect test.

Next, a model  $M2$  with mediator variable cultural identity was constructed, that is, model A. As shown in Table 4, the standard path coefficient  $a$  from media influence to cultural identity was 0.182 ( $P < 0.001$ ), and that  $b$  from cultural identity to willingness to buy was 0.769 ( $P < 0.001$ ), both of which are significant; the standard path coefficient  $c'$  from cultural identity to willingness to buy was  $-0.023$  ( $P = 0.454$ ), failing to reach the significance of  $P < 0.05$ . Therefore, cultural identity fully mediates the relationship between media influence and willingness to buy; that is, the mediating effect explains 100% of the total effect.

**4.3. Moderating Effect of Product Involvement.** Referring to Song [53], this paper divides ICH product consumers into a high involvement group and a low-involvement group by the mean product involvement and tests how product involvement regulates the relationship between media influence and cultural identity and that between cultural identity and willingness to buy through comparative analysis of the two groups.

Descriptive statistics show that the mean product involvement of all samples stood at 4.8. Hence, the consumers

TABLE 1: Items and reliability.

Variable	Item	Source	CITC	Cronbach's $\alpha$ after removing the item		
Media influence $\alpha = 0.803$ (0.825 after removing MI1)	MI1: I acquire the information of the ICH product mainly from media advertisement.	[40]	0.472	0.825		
	MI2: new report affects my choice of the ICH product.		0.718 (0.712)	0.704 (0.728)		
	MI3: the dissemination on authoritative media affects my decision of purchasing the ICH product.		0.685 (0.731)	0.719 (0.707)		
	MI4: I often query the consumption information about the ICH product online.		Removed for presurvey item analysis			
	MI5: the online information of the ICH product affects my purchase decision.		0.610 (0.605)	0.756 (0.834)		
	Product cognition		CI1: ICH products should have rich cultural connotations.	0.675	0.947	
			CI2: ICH products should have rich stories.	0.679	0.947	
			CI3: ICH products should be displayed in traditional forms.	0.661	0.948	
			CI4: I am very satisfied with the ICH product.	0.704	0.947	
			CI5: the ICH product is suitable for me in many ways.	0.749	0.946	
	Emotional commitment		CI6: the ICH product brings a sense of novelty.	0.694	0.947	
			CI7: the ICH product mirrors my belief.	0.798	0.944	
			CI8: other consumers using the ICH product must have something in common with me.	0.765	0.945	
			Cultural identity $\alpha = 0.949$	Group identity	[33, 41, 42, 43]; interview data	0.778
	CI9: I have a natural sense of intimacy for other consumers using the ICH product.			0.747		0.946
CI10: I am glad that other consumers using the ICH product treat me as one of them.	0.736	0.946				
CI11: I am proud that ICH performance hit the stage of Spring Festival Gala.	0.694	0.947				
Cultural self-esteem	CI12: I like the integration between innovation and tradition in ICH products.	0.729		0.946		
	CI13: I am concerned with the youngsters' pursuit of popular culture products and neglect of ICH products.	0.726		0.946		
	CI14: any criticism of ICH products feels like an insult to me.	0.753		0.945		
Product involvement $\alpha = 0.936$	CI15: any praise of ICH products feels like a praise of me.	[15, 44]	0.869	0.910		
	PI n1: the ICH product is very important to me.		0.868	0.910		
	PI n2: I am very interested in the ICH product.		0.830	0.923		
	PI n3: I associate myself with the ICH product.		Removed for presurvey item analysis			
	PI n4: I will collect relevant information before buying the ICH product.		0.829	0.923		
Willingness to buy $\alpha = 0.946$	PI5: it is a great pleasure to buy the ICH product.	[45]	0.885	0.925		
	PI1: I am interested in buying ICH products.		0.917	0.915		
	PI2: I will consider buying ICH products.		0.817	0.946		
	PI3: I will recommend ICH products to friends.		0.865	0.931		
	PI4: I may buy ICH products.					

with a mean product involvement of (1, 4.8] were allocated to the low-involvement group ( $n = 384$ ), and those with a mean product involvement of (4.8, 7] were allocated to the

high involvement group ( $n = 232$ ). The data skewness (maximum absolute value  $< 3$ ) and kurtosis (maximum absolute value  $< 8$ ) of the two groups both obey normal

TABLE 2: Demographics of the respondents ( $n = 616$ ).

Feature	Percentage (%)	
Gender	Male	40.17
	Female	59.83
Age	18–25	45.79
	26–35	36.29
	36–45	11.66
	46–55	4.32
	56 and above	1.94
Monthly mean income	0–1,500 yuan	26.5
	1,501–3,000 yuan	23.17
	3,001–5,000 yuan	38.94
	5,001–8,000 yuan	10.67
	8,001–10,000 yuan	4.54
Occupation	10,000 yuan and above	3.46
	Educators	7.99
	Civil servants	8.42
	Public institution employees	10.37
	Professional and technical staff	2.38
	Corporate employees	10.58
	Freelancers	11.45
	Retired personnel	0.86
	Students	38.66
Others	9.29	
Education level	Senior high school and below	10.15
	Junior college	10.37
	Undergraduate college	64.58
	Postgraduate college	14.9

TABLE 3: Validity of scales.

	Media influence	Cultural identity	Product involvement	Willingness to buy
Media influence	0.789			
Cultural identity	0.180**	0.736		
Product involvement	0.114**	0.734**	0.893	
Willingness to buy	0.097*	0.731**	0.679**	0.905
AVE	0.623	0.542	0.798	0.819
CR	0.830	0.946	0.941	0.947

\* and \*\* represent significance at the statistical levels of 5% and 1%, respectively; the diagonal numbers are the root mean squares of AVE.

distribution. Therefore, the data of both groups are suitable for structural equation analysis. Intuitively, the high involvement group had a higher mean score in most terms compared to the low-involvement group, reflecting the difference between high and low-involvement consumers in the perception of measured variables like media influence, cultural identity, and willingness to buy.

**4.3.1. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).** The high and low-involvement groups were fitted through SEM on Amos, separately. The fitness indices of the high involvement group were as follows: CMIN/DF = 3.122, GFI = 0.881, AGFI = 0.834, NFI = 0.931, RFI = 0.913, IFI = 0.952, TLI = 0.939, CFI = 0.952, and RMSEA = 0.074. Those of the low-involvement group were as follows: CMIN/DF = 2.186, GFI = 0.866, AGFI = 0.817, NFI = 0.896, RFI = 0.870, IFI = 0.941, TLI = 0.925, CFI = 0.940, and RMSEA = 0.073. The structural equation models and data fitness of both groups are acceptable.

**4.3.2. Path Coefficient Comparison.** Table 5 shows certain differences between high and low-involvement groups in path coefficient,  $T$  value, and significance between variables: the path of cultural identity  $\rightarrow$  willingness to buy is significant in both groups, but the path coefficient changes between the two groups; the paths of media influence  $\rightarrow$  cultural identity and media influence  $\rightarrow$  willingness to buy are significant among high involvement consumers but insignificant among low-involvement consumers. Overall, the higher the product involvement, the more significant the effect of media on cultural identity and the more prominent the influence of the media and cultural identity on the willingness to buy.

**4.3.3. Significance Test of Path Coefficient Difference.** The above analysis shows that high and low-involvement groups have different standard coefficients for the same influence path. Whether the difference is statistically significant needs to be further verified. Since the two sample groups have the same measuring mode and structural mode, a benchmark



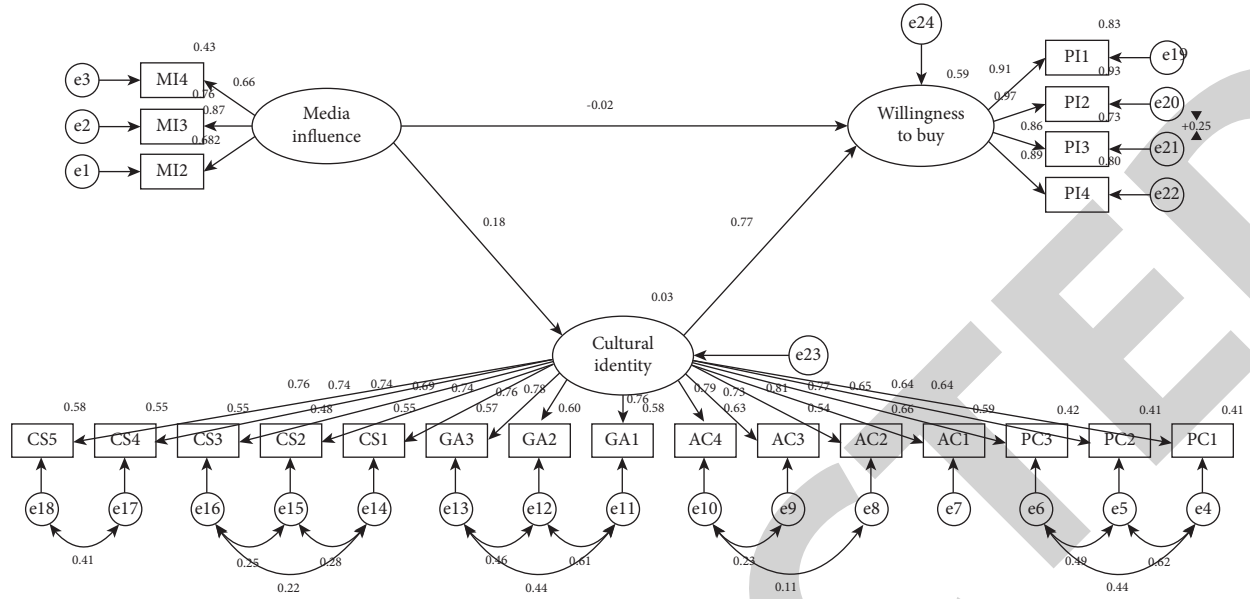


FIGURE 2: Fitting of model A.

TABLE 4: Path coefficient estimates of model A.

Hypothesis	Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Valid
H1	Media influence → willingness to buy	-0.023	0.033	-749	.454	No
H2	Media influence → cultural identity	0.182	0.029	3.956	***	Yes
H3	Cultural identity → willingness to buy	0.769	0.083	15.328	***	Yes

\*\*\* represents significance at the level of 0.1%.

TABLE 5: Path coefficients and significance between variables in each group.

Path	Low-involvement group (n = 384)		High involvement group (n = 232)			
	Path coefficient	T value	Significance	Path coefficient	T value	Significance
Media influence → cultural identity	0.027	0.376	Insignificant	0.251***	4.331	Significant
Cultural identity → willingness to buy	0.600***	7.494	Significant	0.864***	13.490	Significant
Media influence → willingness to buy	-0.004	-0.067	Insignificant	-0.083*	-2.111	Significant

\* and \*\*\* represent significance at the levels of 5% and 0.1%, respectively.

model was obtained with two sets of independent parameters, which do not constrain each other. On this basis, it is possible to test whether the parameters are invariant across groups. As suggested by Wu [48] and Wen et al. [52], this paper tests the significance of path coefficient difference between the two groups in the following steps:

- (1) Establish a multigroup regression analysis model (Model Ma) as the benchmark, estimate the coefficients of each group freely, and denote the obtained chi-square and degree of freedom as  $\chi^2_{Ma}$  and  $df_{Ma}$ , respectively.
- (2) Suppose that the regression coefficients of the two sets of structural equations are the same (Model Mb), and denote the obtained chi-square and degree of freedom (DOF) as  $\chi^2_{Mb}$  and  $df_{Mb}$ , respectively. Derive a new chi-square by subtracting  $\chi^2_{Ma}$  from  $\chi^2_{Mb}$ :  $\Delta\chi^2 = \chi^2_{Mb} - \chi^2_{Ma}$ . The corresponding DOF is

the DOF difference between the two models:  $\Delta df = df_{Mb} - df_{Ma}$  (in this case,  $df = 1$  according to the situation of the two groups).

- (3) Perform chi-square test on  $\Delta\chi^2$ . If the result is statistically significant, then the interaction is significant; that is, the controlled path coefficient has statistically significant difference between sample groups.

The unconstrained and constrained models were tested in high and low-involvement groups, respectively. The results (Table 6) show that  $\chi^2$  and  $df$  of the unconstrained model were 814.322 and 344 for the two groups. By comparison with nested models and checking the chi-square table, when  $\Delta df = 1$ , if  $\Delta\chi^2 > 6.635$ , then the model is significant at  $P < 0.01$ ; if  $3.841 < \Delta\chi^2 < 6.635$ , then the model is significant at  $P < 0.05$ ; if  $2.706 < \Delta\chi^2 < 3.841$ , then the model is significant at  $P < 0.01$ ; if  $\Delta\chi^2 < 2.706$ , then the model is not

TABLE 6: Significance test of path coefficient difference.

Model	Path	$\chi^2$	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta df$	Significance
Unconstrained model		814.322	344	—	—	—
	Media influence $\rightarrow$ cultural identity	817.586	345	3.264*	1	Significant
Constrained model	Cultural identity $\rightarrow$ willingness to buy	819.185	345	4.863**	1	Significant
	Media influence $\rightarrow$ willingness to buy	815.811	345	1.489	1	Insignificant

\* and \*\* represent significance at the levels of 10% and 5%, respectively.

significant statistically. For consumers with different product involvements, the coefficient difference of the path from media influence to cultural identity was significant at  $P < 0.05$ ; the coefficient difference of the path from cultural identity to willingness to buy was significant at  $P < 0.01$ ; there was no significant difference between high and low-involvement groups in the media influence on the willingness to buy. The test results show that, for high involvement consumers, the higher the product involvement, the more significant the effect of media on cultural identity and the more prominent the influence of cultural identity on the willingness to buy. Therefore,  $H4a$  and  $H4b$  were proved valid.

## 5. Discussion

Our results confirm that, in the ICH buying context of this study, the media have a significantly positive effect on cultural identity, which in turn significantly promotes the willingness to buy. We also find that, for high involvement consumers, the higher the product involvement, the more significant the effect of media on cultural identity and the more prominent the influence of cultural identity on the willingness to buy. Taken together, these findings indicate that the media exert a key influence on the consumer selection of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) products, and the implications for marketing practice are discussed subsequently.

**5.1. Give Full Play to the Impact of Various Media.** In modern society, traditional media, especially television, still play a critical role in our lives. For example, Outstanding Craftsmen, a cultural experience program of Beijing Satellite TV, turns the camera on Chinese traditional crafts and their inheritors, in search for the cultural roots of the Chinese nation. The program has won good ratings and a high reputation. In the second season, the program organizers cooperated with JD Equity Crowd funding platform, which provides a display and crowd funding window for the ICH products appearing in the program. Therefore, ICH inheritors and enterprises should show and spread ICH products more frequently on various TV programs.

Ecommerce platforms and online social media are now the main carriers of ICH products dissemination. Vipshop and iResearch jointly released the 2019 ICH New Economic Consumption Report, which points out that consumers primarily access ICH products through the following channels: recommendation by ecommerce platforms (47.9%), self-search (47.4%), and social media like WeChat

Public Accounts, Weibo, Xiaohongshu, and TikTok (34.6%) [54]. ICH inheritors and enterprises can build communities of ICH products or brands on various virtual communities, online social networks, and review websites, aiming to encourage the communication between online groups or individuals. They can also promote ICH products via blogs, enterprise/individual WeChat Public Accounts, network diaries, and so forth.

**5.2. Promote the Cultural Identity of Consumers with ICH Products.** First, enhance the cultural identity with ICH products from product cognition. Further enhance consumers' cognition of ICH products through deep excavation of cultural connotations and innovative forms. To spread ICH products to a wider area, ICH inheritors and enterprises should choose the right ICH themes and create new creative works through excavation, organization, processing, and refinement.

Second, enhance the cultural identity with ICH products from group identity. Enhance consumers' sense of belonging by building a community for ICH lovers and product marketing on social media. ICH inheritors and enterprises could build brand communities through ICH public courses, public lectures, performances, annual theme activities, and platform construction (e.g., WeChat and Weibo). They could also cooperate with museums, art galleries, cultural centers, ecommerce platforms, and the we-media interested in ICH culture to promote ICH products and brands.

Third, enhance the cultural identity with ICH products from emotional commitment. Strengthen the emotional commitment of consumers by improving their satisfaction with ICH products and establishing their belief in ICH products. Like other products, ICH products have three effects: instrumental performance, symbolic performance, and emotional performance. Among them, emotional performance refers to the emotional reaction of consumers after possessing or using a product. This reaction may be derived from the instrumental performance, symbolic performance, or the product itself [55]. The design, production, and marketing of ICH products should generate more values on the three efficacies, making consumers more satisfied and prouder. Besides, ICH inheritors and enterprises should carry out questionnaire surveys, face-to-face interviews, and phone interviews to understand the consumers' preferred experience, in combination with the websites, forums, QQ groups, and WeChat groups related to ICH products. On this basis, they need to establish a database of experience demand of key consumers, providing a basis for ICH product development.

Fourth, enhance the cultural identity with ICH products from culture self-esteem. Improve consumers' culture self-esteem by enhancing their pride in traditional culture and building ICH brands. First, it is necessary to develop the medium and long-term ICH brand publicity plans and carry out publicities and display ads on television, newspapers, and the Internet, trying to shape a good image of ICH products. The publicity should highlight the local elements and proudness of these products. Second, after fully excavating the cultural connotations of the products and thoroughly understanding the consumers' experience demand, a series of ICH products/services (e.g., shopping goods, experience activities, and travel routes) should be developed to satisfy the needs of different markets and occupy greater market shares. Finally, ICH brands should be shaped by improving the production design, hardware, and supporting management of ICH products.

*5.3. Develop Different Marketing Strategies for Consumers with Different Levels of Product Involvement.* The ELM theory believes that the level of product or brand involvement determines how the information is processed and how the attitude is changed. This theory reminds us of using completely different communication strategies for high and low-involvement consumers, in order to effectively disseminate the information of ICH products.

For high involvement consumers, ICH products have a high relevance or importance. They generally feel lots of fun in purchasing ICH products and have a clear purpose of consumption. The marketers should provide them with specific, logical, and factual information and reduce the time and cost of information search. More importantly, the information should focus on the specific region and social group, trying to evoke the emotional association between consumers and ICH products.

For low-involvement consumers, ICH products are usually purchased accidentally. These consumers process the acquired information with a low level of cognitive elaboration and form an impression of the products based on some obvious clues in the information. They do not check whether these clues are related to the products. Therefore, the marketers need to provide a limited amount of information initially, for example, eye-catching ads or slogans, so that the consumers could quickly grasp the key attributes of the ICH products. The marketers can also take some techniques or measures to increase consumers' involvement or level of cognitive elaboration in information processing, such as arranging experience activities in promotion campaigns or adding sensational information.

## 6. Conclusions

In this research, the media influence on the willingness to buy ( $H1$ ) receives no data support ( $P = 0.454$ ). There are two possible reasons: The first is related to the contents disseminated by the media. For the product development of ICHs, experts of different disciplines disagree in policy-making and academic research. The disagreement is

reflected in the publicity on the media. Most media reports highlight ICH protection and talk little about the industrial development or product attributes of ICHs. This might affect the viewers' willingness to buy ICH products. Second, the purchase of ICH products is not the result of media influence. For example, the random purchases of ICH souvenirs on festivals or trips are mostly following the trend or affected by relatives or friends.

Our research finds that cultural identity fully mediates the relationship between media influence and willingness to buy; that is, the mediating effect explains 100% of the total effect. This means the media influence on the willingness to buy ICH products is mainly realized via the mediator variable cultural identity. The disseminators further enrich the consumers' cognition of ICHs via the media and enable them to recognize the cultural value of ICH products, making them more willing to buy these products. This result again reflects the role of the media in constructing cultural identity in modern society.

Further, our research discovers that product involvement regulates how media and cultural identity influence consumers' willingness to buy ( $H4a$  and  $H4b$ ). The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) holds that consumers choose different levels of cognitive elaboration for information processing. If the purchase is strongly correlated with the attitude object, a consumer would evaluate the merits and defects of the product carefully; otherwise, the consumer will search a limited amount of information and make very shallow evaluations (i.e., a low level of cognitive elaboration). Therefore, a highly involved consumer tends to invest more energy or pay more attention to ICH products, understand the special nature and cultural connotations of these products, and nurture the cultural identity with ICH products. The stronger the identity, the greater the interest and the more the willingness to buy. In this way, a virtuous cycle is formed.

In terms of research methods, the future research will increase the theoretical depth through diachronic survey or experiments. In terms of model construction, this paper constructs a "media influence-cultural identity-willingness to buy ICH products" model according to the properties of ICH products. However, there are many factors affecting cultural identity and willingness to buy. Our theoretical model can only explain one aspect of media influence on ICH product purchases. In the future, new mediator variables (e.g., consumption frequency, conversion cost, reputation, and attachment) will be introduced through observations and literature query, and new combinations of variables will be tried, aiming to enrich the research framework of the media influence on consumers' behaviors and willingness to buy.

In addition, this paper examines the moderating effect of product involvement on the relationship between media influence and cultural identity and that between cultural identity and willingness to buy. However, the ICH product purchases could also be regulated by other statistical variables. The subsequent research will further investigate the moderating effect of other variables on the media influence of ICH product purchases, namely, media usage habits, media type, and product type.

## Data Availability

The data used to support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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