

A Review of the Impact of Aesthetic Experience on Consumers' Purchase Decisions

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Abstract. Nowadays, the society is in the era of the awakening of the national aesthetic consciousness, and people are paying more and more attention to their spiritual enjoyment of aesthetics. Especially in the consumption scene, consumers have begun to pay more attention to the aesthetic experience in the purchase process, but the research on aesthetic experience design has not been systematically sorted out. Based on the research of scholars in psychology, art design and brand marketing, this paper analyzes the aesthetic elements that affect aesthetic experience, as well as the differences in aesthetic preferences of different aesthetic power groups, and also analyzes the role of aesthetic experience in different purchase periods of consumption scenarios, as well as the thinking perspective of brands on aesthetic experience design. This paper concludes that products and consumer services with aesthetic elements can bring consumers a universal aesthetic experience, thereby stimulating purchase intention and driving purchase decisions. Based on this, in the future development of brands, people should pay attention to the research and setting of aesthetic experience according to product positioning, and academic research should also dig deeper into the laws of aesthetic experience and verify more detailed operation methods that can be implemented.

Keywords: Aesthetic Experience; Aesthetic Elements; CVPA; Consumer Psychology; Purchase Decisions.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, people's self-exploration and self-improvement consciousness are increasingly awakening. In the context of such an era, the public pays more attention to the individual's internal cultural perception and self-judgment, and the aesthetic ability is also generally improved. Therefore, in the consumption scene, consumers begin to change from a single concern about the function of the product itself, and also begin to think independently from the cognitive dependence on product marketing, so they pursue more product-related aesthetic experience, pursue the internal cultural attributes externalized by the product, and expect to be consistent with their personal aesthetics. In the era of sweeping waves, many brands have been eliminated because of the aesthetic backwardness of product design and consumption scene design, and many emerging young brands have sprung up like mushrooms and attracted much attention. All walks of life have begun to reshuffle with aesthetic thinking. Even benchmark enterprises that have stood in the industry for many years have begun to innovate in brand image and aesthetic elements of product design, in order to help them get the flow of this aesthetic era. Aesthetic it is a psychological concept, and aesthetic psychology has certain subjectivity. To study how aesthetic experience acts on consumers, it is necessary to analyze the aesthetic differentiation of different aesthetic consumer groups, and combine psychology with marketing. The aesthetic elements in the aesthetic experience of product design affect consumers' purchase psychology and purchase behavior [1]. The differentiated aesthetic ability of different groups of people also determines consumers' differentiated feelings about aesthetic experience [2]. The three stages of the formation of aesthetic experience also construct a trigger response chain for brand visual aesthetics [3]. At present, the existing research theories focus on the various stages of aesthetic experience, and the coherence between the studies is relatively low. Therefore, it is necessary to systematically sort out the context of relevant theories and research findings, so as to provide the basis for academic views for future research in this field, and to make the research gaps and research deficiencies more clearly presented to consumer behavior researchers, so as to promote

the theoretical development in this field. This article will sort out the concept and mechanism of consumer aesthetic experience, the influence of aesthetic elements, the psychological impact of aesthetic experience on consumers at different stages of purchase, and the targeted service strategies of brands. The purpose of this study is to summarize how brands can upgrade the aesthetic design of products and consumption environment in the sales scene to improve the aesthetic experience of consumers in the social context of the awakening of national aesthetic awareness, so as to promote brands to force brand innovation and achieve growth with the help of consumer aesthetic requirements.

2. The Concept and Mechanism of Aesthetic Experience

2.1. The Concept of Aesthetic Experience

The aesthetic experience in the consumption process refers to the aesthetic realm of consumers being triggered, induced, and resonated by products or services in the purchase scene, achieving the aesthetic realm of visual integration and the unity of subject and object, which is the psychological activity of consumers stimulated by various aesthetic elements [4]. Aesthetic experience is a high-level cognitive process. Cognition, imagination and feeling will interact in aesthetic experience, which is more sensational than simple rational thinking and imagination, which requires the coordinated intervention of imagination, cognition and perception [1]. In the whole process, consumers' imagination is expanded, and their personal feelings are improved, and finally they get a free and enjoyable aesthetic experience [5].

2.2. The Mechanism of Aesthetic Experience

From a physiological point of view, consumers mainly use the ventral system to perceive aesthetic elements. The brain regions related to the brain reward system can respond quickly to stimuli of beauty. Aesthetic experience is a cognitive process that provides self-reward. Neuroscience research has confirmed that visual stimuli with aesthetic elements are associated with a higher reward value in the brain than ugly visual stimuli, so the use of aesthetically pleasing visual elements by brands will trigger an instinctive positive response from consumers [3]. The stronger the consumer's aesthetic perception of the product itself and the design of the service, the easier it is to stimulate the reward system in the brain, which in turn increases the evaluation and preference of the product [6].

From a psychological point of view, consumers actively treat themselves through the pursuit of beauty, and because the materialized consumption behavior itself has the meaning of giving consumers a personal identity symbol, the consumption behavior with an aesthetic sense doubles the spiritual needs of consumers. Therefore, even though the development of science and technology has greatly improved people's quality of life and comfort, technology cannot give people spiritual enjoyment, while beauty can reach people's hearts and give people the experience of spiritual freedom.

On the basis of physiological and psychological perspectives, consumers process and understand aesthetic elements through three stages: visual attention, visual processing, and visual understanding, forming an aesthetic experience [3].

Aesthetic experience respects people's deep needs, and integrates aesthetics into consumption behavior, so that the whole consumption process starts from meeting the aesthetic needs of consumers, so that consumers can obtain emotional pleasure in the process of consumption, which is the promotion of consumers' purchase decision and even the promotion of brand growth.

3. Factors Affecting Consumers' Aesthetic Experience

In the aesthetic experience of the consumption scene designed by the brand, consumers are stimulated by the aesthetic elements and develop aesthetic feelings, and the aesthetic elements in this process are the influencing factors that determine the aesthetic experience. These factors include not only the combination and use of specific graphics and structural elements of product design, as well

as general design factors, but also the visual actual factors in consumption scenes, which is of great significance for the design of the brand on aesthetic experience. According to Li Dongjin's research and combined with the actual situation of the sales scene, the following aesthetic influencing factors are summarized.

3.1. Appearance

In the design of products and stores, graphic elements and structural elements are important design factors that affect consumers' aesthetic experience, such as trademarks, colors, shapes, volumes, materials, etc. Previous studies have concluded that if a particular visual impression is consistent with the cultural values and morals of a certain consumer group, the object of that visual impression is aesthetically attractive to such consumers [1]. Because aesthetics and specific visual perceptions are very personal, such as everyone's color and shape preferences are different, this influencing factor can be used as a reference in the strategy of accurate classification and positioning of customer groups in the practical field of aesthetic experience design for brands.

3.2. Novelty

Novelty refers to whether the consumer's perception of the current form is different from the form of past experience and thus perceives novelty [1]. In practice, consumers develop preferences for products with different levels of novelty, which are described in more detail below.

3.3. Complexity

Complexity refers to the degree of stimulus derived from the quantity and quality of the physical figure, the degree of difference between the previous figure, and the degree of organization of the arrangement of these figured units. Classical aesthetic theory points out that neither too high nor too low complexity can induce a high sense of pleasure. Consumers usually prefer products with low complexity and high symmetry, and the level of complexity affects people's perception of aesthetics [7]. When consumers value the functionality and quality of products more, their preference for product complexity increases; when consumers are more concerned about the aesthetics and ease of use of products, they prefer product designs with low complexity [7]. It can be seen that in different product categories, designs with different degrees of complexity should be used to trigger consumers' high aesthetic perception.

3.4. Typicality

Typicality refers to the degree to which an object can represent a category of objects. Previous studies have shown that typical designs can immediately elicit positive reactions from consumers. However, as consumers gain a more comprehensive understanding of product attributes and features, their preference for typicality decreases, while atypical designs are more popular when they have more opportunities to appear in consumers' perspectives [8]. It can be seen that popular and universal products require more atypical designs, while niche product types that are not often familiar to consumers require more typical characteristics.

3.5. Unity

Unity refers to the overall harmony between the individual design elements. In the field of aesthetic research, it is believed that beauty is a harmonious and orderly relationship, and the feeling of beauty comes from the feeling of harmony as a whole. Taking the field of clothing as an example, the importance of dressing lies in the fact that people pay attention to the harmonious coexistence of the whole clothing and accessories, so that the overall image of the wearer exudes beauty. Even in the so-called mix and match style, there needs to be some elements between the individual items that can echo and integrate with each other.

3.6. Artistry

Art is an important field of aesthetic research, and the artistry of a product can significantly affect consumers' perception of a product. Art injection refers to the influence of the expression of art in the product on the consumer's perception and evaluation of the product. Previous studies have verified that art injection has a positive impact on consumers' product evaluations both in the product itself and in product marketing [1]. Art injection can improve the aesthetic appeal, thereby improving the feeling of aesthetic experience, so brands should use the elements of art injection in the design of aesthetic experience to improve the positive aesthetic response of consumers.

3.7. Cultural Context

For consumers, the perception of beauty is the result of objective and subjective interactions, so in addition to objective attributes of products, the matching between the cultural subjectivity of consumers as aesthetic subjects and product attributes will also affect the occurrence of aesthetic experience [1]. People's aesthetic response to a unified object depends on different cultural contexts. For example, color, an important factor affecting aesthetic experience, has different meanings in different regions. In the wedding scene, Westerners use white to represent romance and purity, while Chinese use red to represent festivity and enthusiasm. Therefore, in practice, the brand should have corresponding design changes under different cultural scenarios.

3.8. Fashion

Fashion refers to the trend of life style in a specific period and environment. The fashion related to products is developed from the industrial age and represents the attribute of modern technology and artistic aesthetics [2]. Nowadays, fashion means that the product is easy to be accepted and loved within a certain time range. The lack of fashion will make it difficult for the product to meet the current aesthetic needs of consumers [2]. It can be seen that fashion is also a common form of product innovation. Innovation is the root of development. All industries are trying to find a balance between fashion and typicality.

4. Differentiated Perception of Aesthetic Experience

From the perspective of consumers, in the same marketing scenario of the same product, different consumers will also have different aesthetic feelings. CVPA refers to the degree to which consumers pay attention to the aesthetic factors of various product styling, and this tool can show how consumers with different aesthetic abilities feel about the aesthetic experience [2]. Experiments have shown that in aesthetic experience, appearance can only affect the high-CVPA group to a greater extent, and novelty will have a negative impact on the high/medium CVPA group, while artistry will have a positive impact on the high/medium CVPA group, and fashion will have an impact on different CVPA groups [2]. This experiment shows that consumers with higher CVPA levels have stronger aesthetic ability, pay more attention to aesthetic factors in the aesthetic experience, and will comprehensively consider multiple aesthetic factors to make aesthetic decisions.

5. The Impact of Aesthetic Experience on Consumers' Purchase Intention

Aesthetic experience is the main driving force to promote consumers' purchase decisions. Aesthetic experience meets consumers' spiritual needs for aesthetics. Positive emotional reactions to aesthetic experience will then produce corresponding behavioral reactions, such as further contact or even purchase, because this is an instinctive judgment [3]. Therefore, aesthetic experience has gradually promoted the purchase behavior in different stages.

5.1. Early Stage of the Purchase Process

Once consumers come into contact with a product or enter a consumption scene, they will enter the early stage of the purchase process, and the appearance design of the product and consumption scene design will reach consumers in the form of visual attraction or even visual impact in the first time. This officially enters the process of consumers' aesthetic experience of the product. The high CVPA group with aesthetic power will pay special attention to the design. Consumers will start to understand the product from the design elements, enter the visual attention stage, and begin to enter the beginning of the aesthetic response. The visual stimulation generated by the aesthetic attractive design will offer consumers a smooth aesthetic experience and form a brand visual aesthetic trigger reaction chain. Positive emotional feelings will cause people to attribute to the product design itself, and thus produce a higher aesthetic evaluation and preference for the product [2].

5.2. Middle Stage of the Purchase Process

Having a preliminary purchase intention for the product, consumers will generally start a rational understanding process (such as specific performance) and calculation and evaluation (such as price), so as to decide whether to buy or not. This process will increase the dullness of the consumption process, because rational thinking requires monotonous data evaluation, and simple evaluation behavior cannot promote the purchase decision [9]. At this time, if aesthetic decoration and packaging are added to all aspects of consumption, especially the aesthetic elements of artistry and fashion, consumers need to add the ingredients of perceptual analysis in order to fully understand the product, rather than monotonous rational thinking. For example, artistic product design will make consumers stay for a longer time to enjoy and study. The aesthetic experience in the consumer environment will enable consumers to quickly enter the stage of perception and thinking, and more immersively experience the spiritual experience of aesthetic perception and imagination. These impacts will extend the time consumers experience in the consumption scene, thus increasing the likelihood of purchasing behavior [9].

5.3. Late Stage of the Purchase Process

After combining the in-depth experience in the early and middle stages, consumers will make purchase decisions under perceptual cognition, and decisions based on perceptual cognition will bring consumers more lasting spiritual pleasure than rational purchase. Especially when the hedonic benefits of the product exceed the expectation, the brand will have higher consumer loyalty, and such consumption experience is more likely to generate repurchase behavior, which is more conducive to the brand side to lock in customers, so as to improve the brand profit and brand value [1].

6. The Setting Method of Brand Aesthetic Experience

From the perspective of brand, aesthetic experience is the process of perception and emotional response to beauty formed between merchants and consumers through the interaction of goods or services [2]. The way in which the aesthetic experience of the brand is set in the consumption link should be implemented throughout the whole process of the timeline of the consumption link and the three-dimensional experience of the consumption scene. The aesthetic packaging and operation of consumption can weaken the rational thinking of consumers, gradually shift consumers' thinking mode from rational calculation to perceptual experience, ensure that consumers can get more aesthetic opportunities in consumption, experience more aesthetic enjoyment, and strengthen more decision-making impulse.

6.1. Product Design

According to the influencing factors of aesthetic experience, in the design of product appearance, a brand should make a differential analysis according to its product type, product attributes, sales area and other aspects, and analyze the products one by one from the aspects of appearance, novelty,

complexity, typicality, unity, artistry, cultural context and fashion, so as to form a product's exclusive aesthetic element positioning, maximize the aesthetic experience of potential customers, and increase people's reaction time to product design with aesthetic value [6].

At the same time, since different CVPA groups have obvious differences in aesthetic preference and aesthetic ability, it is necessary to consider whether the product belongs to a certain type of CVPA group in the product design. For example, tea sets are utensils with life style, and the customer group positioning is probably in the high CVPA group, so the design of tea sets should pay special attention to the beauty of appearance. At the same time, artistry and fashion should be considered, but not novelty factors. Brands need to subdivide consumer groups, and formulate accurate and differentiated product positioning and product strategies according to the aesthetic ability and aesthetic needs of target groups, so as to help enterprises get rid of the Red Ocean Strategy and enhance their competitive advantage.

6.2. Packaging Design

Packaging is an important aesthetic context for products, and when consumers have no prior experience with product quality, packaging aesthetics can become a key marketing factor that affects consumer expectations. Just like the famous 55387 theory in the fields of psychology and communication, a person's appearance can determine 55% of their first cognitive evaluation by others. This shows the importance of appearance, and the same goes for the appearance of an item. Packaging is the first direct signal that consumers can observe a product. However, the aesthetic elements of product packaging need to be appropriately expressed. If the aesthetic appeal of the packaging is too high, it can also lead to negative expectation management, thereby reducing product evaluation.

The design of brand logos is also a part of packaging, and brand effect is also an important part that consumers value in their purchasing behavior. Aesthetic brand logos can attract consumers' attention, enhance their impression, and promote consumption.

6.3. Marketing Advertising and Service Environment

Brand merchants need to fully integrate aesthetic experience design into the marketing environment. In addition to product and packaging design, the advertising communication and marketing service environment of marketing are equally important. The graphic design of product advertising and the aesthetic design of materials in the communication process need to be unified with the design elements of the product itself, and should be considered in terms of the aesthetic experience of product design. In the consumption scene, the artistic and personalized aesthetic design of the arrangement also needs to serve the aesthetic needs of consumers.

The marketing scenario of a brand represents its image. Whether in offline stores or online websites, brand image is the soft power of brand competitiveness, so brands need to pay attention to the aesthetic experience design of marketing scenarios. The design of consumer scenarios based on emotional experience is different from the simple buying and selling of goods in the past, which is also one of the fundamental competitiveness of enterprises in the future [10].

7. Conclusion

Based on aesthetic experience, this paper combines aesthetic factors, CVPA theory, and the psychological effects of aesthetic experience on different purchase stages, and reveals the complexity of the influence of various factors on consumers' purchase decisions, as well as the important role of aesthetic experience in purchasing decisions. This can be explained by the following facts: first, aesthetic experience will have a positive effect on consumers from both physiological and psychological perspectives, and aesthetic experience meets the deep spiritual needs of consumers; secondly, many aesthetic elements influence consumers' aesthetic experience; thirdly, aesthetic experience creates visual stimulation for consumers in the early stages of purchase and produces a pleasant aesthetic feeling for consumers, so that the product can get a higher evaluation. The

occurrence of perceptual feelings from the aesthetic experience in the middle of the purchase can prolong the experience time of consumers, increase the possibility of purchase, and the hedonistic effect of aesthetic experience in the late stage of purchase can make consumers produce a higher repurchase rate. This paper provides a reference for brands on how to design the aesthetic experience of products, which is conducive to brands to start thinking from the mechanism of aesthetic experience, aesthetic elements and multiple starting points of different aesthetic power groups, and analyze the psychological effects of product design and service scene design in the three stages of consumer purchase period. Aesthetic experience is a topic worthy of in-depth study. In the context of today's aesthetic era, the business field should explore the space for brand growth from the perspective of consumers' aesthetic psychology. While promoting brand growth, it also promotes the improvement of the national aesthetic power, and the improvement of the national perceptual cognition also means social progress. At present, research in the field of aesthetic marketing has also limitations due to insufficient case studies. Brands do not have relevant data on the differentiation of aesthetic power groups from the practice of aesthetic experience, as well as big data feedback on aesthetic experience in sales practice. Future researchers can continue to delve deeper into consumers' aesthetic psychology through practical data and data argumentation.

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