Research on IP Marketing Strategy Based on Emotional Ties: Linkage Analysis of Brand Loyalty and Social Media Interaction--The Case of Lina Bell

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Abstract. In the new era with high-developing information and prevalent use of social networks, there are gradually more and more frequent interactions in social media which is of great importance, making it the core channel for communication between brands and their consumers. However, there are relatively less analysis on how emotional ties influence brand loyalty. The research takes Disney's Linabell image as an example, discussing how these brands can use social media interaction under guidance of these theories to enhance brand loyalty. The research use questionnaire survey to analyze customers' emotional feedback and preference. The study found that consumers' emotional connection to personalized IP stems primarily from IP's unique design and backstory, elements that are amplified by high-frequency interactions on social media. In addition, social media interactions significantly boost consumers' sense of engagement and emotional value, further driving purchase behavior. The research results provide instructional guidance for brand strategy in digital marketing. It concludes that by giving distinct affective attributes and personalized story to its intellectual property image, brand can establish a profound emotional link with its customers on social media platforms, in order to increase interactional frequency as well as enhancing relationship between them. Therefore, brands can focus on establishment of emotional value through IP design and improve interactions on social media platforms to form persistent emotional ties. At the same time, the phenomenon of light culture should be prohibited to ensure the quality and cultural value of IP image.

Keywords: Personified IP, brand loyalty, social media interaction, consumer behavioral research, emotional bonding.

1. Introduction

In today's globalization and digitalization, the way brands interact with consumers is undergoing a series of profound changes. The traditional brand marketing model can no longer meet the growing demand of consumers. Brands establish emotional connections with consumers by creating personalized images with unique personalities and story backgrounds, thus enhancing brand loyalty. Social media, as a highly interactive communication channel, helps brands amplify the influence of their IP images and enhance the emotional resonance of consumers.

Disney, one of the world's leading entertainment industry giants, with its efficient IP marketing strategy, launched the personified character, Lina Bell. With her adorable appearance, rich story background and lively and curious personality, Lina Bell quickly won the hearts of a large number of fans. Through social media promotion, Lina Bell not only consolidated Disney's market position, but also realized deep interaction with consumers. Taking Disney's Lina Bell as an example, this paper discusses the success factors of personality-based IP marketing and its impact on brand image and consumer behavior.

Personified IP marketing has been widely studied in the fields of brand management, consumer behavior, communication theory and social media marketing. Brand image and loyalty are the core elements of brand management, and personified IP enhances brand affinity and consumer

identification through anthropomorphic characters. From the perspective of consumer behavior theory, emotional resonance significantly influences consumers' decision-making and purchase intention. In addition, social media marketing emphasizes the importance of content creation, interaction and community strategy, which not only enhances brand awareness but also consumer engagement.

The role of emotional bonding is crucial in IP marketing success stories. Existing research shows that emotional interaction has become a major approach to IP marketing, especially in the new media environment. Brands have formed the core means of cultural IP marketing communication by using momentum marketing through emotional economy, as well as activating emotional energy through social media interaction to further gather emotional resonance. However, in this process, there are also the phenomena of "focusing on marketing but not on content" and "focusing on entertainment but not on culture", which show a series of challenges to the long-term healthy development of the IP.

This study will examine how Disney promotes the personified IP image of Lina Bell on different social media platforms and analyze the key factors for its success. The paper will also examine the impact of Lina Bell on brand image and consumer behavior, especially how emotional ties enhance brand loyalty. Finally, the study will also examine how other brands (e.g., Jelly cat) can learn from Disney's promotional strategy to successfully create a personified IP, which will provide guidance for brands' practice in digital marketing.

The study adopts the questionnaire survey method to analyze Disney's promotion strategy on social media and explore how it builds a successful personified IP through the theory of symbolic interaction and emotional resonance. At the same time, the study will combine with questionnaire surveys for consumers to collect their emotional feedback and behavioral changes towards Lina Bell, and to validate the actual impact of social media interaction on brand loyalty. Through these data, the study will summarize the key factors of IP image promotion and propose a healthy development path for cultural IP marketing.

2. Methods

2.1. Questionnaire Design

The main method used in the research is questionnaire survey. The questionnaire is designed to detect customers' cognition and preference towards personalized IP, and also the interactive condition of them on social media platforms. The aim is to verify social media marketing's positive influence on character the personalized IP image and facilitate brand loyalty. Additionally, questions in the questionnaire are mainly designed to investigate respondents' engagement in social media and cognition and attitude towards personalized IP, and also consumption tendency. The following is a specific analysis of different dimensions of the questionnaire.

When it comes to respondents' basic information, such as ages and gender, it is all helpful to recognize their general group features. Besides, the information is also beneficial to have better detailed comprehension and analysis on percept of different gender and age groups to personalized IP, to determine the specific consuming group who have deep interest in personalized IP.

The cognition and preference of personified IP are the key aspects to be examined. Part of questions in the questionnaire, for example, asking respondents' comprehending degree and channels towards different personified IP (Linabell, Hello Kitty, Mickey Mouse), which is conducive to understanding cognitive tendency and cognitive level of various kinds of personalized IP and set deep and accurate focus on their popularity among customers. Besides, social media engagement is also an important aspect in the research. The questionnaire also discusses what kind of social platforms respondents frequently use to follow and share relevant content of personalized IP they are interested in, and ask about IP-related interactions they once engaged in.

The most effective marketing in social media actually stems from active and positive promotion by customers themselves. Organisations and enterprises can gain various forms of advantages through

social networks, such as improving brand awareness, attracting more new customers and obtaining brand intelligence [1]. Therefore, these questions can help clarify the significance of social media in personalized IP promotion as well as identify the social media platform which is most popular.

The attractive factors of IP image and strong recommendation channels should also be considered into questionnaire design, which can help to understand respondents' emotional needs and consuming preference, and assist the brand to optimize design of image and marketing strategy. In addition to promotion, concerns about brand loyalty and consumption decisions also show in the questionnaire, especially whether the personalized IP image can enhance the brand loyalty. At the same time, respondents are also questioned whether their purchasing decision is affected by emotional value. The questionnaire asks about the reason why respondents purchase products related to personalized IP items and list some choices, for example, quality of products, design and love for characters. It is beneficial to understand customers' motivations for buying these products, providing guidance in product design and marketing methods to help the brand develop products based on customers preferences in the future.

2.2. Questionnaire Distribution

The questionnaire is designed and produced through the WenjuanXing platform and distributed through social media platforms (Wechat, XiaoHongshu). The questionnaire is using the random sampling method to make sure of the diversity of participants. 150 questionnaires have been distributed. 128 of them are valid and recovered, with a recovery rate of 85.3%.

The social media platforms used to distribute questionnaires are all closely connected with promotion of personalized IP image, as there are many active users on these platforms. The determination of distributing questionnaires on these platforms is mainly based on customers' use of social media platforms, and also ensures they are highly representative in samples. The questionnaire survey is focused on young consumers aged between 18 and 35 years old, because the young age group are main users of social media and also vital audiences of personalized IP images. They play vibrant roles on social media platforms and have high consumption potentiality and willingness. During the process of recovery, incomplete questionnaires were banished and valid questionnaires were retained.

2.3. Result Assumption

Based on symbolic interactionism, social media marketing theory and consumer behaviour theory, action of human beings on other things mainly base on the meaning they endow to them, which originate from interactions in the whole society. Nowadays, with rapid development of society, there are gradually more and more frequent interactions in social media [2].

By instilling unique emotional attributes and characteristic story into IP image, brands can build profound and closely emotional bonds with customers on social media platforms, enhancing frequency of interaction to strengthen connection between brands and their consumers. Therefore, the result hypotheses that with the help of unique design and story background, personalized IP brands can actively interact with followers and potential customers on social media platforms to enhance emotional connection. As emotional value plays a significant role in customers' purchasing decisions, it can also help to prompt brand loyalty and popularity.

3. Results

3.1. Summary and Analysis of Demographic Information

First, the basic information of the respondents such as gender, age and occupation were counted and analyzed. The results show that 27.82% of the respondents who participated in the questionnaire survey were male and 72.18% were female (figure 1). The age of the survey respondents mainly focuses on 18-25 years old, accounting for 69.17%, which indicates that young women dominate in their preference for personified IP (figure 2). As young women pay the most attention to IP images,

brands can pay more attention to content and elements that match this group's preferences in their design and promotion.

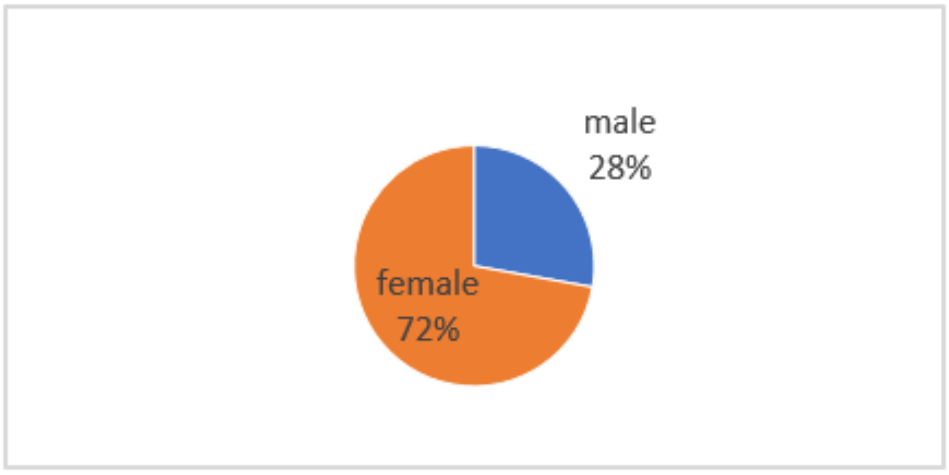


Figure 1. Gender.

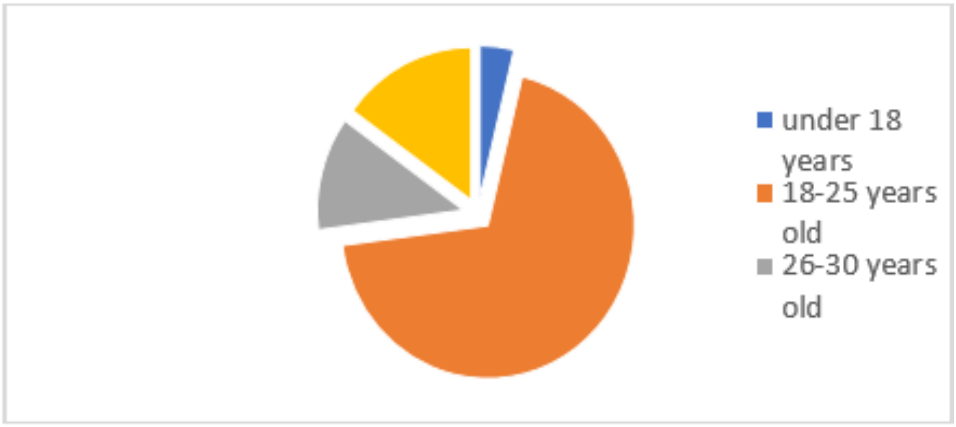


Figure 2. Age.

3.2. Analysis of Awareness and Preference of Personality-based IP Images

In the survey on respondents' perception of different IP images, Hello Kitty (51.88%) is the most popular, followed by Lina Bell (48.87%) and Mickey Mouse (44.36%). Comparatively, mm bean (14.29%) and Jiang Xiao Bai (15.04%) were less popular (figure 3). By analyzing the differences in the perception of IP by different age groups and genders, the analysis concludes that the young group has a higher acceptance of these IP images, especially the female group shows a strong fondness for them.

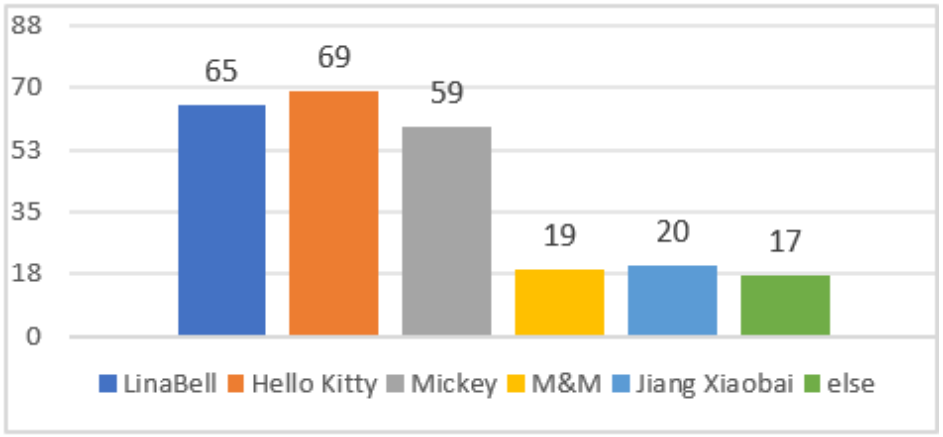


Figure 3. Analysis of the cognition and preference of personalized IP images.

3.3. Analysis of Social Media Usage

TV and film advertisements or social software platforms are the main channels for respondents to learn about and get to know personified IPs, while news clients and acquaintances are less likely to inform them. The data shows that these brands put a lot of promotion on media platforms, but people are not too willing to want to share the information with their friends around them after learning about it (figure 4). How to make the IP image spread in front of the public is an issue that brands need to consider.

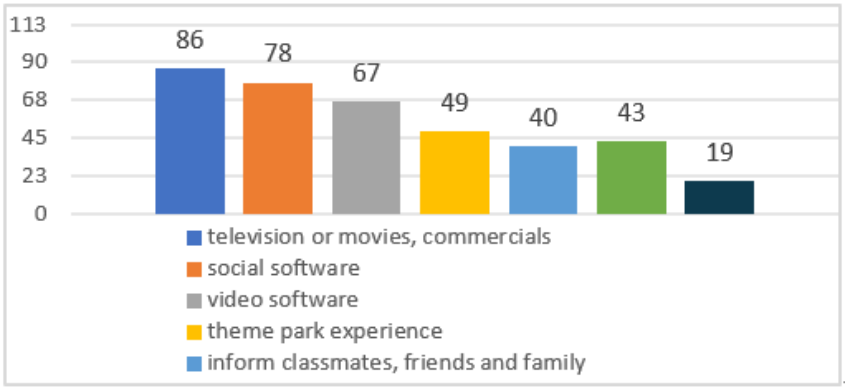


Figure 4. Analysis of respondents' initial understanding.

The data shows that 63.16% of the respondents follow or share the IP image through TikTok, 59.40% use WeChat, and 58.65% use Little Red Book (figure 5). This suggests that Shake and WeChat are key platforms for promoting personified IPs. In addition, respondents interacted with IP images more frequently on these platforms, especially on TikTok, where they often engaged in interactions by liking, commenting and sharing. Brands can increase their emphasis on Strong's promotion on social platforms such as TikTok and WeChat, and further engage users by adding interactive activities.

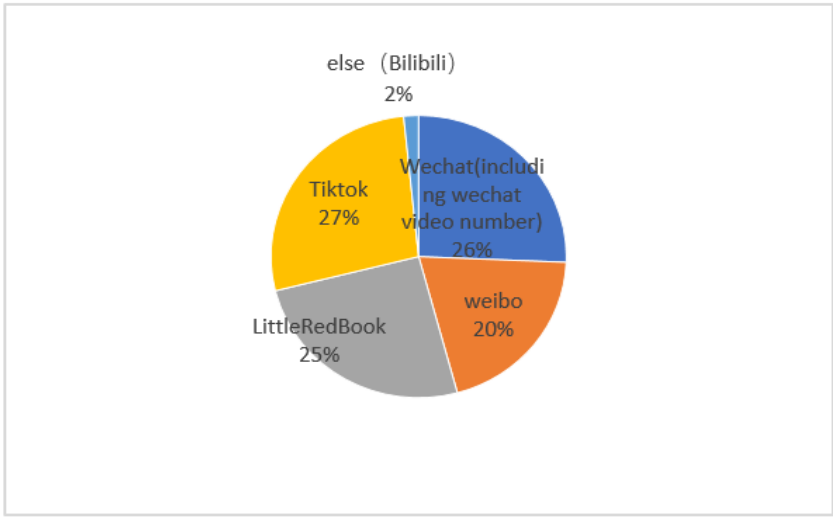


Figure 5. Analysis of Social Media Followed and Shared by Respondents.

3.4. Analysis of IP Attractiveness Factors

Respondents believe that the attractiveness of IP images mainly comes from aesthetic or creative designs (71.43%) and interesting story backgrounds (57.89%) as shown in figure 6. This indicates that aesthetic design and background story are the key factors to attract consumers. In addition, some respondents mentioned that emotional value and interactive experience had a significant impact on their purchase decision. This suggests that the sense of design of the personified IP image and the shaping of the backstory are important, and combined with emotional marketing strategies, they can further strengthen the emotional connection of consumers.

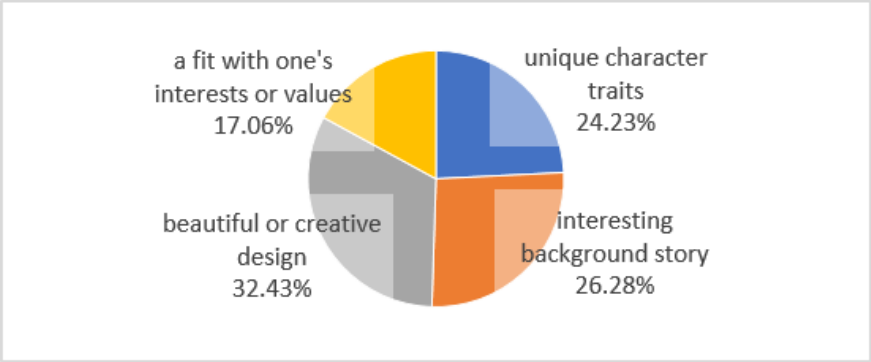


Figure 6. Analysis of IP Attraction Factors.

3.5. Brand Loyalty and Emotional Value

The data shows that 62.41% of the respondents said that the IP image increased their loyalty to the brand (figure 7). Meanwhile, 53.38% of respondents believe that emotional value has a greater impact on their consumption decisions (figure 7). Through emotional connection, brands are able to increase consumer loyalty and drive their purchasing behaviour.

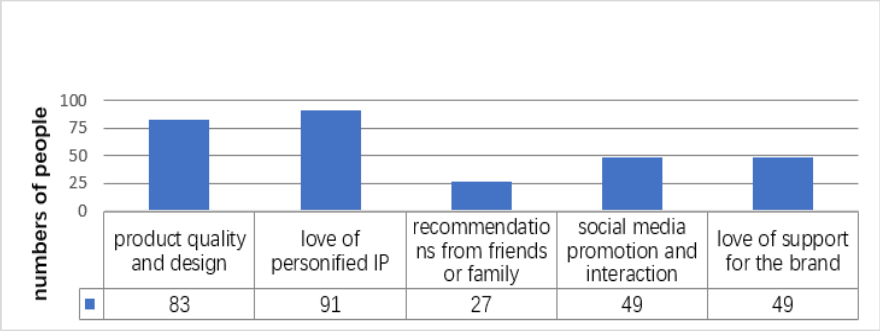


Figure 7. Purchase Behaviour Analysis.

In addition to this, when purchasing goods related to personified IPs, respondents are mainly concerned with product quality (65.41%) and design sense (58.65%), followed by their love for the IP image (53.38%) (Figure 8). This suggests that the actual quality and design of the product are equally important influences on consumers' purchasing decisions.

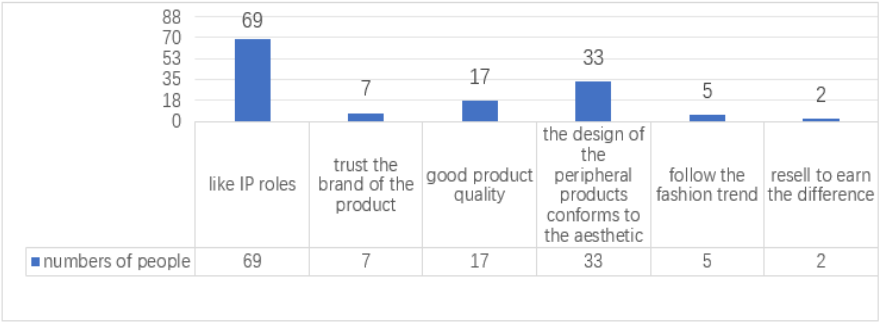


Figure 8. Analysis of Reasons for Purchase Decision.

3.6. Comparison of Assumptions

Based on symbolic interaction theory, social media marketing theory and consumer behaviour theory, the interactive activities of personified IP images on social media are more frequent. However some respondents are still in the stage of preliminary understanding and attention to personified IP. Consumers and target audiences pay more attention to the story background behind the personified IP, the quality of related peripheral products, and the delivery of emotional value. This is consistent with the result hypothesis.

4. Discussion

4.1. Research Results

According to the respondents' gender, age and other data in this questionnaire, 72.18% of the respondents are female, mainly aged 18-25 years old, which indicates that young women pay special attention to the personified IP images, so that brands can focus on the content that meets the preferences of this group in design and promotion, such as cute style, fashion style, and animal style. Respondents' cognition and preference for different IP images show that Hello Kitty, Linabelle and other images are the most popular among them, especially among young women. TikTok, WeChat and other social media are the main channels for respondents to learn about and share IP information, and brands effectively attract users to participate in discussions based on the symbolic interaction theory. The appeal of IP images mainly comes from external image design, novel story background and emotional value, among which emotional bond has a significant impact on consumers' purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, brands enhance consumers' loyalty and emotional identification with the brands through emotional bonds, thus further promoting the occurrence of consumer behavior.

4.2. Cause Analysis

4.2.1. Strengthening brand loyalty through symbol theory

The ideology and symbols share the consistent domain, wherever there are symbols, there is ideology. The transmission of ideology needs to enable both of them a common meaning space. Disney's IP images (such as Mickey Mouse, the Duffy family) are not just simple cartoon characters, but have rich cultural and emotional significance, constituting a bond for consumers' emotional sustenance. According to the symbol theory, these image symbols provide emotional support for consumers, and young women show higher awareness and preference for these IP images, indicating that Disney has successfully stimulated the emotional resonance of target groups [3].

4.2.2. The promotion of symbolic interaction theory on emotional connection between brands and consumers

Social currency is the entirety of the actual potential resources of social networks and communities, proposed by Bourdieu. Virtual characters can make the holders of social groups have a connection with others and a sense of belonging, and establish a cultural exchange space belonging to them 错误!未找到引用源。. Disney applies the symbolic interaction theory on social media platforms (such as Tiktok and wechat) to continuously interact with consumers, so that consumers can establish an emotional bond with IP images. According to the data, the main platforms for consumers to learn about and interact with IP images are Tiktok, Little Red Book, and WeChat. Through this frequent interaction, the IP images create a unique meaning in the hearts of consumers, and promote the in-depth communication between consumers and the brand through likes, comments and other behaviors. Disney continues to publish IP image-related content on social media platforms, such as character stories and adventures. This means that consumers 'purchasing decisions are influenced by external environment at any time, especially the advice of "opinion leaders" [5]. In addition to improving the image of the Disney family, these content also allows fans to actively participate in the story of making IP images, and also provides consumers with the opportunity to continue to participate.

4.2.3. Emotional value as a core driver of brand loyalty

It is pointed out in the symbol theory that the meaning of symbols is not limited to external manifestations, but also depends on the emotions and values it conveys. Disney's IP images empower IPs rich emotional value through exquisite design and vivid story backgrounds, attracting a large number of young female followers. This is proved by the respondents' high recognition of the IP design and the background of the story.

4.2.4. Social media platform as an effective carrier of symbol propagation

Data shows that social media platforms are the main channel for consumers to learn about the IP images. The rapid development of various new media in the Internet environment enables users to find content in line with their own values and ideals at a low cost and efficiently, thus becoming the subject of two-way interaction [6]. Marketing and communication are integrated in the new media environment, and marketing is no longer a top-down one-way activity, but a multi-directional network interactive communication [7]. Based on the symbolic interaction theory, consumers communicate with brands or other consumers through social media platforms to further discuss the creation of IP images and create emotional connections with Disney. Disney can establish closer cooperation with social media platforms such as TikTok and WeChat to further deepen the spread of IP images through innovative and interesting interactive forms such as user-generated content (UGC), immersive experience activities, theme parks, etc., and enhance consumer participation and loyalty.

4.3. Objective Limitations

4.3.1. Sample error

In survey interviews, 72.18% of the respondents are female, and most of them are aged 18-25, so their preferences may limit the general applicability of the research results. The data mainly reflects the preferences of young women, while consumers of other age groups and genders may have different recognition of IP images and fail to form emotional bonds. As a result, the research results may not fully reflect brand loyalty in the broader population.

4.3.2. Limitations of social media platforms

Through the specific analysis of the questionnaire, it is found that the key platforms to promote personified IPs are TikTok, Little Red Book, WeChat, etc. However, social media platforms and use habits are different in different countries and regions. The research does not fully consider the role of global social media platforms (such as Instagram, Twitter) in IP image spread, and the applicability of its conclusions in the international context may be limited.

4.3.3. Limitations of symbol theory

Although symbol theory and symbolic interaction theory provide theoretical support, they mainly focus on the symbolic meaning and interactive process of Disney IPs and cannot deeply consider other important factors that affect brand loyalty, such as product quality factors, price factors, sales channel factors, etc. Research based solely on symbol theory may neglect other key factors, which may lead to the singularity and limitation of research perspective.

5. Conclusion

According to the results of the study, among the many personified IPs, characters such as Lina Bell, Hello Kitty and Mickey Mouse are widely known. They are not only appealing due to their aesthetic or creative designs, but also have rich and interesting story backgrounds. Disseminated through TV or film advertisements, social software and video-based software, these characters have gradually become favourite IP images. Social media platforms such as WeChat, Little Red Book and TikTok have become the main ways for audiences to follow or share personified IP characters. However, the frequency of most audiences' participation in related activities is low. The attractiveness of personalized IP lies in its unique design, storyline and related merchandise and peripheral products. When brands are promoting, these elements are key points that can attract audiences. In terms of social media content preference, audiences prefer content such as story background, interactive content and related products. Although personified IP has an impact on brand loyalty enhancement, the degree of impact is not significant. However, emotional value has an impact on consumers purchase decisions, suggesting that brands should focus more on enhancing consumers' emotional connection. Consumers' love for the personified IP character, product quality and design become the main considerations in the purchase decision. When choosing to buy a personified IP product,

consumers place more importance on how much they like the character and the high quality of the product, and the design of the periphery also influences the purchase decision.

Therefore, for brands to better promote personalized IPs and attract audience attention and engagement, they need to focus on the appeal of both design and storytelling, while combining interactive activities and social media content to enhance consumers' emotional value and brand loyalty. This not only helps to build brand image, but also effectively drives consumers' purchasing decisions.

The results of this study fill the gap in the creation of personalized IP images for brands and provide guidance on how such images should be created, providing a reference for branding and enhancing customer loyalty.

Relying on the strong influence of Disney, a globally renowned brand, the success of the newly promoted IP image of Lina Bell can be clearly seen through the lens of symbolic theory and symbolic interaction theory, as it is endowed with unique emotional values and distinctive personality traits. These traits have attracted a large number of customers, enhanced customer loyalty, and shaped the brand's unique personality. Currently, the IP image of Lina Bell has high awareness and influence in only the Chinese market. Therefore, a series of topics exploring how brands can more effectively use symbol theory and interaction theory to enhance their popularity in the international market need to be studied in depth in the future.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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