

Exploring the Value Innovation of Craft Brands through the Perspective of Qualia

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Abstract

Qualia is a unique texture and spiritual touch that constitutes human senses, leaving people with unforgettable memories for a lifetime. Attractiveness, beauty, creativity, delicacy, and engineering are the elements of Qualia. The purpose of this study is to explore the Qualia of craft brands, and how to use Qualia to transform into value innovation of craft brands and construct a craft brand value innovation model to help future craft brands or industries enhance their brand competitiveness. The research findings indicate that: Sensory qualities contribute to enhancing brand competitiveness; Craft brands establish a new value curve through the four action frameworks of value innovation: Eliminate, Reduce, Raise and Create, and achieve this through four major dimensions: storytelling for cultural expression, contemporary aesthetics for aesthetic expression, emotional resonance for lifestyle expression and value co-creation for service expression. Craft brands, from design, materials to functions, keep up with the times, and attractiveness, beauty and creativity are indispensable Qualia elements. They also find brand-exclusive bestsellers. Through the successful creation of bestsellers, they can also play a good market foundation for subsequent series of products. Qualia of delicacy and engineering are a basic element and an important part of the business mechanism. Craft brands improve production efficiency through strategic mass production, so that the brand can expand its market coverage while retaining its core value. This study can serve as a reference for the future use of Qualia to enhance value innovation.

Keywords

Qualia, Craft Brands, Value Innovation

1. Introduction

With the changes of the times, the advancement of technology, and the rapid de-

velopment of the global economy, Taiwan region has gradually improved the economic scale of the manufacturing industry and strengthened the performance of the deeper meaning of its products. Taiwan region's crafts are characterized by "fine craftsmanship and ingenuity", with products meticulously crafted and craftsmen highly skilled, but the shapes of the products are relatively traditional. The place has formulated a medium- and long-term plan for Taiwan region's craft and cultural industries from 2013 to 2016, which plans to promote the "Taiwan Region Craft and Cultural Industries Ecosystem", which is enough to show that Taiwan region attaches importance to the craft and cultural industries. However, most Taiwan region's craft brands are small- to medium-sized, family-run, studio-based businesses, and they still need to work harder to become international craft brands. The value innovation of craft brands has been adjusted with the changes of the times and has kept pace with the times and developed. In addition to superb technology, it is also necessary to provide high added value to consumers. It is no longer just the quality value of the material itself, but even the qualia elements of attractiveness, beauty, creativity, delicacy, and engineering (Lin, 2011). However, how craft brands can use Qualia to stimulate consumers' desires and resonance is an important issue for strengthening their international competitiveness.

Therefore, this study takes craft brands as the research object, conducts multiple case in-depth interviews, and explores the value innovation of craft brands from the Qualia perspective. The purpose of this study is: 1) to explore the Qualia of craft brands; 2) to explore how to use Qualia to transform into value innovation of craft brands and construct a craft brand value innovation model to help future craft brands or industries enhance their brand competitiveness.

2. Literature Review

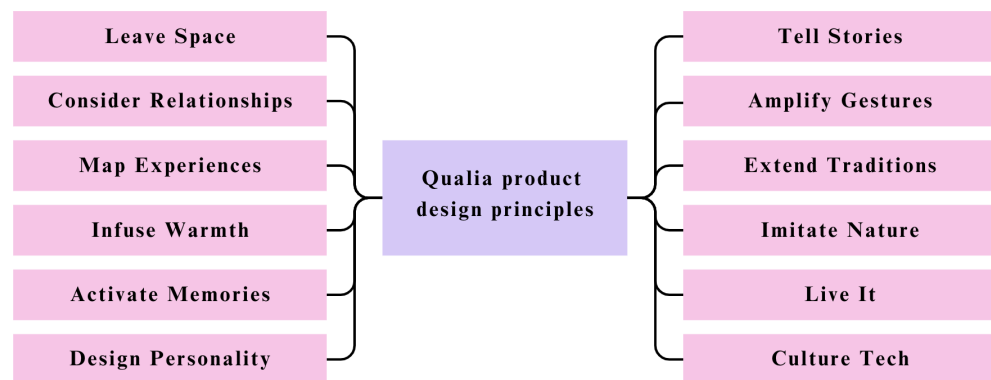
2.1. Qualia Product Design Principles

Idei (2003), former CEO of SONY, once applied Qualia to product design, proposing that Qualia is a unique texture and spiritual touch that constitutes human senses, leaving people with unforgettable memories for a lifetime. The Small and Medium Enterprise Administration's selection criteria for Qualia products and Qualia services in the "2013 Qualia Elite Award Application for Small and Medium Enterprises under the Qualia Optimization and Promotion Program for Small and Medium Enterprises" are products that have been mass-produced, marketed, or commercialized, have excellent quality and present Qualia elements, and the product can induce consumers' empathy, thereby triggering their spiritual joy and emotion. Yen et al. (2015) proposed that the "Qualia" element of a product includes "quality", that is, "Qualia" should be above "quality" to further align with international consumer trends.

When design considers the user's emotional and pleasure experience, it has a significant impact on behavior and decision-making and plays an increasingly important role in modern design (Jordan, 2000). Cognitive scientist Norman (2004

& 2013) emphasized that design should not only consider functionality, but also pay attention to the user's emotional experience to create a better user experience. Emotional design theory has had a profound impact and is widely used in various design fields. From a neuroscience perspective, Reinert (2017) proposed that Qualia is one of the important aspects of the development of conscious thinking, and believed that the creation of emotional value, the optimization of user experience, and the integration of perception and cognition open new development paths in the field of design.

Klegin & Caldwell (2012) proposed that taking the user's emotional experience into consideration during the design process of products or services is sufficient to improve user satisfaction and loyalty. Their research pointed out 11 methods that can resonate with people and help them explore and express their feelings. Scholar Lin (2011) proposed the concept of Qualia products: technology is the foundation of Qualia products, emphasizing "emotional technology"; humanity is the beginning of Qualia products, focusing on "humanistic design"; culture is the source of design thinking, pursuing "Qualia creativity"; modern designers must integrate the design thinking of "emotional technology" and "humanistic design" to create a humanized product and service environment with "Qualia creativity". This study sorted out 12 Qualia product design principles based on the above, as shown in Figure 1.



Source: This study is compiled from Lin (2011); Klegin & Caldwell (2012).

Figure 1. Qualia product design principles.

"Leave Space" Emphasize that the design leaves room for interpretation, allowing users to complete the experience through their own experience and imagination; "Consider Relationships" Design focuses on building multi-level relationship networks, including emotional connections between people and products, and harmonious interactions between products and the environment; "Map Experiences" Modern design theory emphasizes the multidimensionality of experience, including perception, emotion and cognition, taking into account the user's cultural background, psychological needs and social context to create a richer user experience. "Infuse Warmth" According to emotional design research, product design should integrate technical functions with humanized characteristics, and

consider the user's psychological needs, emotional reactions, and social needs; "Activate Memories" Designs that evoke memories and emotional connections can create profound user experiences; "Design Personality" Strike a balance between personalized expression and universality to make the product stand out from the crowd; "Tell Stories" Enhance the emotional connection and cultural significance of the product through storytelling and establish deeper product implications; "Amplify Gestures" Detailed design is crucial to creating a high-quality user experience and affects user satisfaction; "Extend Traditions" Emphasize the integration of tradition and innovation and transform traditional elements into modern language; "Imitate Nature" Draw design inspiration from nature to create sustainable and humane solutions; "Live It" Designs based on real-life experiences are more likely to gain user recognition and emotional involvement; "Culture Tech" Transform cultural elements and combine them with modern technology to create product connotations with cultural depth and modernity.

The Taiwan region's craft boutique Yii brand was established in 2007. Its purpose is to combine Taiwan region's traditional crafts with modern design to allow Taiwan region's handicrafts to further enter the international market. As a combination of Taiwan region's crafts and modern design, it fully embodies the views and connotations of the 12 Qualia product design principles, and by retaining the essence of traditional craftsmanship, it showcases the innovation of combining tradition with modern design.

2.2. Value Innovation of Craft Brands

Value Innovation was proposed by Chan Kim & Mauborgne (2005) to advocate that enterprises should create uncontested market space through value innovation. It is the cornerstone of the blue ocean strategy. Its core concept is to break through existing boundaries and pursue the core values of differentiation and cost reduction by satisfying customers' unmet needs. It uses a four-action framework: Eliminate, Reduce, Raise and Create to analyze and create new value curves.

The vigorous development of cultural and creative industries has greatly promoted the birth and growth of craft brands. The concept that consumers form about a brand has an impact on their purchasing decisions (Bong Na et al., 1999). The craft brand has superb technology. It straddles the art economy and the design economy, is a manifestation of technology, and is also a form of cultural heritage and creative expression (Greenhalgh, 2003); it possesses outstanding skills and demonstrates its uniqueness (Kroezen et al., 2021). Unlike industrial processes with specific and well-defined tasks, crafts are usually characterized by the mastery of mature skills that are often passed down and refined through years of learning and practice (Barley, 1996). Traditional processes and industrialization are not mutually exclusive, as technological, and entrepreneurial development can preserve traditions as well as stimulate technological excellence and creativity (Rondi et al., 2024).

With the development of the times, the craft industry faces many development challenges in the era of globalization and digitalization. For example: the inher-

itance and discontinuation of traditional technologies, changes in demand in the modern consumer market, rising raw material costs and environmental issues, etc. In the past, many scholars have proposed discussions on the impact of Qualia in various fields (Chen, 2017; Niu, 2019; Tsai & Yeh, 2012). How to create value innovation for craft brands through Qualia's perspective deserves in-depth attention and analysis.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Case Study Analysis Framework

This study adopted a qualitative multiple case study method, using in-depth interviews to confirm the rigor of the data and the perspectives of the research design. The interviewees were the case leaders, who exchanged opinions on the research topic and compiled verbatim records as the basis for data analysis. This study refers to Lin (2011) Qualia experience model, based on the Qualia product design of former Sony CEO Idei (2003), and inherits the "Qualia SME Promotion Plan" with attractiveness, beauty, creativity, delicacy, and engineering as the elements of Qualia. It also summarizes and analyzes the aspects of Qualia by scholars Chen et al. (2012) and adopts Chan Kim & Mauborgne (2005) value innovation theory to extend and propose insights.

The scope of crafts is vast. Due to limited research resources and considering the diversity and popularity of craft categories, we chose Taiwan region's excellent design and the ability to commercialize craft products, exquisite craftsmanship and innovative design as indicators for the case craft brand analysis of this study. The case brands explored are shown in Table 1. The reasons for their selection are: 1) Selected as a brand of Taiwan region's excellent handicrafts by the Taiwan Region Craft Development Research Center; 2) The brand has been established for more than 10 years and has considerable popularity in both the domestic and international markets; 3) Has multiple channels; 4) Has been reported by the mass media; 5) Has business experience and participates in promotion activities of crafts or related units. This study was conducted through one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The outline of the case interview is shown in Table 2. The interview data are analyzed in depth by Artificial Intelligence (AI) models and human experts. By organizing the opinions and experiences of experts, theoretical support and empirical basis are provided for subsequent research.

Table 1. Case brand interview background.

Interview Case Code	Craft Category	Respondent's Position	Year of Establishment
A	Wood products	Person in charge	2008
B	Porcelain products	Person in charge	2003
C	Lacquer products	Person in charge	2007

Source: This study compiled.

Table 2. Case interview outline.**Interview topics**

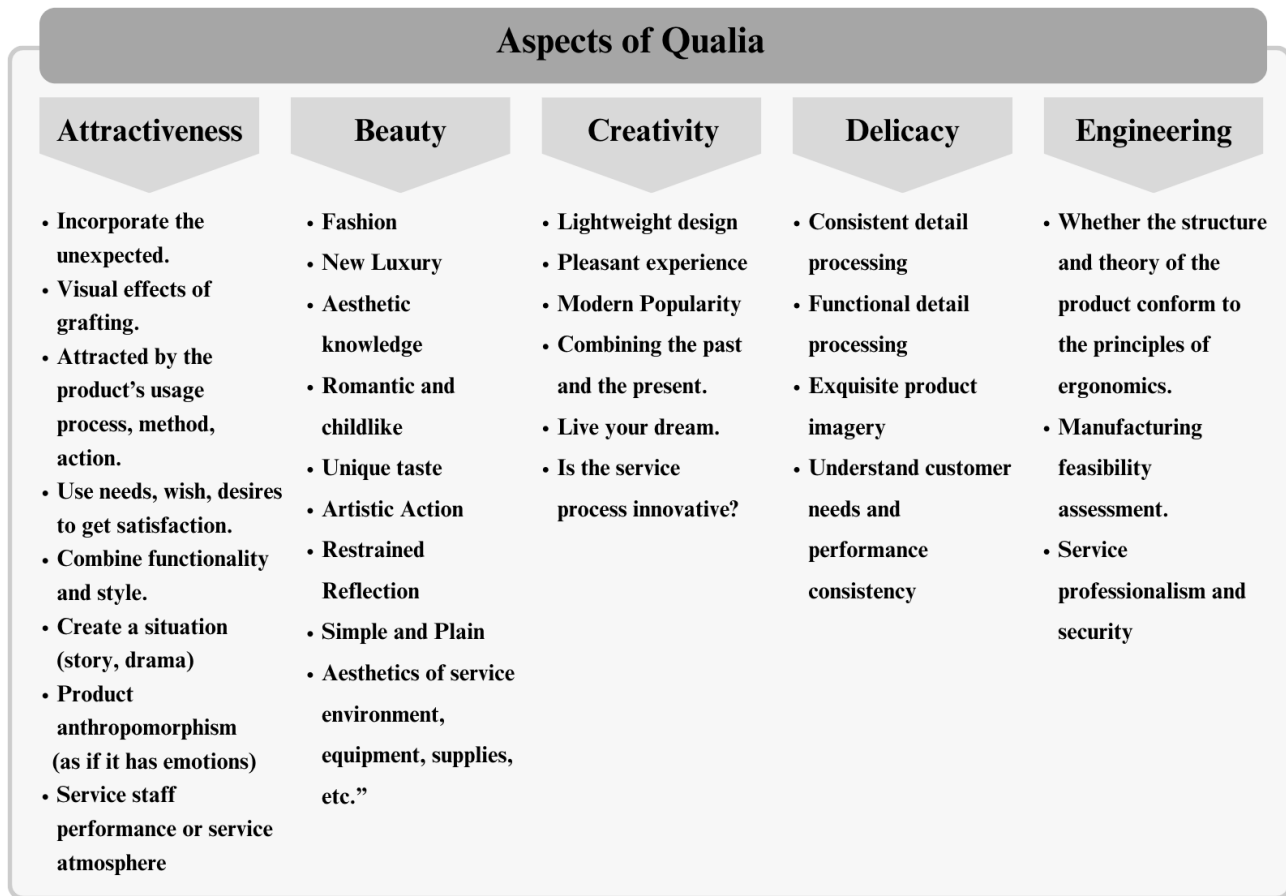
1. What are the cultural concepts, product features, target users and brand philosophy of your craft brand? What is the connection between them?
2. What do you think is the connection between modern and craft?
3. What is the meaning of Qualia (attractiveness, beauty, creativity, delicacy, and engineering) for modern craft?
4. What do you think are the aspects of Qualia (attractiveness, beauty, creativity, delicacy, and engineering)?
5. What is the impact of Qualia (attractiveness, beauty, creativity, delicacy, and engineering) on your brand?
6. What do you think about the essence of modern craft?
7. Any other supplementary matters?

Source: This study compiled.

3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection for this study was done by compiling transcripts from case interviews, and using exploratory case study strategies, analytical induction, and grounded theory to analyze research data using AI models (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994). Golden opportunities for AI and technology-enhanced learning are emerging, enabling a range of text-based tasks (Lund & Wang, 2023). Many international research institutions have developed mature AI models. To maintain objectivity, this study intends to use three AI models: GPT-4o, Claude 3.5 Sonnet, Gemini 1.5 Pro, and one human expert with backgrounds in craftsmanship, branding, and other related expertise. At the same time, it adopts the grounded theory to establish a new theoretical research strategy (Glaser & Strauss, 2017). This study uses AI models to extract relevant topics and keywords through Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology. NLP techniques such as topic modeling and semantic network analysis are used for preliminary coding and classification, assisting in the generation and verification of theories.

The data analysis process consists of three steps. The first step is to analyze the interview data and visit the case brand articles on various websites to obtain the company profile of the case brand and content related to brand development; the second step is to summarize and analyze the aspects of Qualia based on the Qualia optimization promotion plan of scholars Chen et al. (2012) and Small and Medium Enterprise Administration (2013), as shown in Figure 2, to analyze the content and attributes of Qualia and craft brands; the last step is to use Chan Kim & Mauborgne (2005) value innovation theory and examine the causal and attributive relationship between related concepts to infer the brand value innovation model.



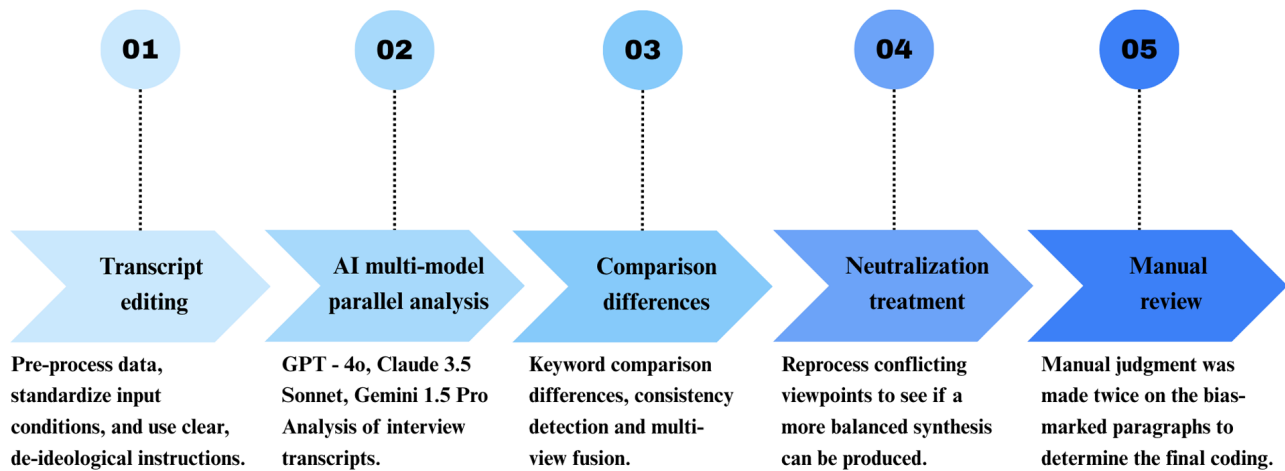
Source: This study is compiled from [Chen et al. \(2012\)](#); [Small and Medium Enterprise Administration \(2013\)](#).

Figure 2. Aspects analysis of qualia.

The specific method for using AI models for data analysis is as follows: GPT-4o, Claude 3.5 Sonnet, and Gemini 1.5 Pro were used to analyze interview transcripts, focusing on multi-model cross-validation, prompt neutralization, and post-processing fusion. Specific steps:

The first step involves organizing the transcripts, pre-processing the data, and standardizing the input conditions. Names, places, and organizations were anonymized to avoid triggering political bias. The same transcripts were divided into identical paragraphs and fed identical inputs to the three models, using clear, de-ideological instructions. The second step involves multi-model parallel analysis, where the same text and prompts were analyzed by the three AI models. The third step involves comparing differences, comparing keywords, checking for consistency, fusing multiple viewpoints, and generating structured output. The fourth step involves neutralization, reprocessing conflicting viewpoints. These can be fed back into any one or all three models to see if a more balanced conclusion can be reached. The fifth step involves manual review, where bias-flagged paragraphs are manually reviewed twice to determine the final coding, as shown in [Figure 3](#). Through multi-model crosstalk, the impact of single model bias can be reduced. Structured output then facilitates comparison of differences, neutral integration,

and balance, followed by verification and manual review, thereby reducing potential bias in AI model interpretation.



Source: This study compiled.

Figure 3. AI model data analysis method.

4. Qualia of Craft Brand

4.1. Analysis of Case A from the Qualia Perspective

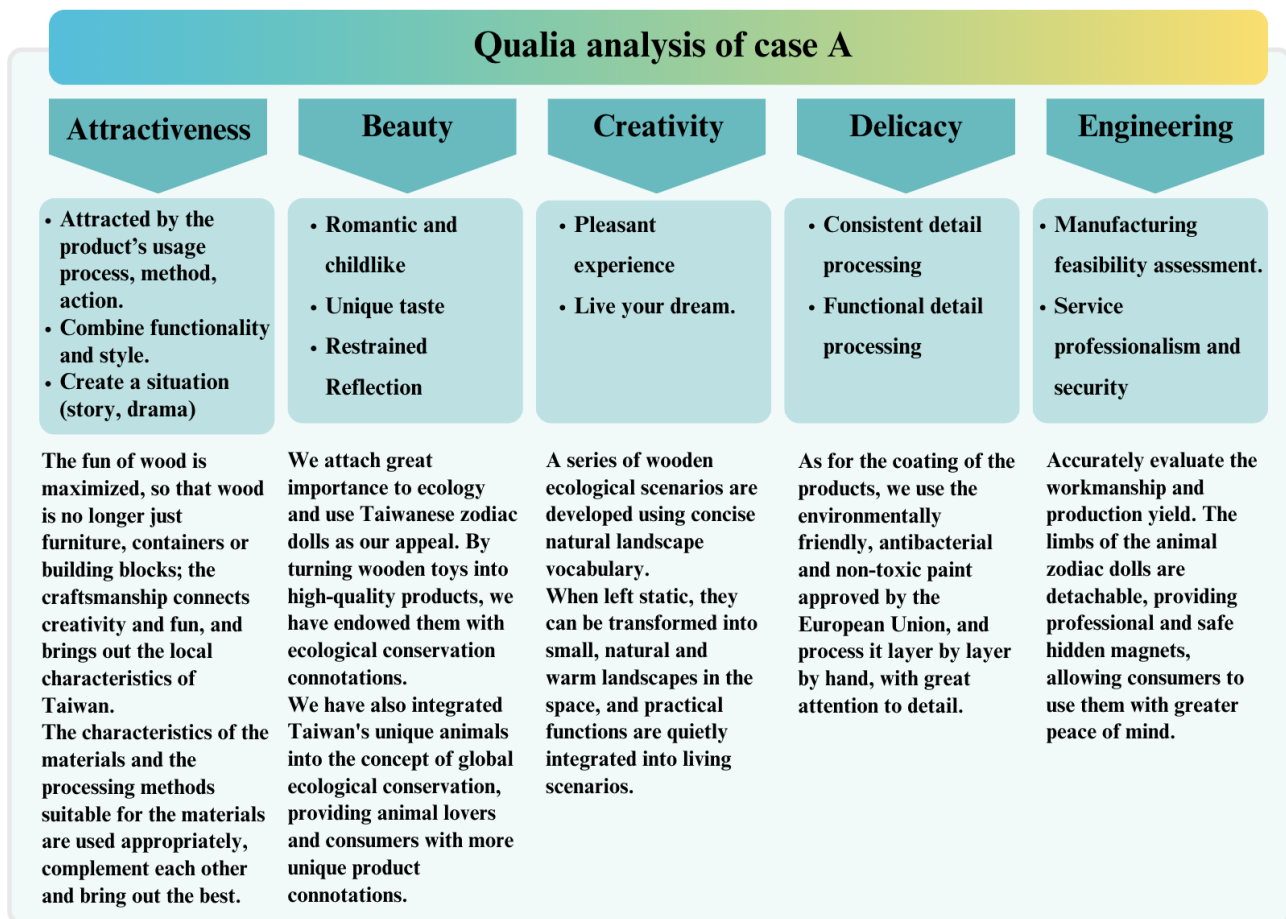
4.1.1. Brand Introduction of Case A

Case A was founded in 2008. Its craft category is wood products. It is good at making various changes to wood and maximizing the fun of wood. By turning wood into a refined product, the artist endows it with ecological conservation connotations, and uses borderless modeling vocabulary to integrate the unique animals of the Taiwan region into the concept of global ecological conservation, thus arousing the public's awareness of conservation.

4.1.2. Qualia Analysis of Case A

This study analyzed the interview data through human and AI models, and visited the articles reported by Case A on various websites. The analysis was performed from the aspects of Qualia, as shown in **Figure 4**, and the details are as follows.

Attractiveness, for example, case A: "I hope to create with Taiwan region's elements. The first thing I chose is the animal series. The reason is that animals represent a cross-cultural and language barrier. Most people can grasp the image of animals more easily when they see animals, but my animals are all from Taiwan region, so I will not resort to pure animal use". The brand's attractiveness comes from its unique interpretation of Taiwan region's animal themes, building a bridge of cross-cultural communication. Aspects of Qualia analysis are, "Attracted by the product's usage process, method, action", the product is mainly based on Taiwan region's animals, hoping that the value of wooden products comes from the design and manufacturing technology; "Combine functionality and style.", In addition to the product's cultural interpretation function, it is also reflected in the design of the shape; "Create a situation (story, drama)", The overall display of the product creates



Source: This study compiled.

Figure 4. Qualia analysis of case A.

Taiwan region's cultural images and conveys the content of the story.

Beauty, the rounded and smooth shape created by lathe rotating pegboard processing technology, combined with the natural texture and dyeing technology of light-colored European beech wood. For example, Case A: "I make extensive use of the lathe's rotary blank processing method. Each of my wooden parts is mainly round, and then they are assembled through local cutting and drilling, so the overall appearance is round. Also, because I use a lot of European wood, the materials are mainly light-colored, which gives me more room for color. So, I will combine it with wood staining. My method is different from general covering paint. While staining, I also hope to retain the texture of the wood." Aspects of Qualia are: "Romantic and childlike", using natural landscapes, animal dolls and other creations to make Taiwan region's endangered animals receive attention and using fun and humor to give products new life; "Unique taste", the rounded design style is matched with natural wood to show unique taste and cultural value in the market; "Restrained Reflection", Taiwan region's wood cutting is banned, and the material selection is mainly European wood.

Creativity, from design to manufacturing, we strive to pursue innovation and

practicality, and enhance the playability and durability of products. For example, case A: “Creativity is something that no one can imagine, and then you make it, and when people see it, they are moved. So, it may be the excitement of different materials or the excitement of different elements. I think it is probably something that has never been seen before. When you put it together, you can create some unique emotions.” Aspects of Qualia are: “Pleasant experience”, animals have humorous connotations, making consumers feel happy when experiencing products; “Live your dream.”, With a love for Taiwan region’s culture and a dream of inheritance, the brand focuses on local culture and cooperates with conservation organizations to realize the dream of bringing Taiwan region’s design to the world.

Delicacy, the brand pursues meticulousness in craftsmanship. For example, in case A: “The largest wood planted in Europe is beech. Many mid- to high-end European furniture and toys are made of this wood.” We use a stable supply of European commercially grown wood to make each product a crystallization of art and technology. Aspects of Qualia are: “Consistent detail processing”, the product has a refined texture during mass production. Although there are many processing steps after painting, the quality remains complete. “Functional detail processing”, most of the joints of the zodiac dolls are designed as hidden magnets, and the functional detail processing is quite ideal.

Engineering, reduce costs through process optimization and economies of scale while ensuring high product standards. For example, case A: “We need to discuss how many steps are needed to manufacture something like this. Is it possible to reduce 10 steps to 9 or 8 steps by slightly changing something? There is also the yield rate in the production process. So, I can only say that to sum it up in one sentence it is a kind of mutual assistance and cooperation in production, a kind of mutual assistance and cooperation in production technology. I think it is a kind of mutual assistance and cooperation.” Aspects of Qualia analysis are, “Manufacturing feasibility assessment”, accurately evaluate the working method and production yield; “Service professionalism and security”, because the joints of the dolls are flexible to use and hidden magnets are provided, consumers can use them with peace of mind.

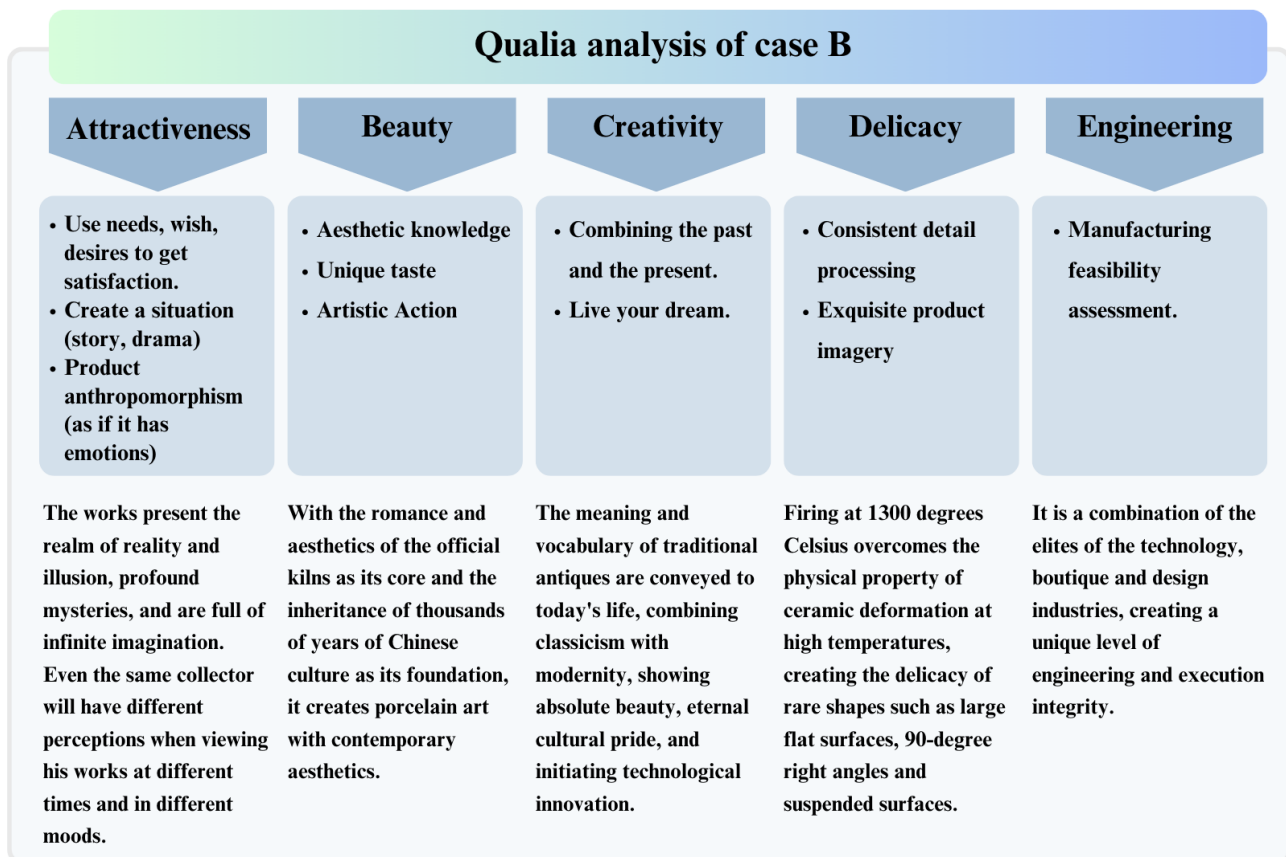
4.2. Analysis of Case B from the Qualia Perspective

4.2.1. Brand Introduction of Case B

Case B was established in 2003, and its craft category is porcelain. It has brought oriental aesthetics to great effect and developed porcelain craftsmanship to an extremely sophisticated level. Product Features: It has the genes and totems of Chinese culture, interprets traditional craftsmanship with modern fashion, and focuses on objects and utensils to drive life and experience. The lines seem simple, but the craftsmanship is surprisingly complicated.

4.2.2. Qualia Analysis of Case B

This study analyzed the interview data through human and AI models, and visited the articles reported by Case B on various websites. The analysis was performed from the aspects of Qualia, as shown in **Figure 5**, and the details are as follows.



Source: This study compiled.

Figure 5. Qualia analysis of case B.

Attractiveness, the unique attractiveness of the fusion of traditional culture and modern design is displayed with the “romance of official kilns and the realization of aesthetics”. For example, case B: “Our slogan is the romance of the official kiln and the realization of aesthetics. We hope that the once glorious national craftsmanship can be revived by our generation, or even under a certain historical and cultural concept, we hope to realize the so-called experience economy. Through our creation, we can make the relationship between us and the objects interactive and provide a concept that inspires you to participate in life and create life. This is the starting point of this brand.” Aspects of Qualia are: “Use needs, wish, desires to get satisfaction.”, The work presents the reality and the imaginary, as well as the profound principles; “Create a situation (story, drama)”, conveys the brilliant spirit of national craftsmanship; “Product anthropomorphism (as if it has emotions)”, injects emotions into the product, and when appreciating the work, it is as if there is a conversation.

Beauty and aesthetics are based on dignified traditional forms. For example, case B: “We are different from many young friends in their so-called conceptual or inspirational designs. We hope to create a solemn piece in the traditional palace. Under this premise, we hope that the craftsmanship can keep pace with the times and present the current style. This is the ultimate standard pursued by the

official kiln, and it is the same as our product development, which produces an interactive effect starting from the eyes.” Aspects of Qualia are analyzed as follows: “Aesthetic knowledge”, hoping that the experience economy can make the relationship between objects interactive through creation; “Artistic Action”, when making each work, in-depth research is conducted on the reason why the work was created; “Unique taste”, the craftsmanship can keep pace with the times and present a contemporary look. From the traditional form of the hall to the solemnity, it is the ultimate standard pursued by the official kiln.

Creativity, the brand is based on innovative craftsmanship, avoiding the mediocre route of imitation and reproduction, and creating works with differentiated value. For example, case B: “I have been emphasizing that the so-called cultural and creative industries must be connected with the times and have a sense of fashion, because we are not imitating antiques. Our values and aesthetic experiences are different. We must present our creativity in the current period, so it must be connected with fashion.” Aspects of Qualia are: “Combining the past and the present. ”, conveying the meaning and vocabulary of traditional antiques to today’s life, combining classicism with modernity to show exquisite beauty; “Live your dream”, pursuing the artistic value of the spiritual level, sustainable cultural pride, and initiating technological innovation.

Delicacy, using modern technology to improve production efficiency and meticulousness, the brand adheres to the highest standards from the selection of raw materials to every detail in the production process. For example, case B: “One of our guests, who is a very important collector, will stand for 2 to 3 minutes every time he comes home to see a large work of art. It is not very cheap, but from the details of the work and the aura it conveys, he feels the culmination of all his efforts, his aura, his vigor, and this complete and upright posture. He feels such a reflection of it, and this is what we hope to present in every work of art.” Aspects of Qualia are: “Consistent detail processing”, where every detail of the work is processed consistently; and “Exquisite product imagery”, where the work is fired at 1300 degrees to overcome the physical properties of ceramics that deform at high temperatures, creating rare shapes such as large flat surfaces, 90-degree right angles and suspensions.

Engineering, emphasizes the importance of engineering in creation, breaks through the limitations of traditional craftsmanship through technological innovation, and realizes differentiated value. For example, case B: “The change in engineering led to the birth of our company. If there is no overcoming of engineering, it is not worth it for us to do it, because there are too many in the market. Why should we switch from glass to porcelain? If you cannot carve out a differentiated path or field, you will enter a red ocean field, and the so-called creative practice will become very difficult.” Aspects of Qualia analysis is, “Manufacturing feasibility assessment”. The extremely simple lines reveal great engineering integrity.

4.3. Analysis of Case C from the Qualia Perspective

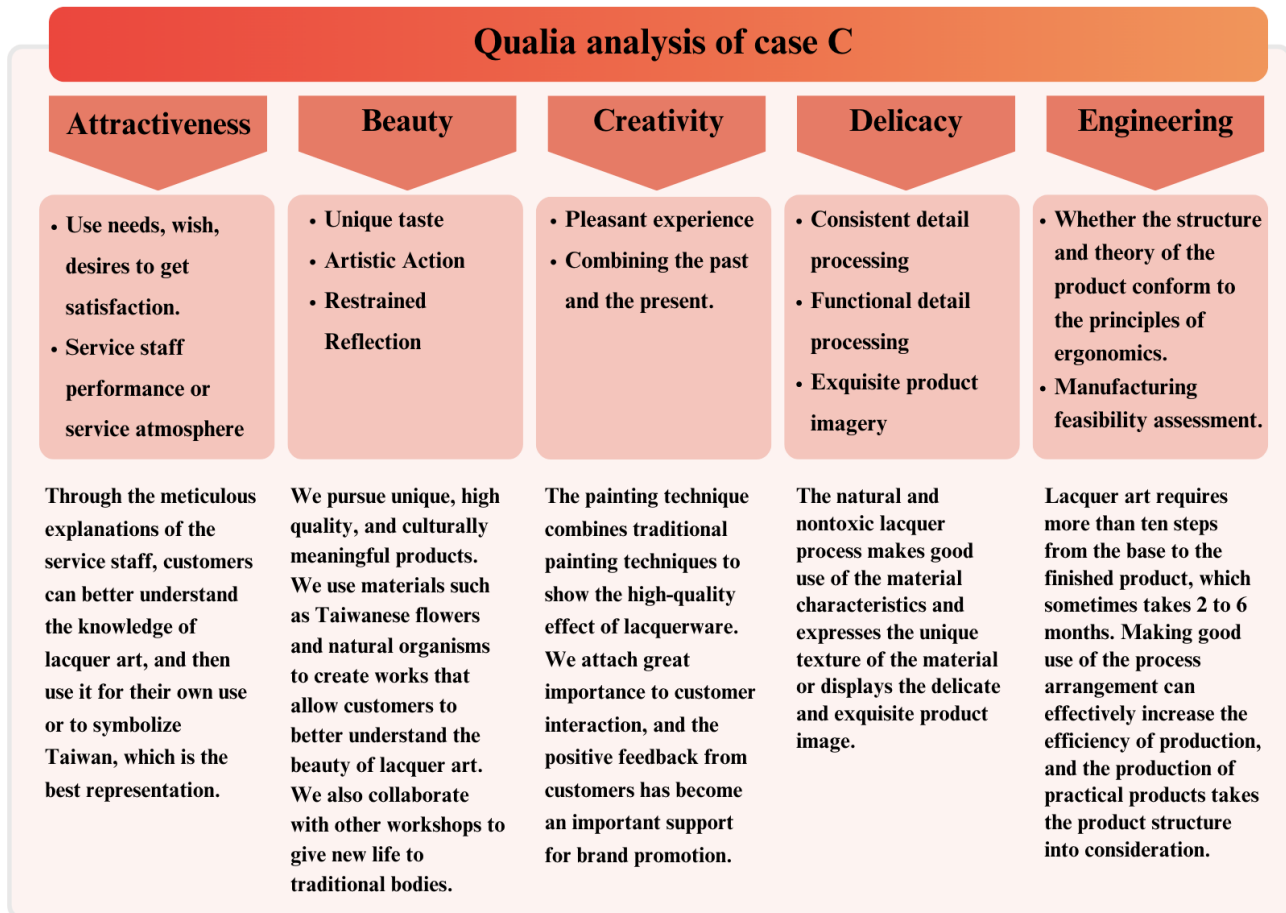
4.3.1. Brand Introduction of Case C

Case C was established in 2007. Its craft category is lacquer art. It uses oriental themes

to promote the aesthetics of lacquer art in daily life. The product features are themed with common flowers and plants in Taiwan region. The complex lacquering and painting process involves more than ten layers. The application of Maki-e (decoration) techniques adds to the temperament of ancient and new works.

4.3.2. Qualia Analysis of Case C

This study analyzed the interview data through human and AI models, and visited the articles reported on the websites of Case C. From the aspects of Qualia, the results are shown in **Figure 6** and detailed below.



Source: This study compiled.

Figure 6. Qualia analysis of case C.

Attractiveness, with the promotion of lacquerware culture as the core spirit, it demonstrates the love for traditional crafts and the intention to revive it. For example, Case C said: “I can make lacquerware and I am very interested in it. I will promote lacquerware because I believe I am a lacquerware person and I hope that people will see me everywhere.” Aspects of Qualia are analyzed as, “Use needs, wish, desires to get satisfaction”, satisfying the needs of customers who have a special interest in culture and art, or who have a need for a return gift for an exotic wedding; the performance of service staff or the service atmosphere: through the

detailed introduction of the service staff and the service staff, people can know the special charm of lacquer art.

Beauty combines traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics, emphasizing the exquisite texture of hand-painted products. From daily necessities to high-end gifts, the product line covers diverse needs. For example, Case C said: “In the beginning, we insisted on using hand-painting for our positioning. In the early days, we used screen printing for export because we didn’t want to go that route. The feel of hand-painted products is different from that of printed products. So, we wanted to use the texture and feel of hand-painted products, and the gold powder sprinkled on them would also be different.” Aspects of Qualia are: “Unique taste”, the pursuit of unique, high-quality, culturally significant products; “Artistic Action”, the use of hand-painted wooden boxes, which are elegant, generous, delicate, and moving, and are collectors’ treasures; “Restrained Reflection”, cooperation with other workshops to give new life to traditional bodies.

Creativity, the brand not only focuses on the revival of traditional crafts, but also finds breakthroughs in innovation. For example, case C: “Most people think lacquerware is very traditional, so I hope to make lacquerware with a more modern feel, not something too traditional, including the form or pattern. Although it can’t be completely new, some of it still retains traditional elements, and then adds new developments.” Aspects of Qualia are: “Pleasant experience”, which emphasizes customer interaction, and positive customer feedback becomes an important support for brand promotion; “Combining the past and the present”, which combines traditional Maki-e painting techniques to show the high-quality effects of lacquerware.

Delicacy, showing the ultimate pursuit of quality and craftsmanship. As the production process is complicated and highly dependent on manual labor, each piece takes at least 6 months to produce. For example, case C: “It is very easy to fail to produce quality with screen printing, and the price is also lowered. We hope to produce exquisite texture, especially lacquerware, which has many processes and should create a sense of value. It is meaningless to compete with low prices but have no quality.” The aspects of Qualia are: “Consistent detail processing”, which uses hand-painting and enhanced detail processing to present a consistent texture and feel, differentiating it from printed lacquerware; “Functional detail processing”, which makes good use of the characteristics of the material and expresses the unique texture of the material or displays the product image in detail; and “Exquisite product imagery”, which maintains the exquisiteness of the product despite the many processes involved in lacquerware.

Engineering, the brand improves production efficiency and reduces costs by adjusting the process while adhering to high-quality standards. For example, case C: “The small-quantity approach means that I can control the same steps and do more at a time. For example, I can draw 5 pictures at a time instead of one or adjust some processes to complete the order in the shortest time. Some people will lower the price very low, but the products they make are inferior. This is what we

don't want to do. Regardless of the culture or Taiwan region's characteristics, we are very sure about these things before we push them to customers, instead of just selling everything if we can make money. The cultural and creative industry is still different from general products. We will push them to customers if we think they are good. This is our brand responsibility for our own products, and it can stand the test of the market." The aspects of Qualia's analysis are, "Whether the structure and theory of the product conform to the principles of ergonomics", the production of practical products always considers the product structure; "Manufacturing feasibility assessment", making good use of process arrangements to effectively increase production efficiency.

5. Value Innovation Model of Craft Brands on Qualia Perspective

Qualia plays an important role in enhancing brand competitiveness. Based on the Qualia perspective and value innovation theory, this paper proposes the value innovation dimensions of craft brands. The realization of value innovation can be achieved through four dimensions: storytelling for cultural expression, contemporary aesthetics for aesthetic expression, emotional resonance for lifestyle expression, and value co-creation for service expression, as shown in **Figure 7**.



Source: This study compiled

Figure 7. Value innovation dimension of craft brand

Storytelling for cultural expression, Cultural elements are becoming increasingly important in brand building. Current cultural trends influence consumers' perception of brands. Successful brands must understand and use cultural symbols to strengthen their storytelling and establish deeper consumer connections. Brand culture building is not limited to the product level, but also extends to multiple application areas such as spatial design and urban marketing (Nechaeva et al., 2023; Zhang & Ramayah, 2024). The study found that Taiwan region is a place that nurtures diverse cultures, and each craft work tells a unique story. For example, Cases A and B have the attractiveness of creating a situation. Each work is regarded as a carrier of cultural stories, and through delicate design language, it is transformed into touching creations, making the works not only practical objects, but also an important medium for cultural inheritance.

Contemporary aesthetics for aesthetic expression, the aesthetic design of a product not only affects consumer demand but is also closely related to brand consistency and the establishment of brand value. Liu et al. (2017) emphasized that in

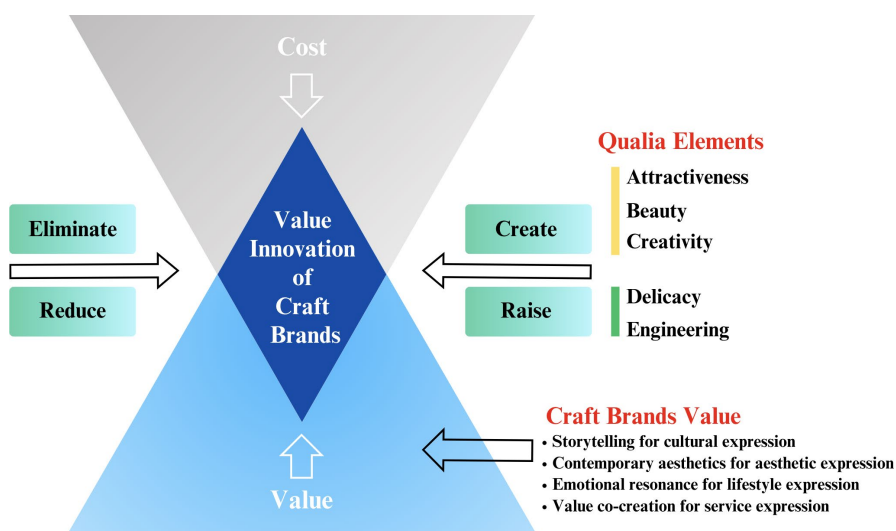
brand building, aesthetic design becomes a decisive factor, which not only affects consumer perception, but also affects the overall brand image and its importance in market competition. [Bargenda \(2020\)](#) further pointed out that aesthetics affects the corporate image, and the use of artistry can construct corporate brand identity. The study found that craft brands must be able to keep pace with the times and present a contemporary look. The three case brands all have the beauty of “Unique taste”. In the process of developing craft products, Qualia’s attractiveness, beauty, and creativity will enhance the differentiation of craft brands. It is also difficult to explain specifically or replicate and convey with experience. Only by adhering to the context of fashion can we present a contemporary aesthetic that keeps pace with the times.

Emotional resonance for lifestyle expression and successful brand loyalty building must be rooted in consumers’ daily life experiences and achieved through sustained emotional connections and meaningful interactions, going beyond pure product functionality to create experiences that can be integrated into consumers’ lives and bring emotional resonance. This view is consistent with the research of [Trudeau H & Shobeiri \(2016\)](#), which states that it is easier to establish long-term brand relationships when brands can be integrated into consumers’ daily life practices and provide meaningful experiences. Consumers can perceive the emotional design characteristics of the product, thereby stimulating their purchasing emotions ([Yen, 2018](#)). As conceptualized in [Klegin & Caldwell \(2012\)](#) and [Lin \(2011\)](#) Qualia product design principles, successful design for emotion requires a deep understanding of the user’s needs and expectations, combined with innovation and technology to achieve emotional resonance. Research has found that for craft brands, the most basic thing is engineering. Engineering cannot be just the technical aspect of the engineering itself, but Qualia gives it a meaning to pursue. Craft brands turn Qualia into a quality that people like and present the qualities that people like in the form of five elements: attractiveness, beauty, creativity, delicacy, and engineering. Ultimately, successful craft brands must have Qualia characteristics.

Value co-creation for service expression, successful innovative services advocate value co-creation as the core and create a unique way of value delivery. [Frow et al. \(2014\)](#) pointed out that the concept of value proposition from the perspective of service ecosystem is not only a promise to customers, but also a dynamic process in which innovative service providers change consumer demand and redesign their service propositions. Innovative value propositions can effectively convey brand value to customers and strengthen brand positioning through innovative combinations or methods ([Zhu et al., 2024](#)). The study found that in the contemporary consumer market, value co-creation has become the key to establishing a deep connection between brands and consumers. Craft brands have successfully created a unique market positioning and adopted a small-scale and diverse production model. While ensuring quality, it also satisfies consumers’ pursuit of uniqueness and collection value. Therefore, the true value of a craft brand comes

not only from the product itself, but also from the interaction and resonance with consumers. As scholars have pointed out, Qualia products or services are based on quality and are centered on users. They present Qualia: attractiveness, beauty, creativity, delicacy, and engineering, constructing uniqueness and increasing the added value of products and services, thereby triggering joy and emotion in customers' hearts. Consumers can develop positive emotions towards the brand through their emotions towards the product, and product design can strengthen the brand image through brand emotions (Chang & Lin, 2013; Yen et al., 2015).

In summary, this study proposes the value innovation model of craft brands on Qualia Perspective as shown in Figure 8. The key elements of craft brand value innovation are: 1) value up, improving value through the practice of storytelling for cultural expression, contemporary aesthetics for aesthetic expression, emotional resonance for lifestyle expression, and value co-creation for service expression; 2) cost down, reducing costs by analyzing customer purchasing behavior, reducing unnecessary steps in production, and optimizing the value chain. Craft brands redefine value through the 4 action frameworks of value innovation, as described below.



Source: This study was compiled.

Figure 8. Value innovation model of craft brands from qualia perspective.

Eliminate, remove elements that consumers do not value or are unnecessary, and reduce costs. For example, case A eliminated the traditional excessive pursuit of rare wood species, avoided excessive processing that would lead to the loss of the original texture and volume of the wood, and instead emphasized design value and craftsmanship; cases B and C eliminated the traditional design style in porcelain and lacquerware craftsmanship, factors that hindered innovation and market acceptance.

Reduce, reduce the intensity or standard of certain elements, focus on core values, and avoid wasting resources. For example: Case C reduces the mindset of price

competition and does not use low price as a market competition strategy, but instead emphasizes the cultural value and craftsmanship of the product.

Raise, from Qualia's delicacy and engineering elements, to enhance existing value, exceed market standards and meet consumers' higher expectations. For example: Case B improves the application of engineering technology and uses technology to break through the size and complexity limitations of traditional porcelain; Case C enhances the exquisite value of the product.

Create, from the attractiveness, beauty, and creativity of Qualia, new elements that have never been seen in the market, meet unmet needs or create new needs. For example: Case A creates a combination of product and ecological conservation; Cases B and C create a design style that combines the past and the present.

The value innovation model of craft brands from Qualia perspective creates product storytelling for cultural expression, thereby shaping contemporary aesthetics for aesthetic expression and generating emotional resonance for lifestyle expression. It takes consumers as the center to achieve innovation in value co-creation for service expression, and further cultivates brand development, creates value innovation for craft brands, promotes the "Taiwan Region Craft Culture Industry Ecosystem", and achieves sustainable management of corporate brands. This also echoes the business model of cultural and creative industries proposed by scholar Lin (2014), which "originates from culture, in the form of products, applied in daily life, and achieved through branding".

6. Conclusion and Suggestions

Craft brands are not only product providers, but also cultural inheritors and leaders of life aesthetics. Based on relevant literature discussion, theoretical construction analysis and multiple case interviews, this study infers that the value innovation of craft brands can be explored from the Qualia perspective to find meaning and characteristics for corporate culture, endow products with meaningful aesthetic culture and emotional resonance of life, and thus build brands. This study can serve as a reference for using Qualia to enhance value innovation in the future. Through discussions with three craft brands, modern elements are integrated from design, materials to functions, keeping up with the times and embodying Qualia of attractiveness, beauty, and creativity. Brand-specific bestsellers are found. Through the successful creation of bestsellers, a good market foundation can be laid for subsequent series of products. Qualia of delicacy and engineering are a basic element and an important part of the business mechanism. The three craft brands can all improve production efficiency through strategic mass production, so that the brands can expand their market coverage while retaining their core values.

This study focused on only three craft brands, which lacked selectivity and objectivity. The case studies were established brands with outstanding achievements and commercial success, and their promotion within cultural contexts or craft categories may not be representative of the broader craft industry. Furthermore,

relying solely on interviews with company leaders may not fully capture consumer perceptions of Qualia. Future research is recommended to delve deeper, using case studies from different international brands and industry categories. Furthermore, it should examine Qualia's relevance in driving purchase decisions from a customer perspective to confirm its applicability and effectiveness across multiple contexts and from a customer perspective.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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