RESEARCH ON THE DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR TOURISM SOUVENIRS BASED ON THE CULTURAL SYMBOLS OF FOSHAN LION DANCE IN GUANGDONG, CHINA

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Abstract

This study explores design proposals for incorporating the symbolic elements of Foshan lion dance, an intangible cultural heritage of the Lingnan region in China, into modern tourism souvenir design. Foshan lion dance is a traditional folk art from Foshan, Guangdong Province, and an integral part of Lingnan culture. Originating during the Ming and Qing dynasties, it is closely associated with local martial arts culture. Beyond being a form of entertainment, it also carries cultural significance, symbolizing the dispelling of evil, disaster prevention, and the pursuit of blessings and prosperity, while showcasing unique artistic charm. Based on this, many souvenirs have been derived using the image of Foshan lion dance as a prototype. However, existing lion dance-themed souvenirs face issues such as limited design variety, lack of innovation, and a small market scale, failing to effectively meet the personalized needs of modern consumers. Based on this, this study utilizes preliminary research, field observation, and interviews, combined with a questionnaire survey, to analyze the history, artistic characteristics, and cultural connotations of Foshan lion dance while extracting its design elements. By integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods, the study explores the symbolic representation of Foshan lion dance culture, analyzes the preferences of young consumers, and combines traditional cultural imagery with modern consumer tastes to propose effective design solutions. According to the research results, the following conclusions were drawn. A total of 87.87% of respondents showed a strong

interest in lion dance souvenirs and placed greater emphasis on their cultural value. Consumers tend to prefer souvenirs with significant cultural symbolism. Moreover, Gen Z consumers are more inclined to purchase cultural souvenirs that feature uniqueness and innovation. Through data analysis, this study provides meaningful insights and valuable data for the souvenir market.

Keywords: Foshan lion dance; Chinese traditional culture; Intangible cultural heritage; Souvenir design

Introduction

In today's rapidly developing globalized world, the tourism industry has become a key driver of economic growth for many countries. With its long history and rich cultural heritage, China’s tourism industry stands as one of the largest and fastest-growing in the world, maintaining a leading position in the global tourism sector. The impact of tourism on China's economy is profound and multifaceted. Culture is one of the most important types of tourism resources, and the tourism industry and cultural industry are highly integrated with each other (Sun, 2020). Cultural tourism has driven the consumption of cultural souvenirs and services, allowing local culture to be expressed through souvenir design. This not only meets the demands of the current market but also helps promote China’s intangible cultural heritage. According to official data from the Chinese government, China’s tourism industry revenue has shown a steady annual increase. Tourism is not only a pillar of the tertiary sector but also holds a significant position in the national economy. At the same time, the deep integration of the cultural and tourism industries can promote regional economic development. As tourists' demand for shopping and aesthetics continues to grow, the demand for souvenirs featuring various cultural heritage elements is increasing, thereby driving economic growth (Ge, 2019). The tourism industry is an important channel for promoting Chinese culture, and the creative design and development of tourism souvenirs are gaining widespread attention.

As an important intangible cultural heritage of the Lingnan region in China, Foshan lion dance is widely performed in festivals, celebrations, and ceremonial events. Its expressive form, artistic design, and profound cultural symbolism have garnered significant attention. Foshan, known as the birthplace of Southern-style lion dance in China, boasts a long history and is renowned for

its lively and dynamic movements, expressive designs, and rich cultural significance. It embodies auspiciousness, the warding off of evil, and serves as a symbol of national spirit and cultural identity in Chinese tradition. In both domestic and international tourism markets, the lion dance is frequently featured as a key element in souvenir design due to its unique aesthetic value and symbolic meaning. However, the development of China's souvenir market started relatively late. The existing lion dance souvenirs on the market often suffer from superficial graphic design, a lack of cultural characteristics, limited product forms, and outdated design approaches (Zhu, 2020). Most products fail to integrate modern consumers' demands for innovation, personalization, and contemporary aesthetics, resulting in low market acceptance. Some souvenirs are unable to effectively convey the essence of lion dance culture in the modern consumer market, limiting the influence of Foshan lion dance culture in the cultural and creative souvenir industry. Therefore, integrating Foshan lion dance culture with modern design innovation, along with an in-depth interpretation of its cultural significance and an empirical analysis of tourist demands, is of great research value. This approach enriches the channels for cultural dissemination and enhances the market appeal of related souvenirs. This study aims to provide design proposals for the modern application of intangible cultural heritage, contributing to the innovative preservation and promotion of Foshan lion dance culture.

Research Objectives

1. Research and Analysis of the Historical and Cultural Background, Artistic Characteristics of Foshan Lion Dance, and Key Concepts for Souvenir Design.

2. Development of Design Guidelines for Foshan Lion Dance Souvenirs.

Literature Reviews

Ge Fei (2019) studied the important role of the cultural industry in tourist cities and analyzed the key position of cultural creative product design in the development of the cultural industry. The research proposed that the core elements of cultural creative product design include the extraction and integration of cultural symbols, narrative expression, the combination of market orientation and consumer psychological needs, the coordination of innovation

and tradition, interdisciplinary integration and technological application, as well as brand building and market promotion strategies.

Peng Weiwen (2021) focused on the inheriting groups and social organizations of the Guangdong lion dance, and traced the development of the Guangdong region (including the Foshan lion dance). The study pointed out that the origin of the Foshan lion dance is closely related to local folk self-defense organizations, and under the influence of Cantonese opera, Southern martial arts, and other cultural factors, it gradually formed a unique performance system and artistic style. Xie Xinze (2023) utilized semiotics theory to study the Foshan lion dance cultural and creative products, analyzing the symbolic meanings of the lion dance movements and expressions, and exploring how to incorporate these symbolic elements into the design expression of cultural and creative products. The research results showed that the emotional changes of the lion dance and the characteristics of combining movement and stillness can be presented through dynamic design techniques, thereby enhancing the cultural experience of the product. Zhu Xuemeng (2023) studied the close connection between the form and content of Southern lion culture. By analyzing the origin and development of the Southern lion's shape, and combining Panofsky's iconology theory, she emphasized the enduring influence and unique value of Southern lion culture in contemporary society. At the same time, the research proposed visual presentation strategies for Southern lion culture, aiming to.

Research Methodology

This study aims to explore the design guidelines for souvenirs based on Foshan lion dance, adopting a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The objective is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the design elements of Foshan lion dance culture and the demands of the modern market.

Qualitative research method: Through preliminary research, relevant literature on the historical and cultural background of Foshan lion dance, its artistic expressions, and tourism souvenir design concepts is collected, evaluated, and integrated. This systematic approach aims to understand the market characteristics of souvenirs, design principles, consumer demands, as well as the performance process and symbolic significance of Foshan lion dance.

Through the observational method, field visits to Foshan City were conducted to observe and document activities related to lion dance culture. By participating in and observing lion dance cultural events, records were made of the movements, costumes, and props used in lion dance performances.

Through the expert interview method, semi-structured interviews were conducted with professionals in the Foshan lion dance industry, local scenic area sales personnel, and experts in related fields. The interviews focused on the following key topics: (1) The history and artistic characteristics of Foshan lion dance culture: Exploring its symbolic elements and expressive forms in souvenir design. (2) The current status and development of Foshan lion dance culture: Discussing its significance in contemporary society, market perception, and future development trends. (3) Souvenir Design Proposal: Discussing consumer needs and the extraction of elements and symbols in Foshan lion dance cultural souvenirs. Based on the findings, relevant design strategies will be formulated to ensure the souvenirs align with both cultural significance and modern consumer preferences. (4) Design Strategy Recommendations: Gather expert advice on the design of Foshan lion dance cultural souvenirs, focusing on creative aspects and strategies for cultural market promotion. This includes insights on how to balance tradition with innovation and enhance the appeal of these souvenirs to a broader audience.

Quantitative Research Method: Through questionnaire surveys, this study systematically quantifies and analyzes consumer preferences for lion dance souvenir design, purchasing behavior, and understanding of Foshan lion dance culture. The questionnaire is designed based on preferences for lion dance souvenir design, purchasing behavior, and comprehension of Foshan lion dance culture, with a focus on consumer demands in terms of aesthetics, functionality, and cultural symbolism. The survey is distributed through social media and email channels, employing random sampling to cover respondents from different income levels, age groups, and cultural backgrounds. The questionnaire data collected in this study is empirically analyzed using SPSS software. To ensure the scientific rigor and reliability of the data, various statistical analysis methods, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and factor analysis, are employed. These methods ensure the validity and appropriateness

of the data, allowing for an in-depth analysis of consumer preferences, purchasing behavior, and cultural awareness from multiple perspectives.

Results

The History and Artistic Characteristics of Foshan Lion dance

The historical evolution and cultural context of Foshan lion dance. The history of Foshan lion dance can be traced back to records in ancient Chinese literature. The earliest documented record of lion dance in historical literature can be traced back to the Northern Dynasties of China in the year 547. Luoyang Qielan Ji (Records of Buddhist Monasteries in Luoyang) mentions that during the Buddha's birthday celebration at Changqiu Temple, performers dressed as mythological creatures, including Pixiu and lions, led the procession (Yang, 1963/547). This research, through an analysis of the development trajectory of Foshan lion dance, identifies four key stages in its historical evolution. Each stage is closely linked to the social context, cultural dissemination, and political environment of its time, providing a clear cultural framework for souvenir design. This study, through an analysis of the development trajectory of Foshan lion dance, identifies four key stages in its historical evolution. Each stage is closely linked to the social context, cultural dissemination, and political environment of its time, providing a clear cultural framework for souvenir design.

(1) Ming Dynasty of China (1368–1644): The Origin of Foshan Lion Dance and Its Integration with Martial Arts Culture. The earliest verifiable records of Foshan lion dance can be traced back to the Zhengtong period in the early Ming Dynasty (Shen, 2017, p. 3). At that time, due to social unrest, the people of Foshan organized self-defense militias, leading to the emergence of martial arts schools. With the migration of people from the Central Plains to the south, lion culture was introduced to the Lingnan region. Lion dancing began to appear in Foshan and gradually integrated with local martial arts elements, becoming an essential part of Guangdong’s folk culture (Peng, 2021).

(2) Qing Dynasty of China (1644–1912): The Spread of Lion Dance and Cultural Identity Among Overseas Chinese. With the increase in Cantonese immigrants, lion dance culture spread to Southeast Asia and various overseas Chinese communities during the early to mid-Qing Dynasty. Through an analysis of the historical connections between Foshan and Southeast Asian Chinese communities, this research finds that lion dance not only became an essential part of folk celebrations but also carried the cultural identity and social network of overseas Chinese.

(3) Modern China (1840–1949): From Folk Activities to the Rise of National Consciousness. After the Opium War, Foshan lion dance began to carry a strong national symbolic meaning. The emergence of the term "Awakening Lion" signifies that lion dance was no longer merely a celebratory performance but was imbued with the connotation of national revival. It symbolized the revitalization of national spirit and gradually evolved into a mass sports activity, carrying the mission of awakening national consciousness.

(4) Contemporary China (1949–present): The Emergence of Competitive Lion Dance and the Development of Contemporary Lion Dance. Entering the contemporary era, lion dance has become more standardized and scientific. In 1995, the China Dragon and Lion Dance Sports Association was established, and in 1996, the first official lion dance competition standards were formulated, and in 2006, it was included in the first batch of China's national intangible cultural heritage (Zhao, 2013). This series of developments has expanded the social function of lion dance from a singular folk entertainment to multiple fields, including sports, commerce, and social education, making it an important cultural symbol of Foshan City.

Overall, Foshan lion dance, as an essential part of traditional Chinese culture, has evolved from a folk performance art into a modern cultural symbol. It has preserved local folk traditions, developed a distinctive artistic style, and transformed into a multifaceted activity that integrates cultural heritage and national identity. By tracing the historical development of lion dance, its unique cultural connotations can be extracted, providing a profound cultural foundation that blends tradition and modernity, history and innovation for souvenir design.

Artistic characteristics of Foshan lion dance

(1) Physical Characteristics: This research systematically analyzes the stylistic characteristics of Foshan lion dance through literature review and field investigation, summarizing its unique visual features in terms of structure, decoration, and symbolic meaning. The findings indicate that the form of Foshan lion dance primarily consists of two parts: the head and the body. Among them, the lion head serves as the visual focal point, carrying profound cultural connotations and artistic elements. As shown in the figure 2, a distinctive feature of the Foshan lion head is the single horn on top. The horn has a sharp, forward-curving shape resembling a bamboo shoot, symbolizing the expression "standing out from the rest" (Zhou, 2014).



Figure 2: Names of Different Parts of Traditional Foshan Lion Dance Costume (Source: Photograph and annotations by the author, 2024).

The prominent forehead features a convex mirror, known as "E Jing" (Forehead Mirror), also called "Tian Ting" (Forehead), which symbolizes fortune gathering and evil warding. Traditional Foshan lions typically decorate the forehead mirror with velvet and a ring of pom-poms. This decorative pom-pom design originates from the local Guangdong opera—" Cantonese Opera ", where similar pom-poms are commonly used on character headpieces. As the

lion dances, the pom-poms tremble, enhancing its dynamic and lively appearance (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Cantonese Opera Costume Headpiece (Source: Photograph by the author, 2024).

The eyes of the Foshan lion are large and flat, shaped like "Xing Yan" (almond-shaped eyes). The sclera is decorated with concentric circles in black and white, while the pupils are made of protruding glass beads. Additionally, the lion's brows have "Yan Lian" (eye curtains), which are internally connected to the ears. Performers can pull the attached strings to create blinking and ear-twitching effects. Moreover, traditional Foshan lions feature three-pointed decorations on the brow ridges. The "Zhao Feng Er" (wind-catching ears) are positioned behind the eyes, and if the ears appear damaged, they are called "Lan Er Zai" (tattered ears), symbolizing the lion's combative nature.

Additionally, a distinctive feature of the Foshan lion is its arched mouth, which differentiates it from other regional lion dance styles, such as the Heshan lion. The lower jaw is flat, with the teeth and tongue painted on it, while three-dimensional teeth and tongue are referred to as "Ming Ya Zhen Li" (prominent teeth and vibrating tongue). The lion's chin is adorned with a beard, and the

length of the beard indicates the lion's age and seniority. The stiff bristles of traditional lions are called "Ngaa Caat Seoi" (toothbrush whiskers). This feature originates from a distinctive style of fake beards used in Cantonese opera. The whiskers are short and stiff, resembling a toothbrush, which is how they got their name. In Cantonese slang, this term is also used to describe a competitive or aggressive person (Cantonese Opera Dictionary Compilation Committee, 2008).

(2) Colors and symbolism of Foshan lion dance: The roles and color schemes of traditional Foshan lion dance: As shown in Table 1, the traditional Foshan lion dance design was influenced by the Cantonese opera characters from the Three Kingdoms, initially categorized into three main roles. Later, with its development in Hong Kong, it expanded into six roles, known as "One Emperor and Five Tiger Generals". The color schemes of different lion heads are based on the facial makeup of Cantonese opera, each conveying specific traits and symbolic meanings. For example, the yellow lion typically represents imperial authority, the red lion symbolizes steadfastness and courage, while the black lion signifies bravery and aggressiveness.

Table 1: Traditional Colors and Meanings of Foshan Lion Dance

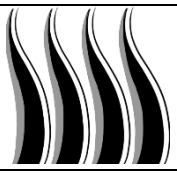
Skin Color	Mane Color	Roles and Their Meanings
		Liu Bei Lionrep resents Benevolence
		Guan Yu Lion representing righteousness
		Zhang Fei Lion representing courage
		Zhao Yun Lion representing loyalty
		Ma Zhong Lion representing filial piety

		Huang Zhong Lion representing respect

The simplification and diversification trends of modern Foshan lion dance: The modern non-character lion head forms are flexible and diverse (Kong, 2022). Compared to traditional Foshan lion heads, modern Foshan-style lions generally do not adhere to character assignments, and their colors are no longer limited to traditional palettes. At the same time, the color schemes and decorations of modern lion dance have been simplified compared to the traditional style, mainly reflected in: The body and fur colors tend to be uniform, reducing the distinct contrast between the head and body seen in traditional lion dance; b. The embellishments around the "forehead mirror" are simplified, now only surrounded by plush material; c. The use of decorative pom-poms has been reduced, retaining only two on either side of the nose, thereby softening the intricate pom-pom decoration system of traditional lion dance; d. In terms of materials, influenced by Malaysian Chinese lion dance, modern Foshan lion heads incorporate more wool in their decorations.

(3) Traditional Foshan lion dance patterns: Lion dance patterns are an essential part of lion dance culture, blending traditional aesthetics, auspicious symbols, and cultural representations to create a unique visual language. As shown in Table 2, traditional Foshan lion dance is typically adorned with motifs such as knife patterns, flame patterns, Tang Grass pattern, copper coin patterns, and bead patterns.

Table 2: Patterns of Foshan Lion Dance

Patterns	**Names and Meanings**
	Knife Pattern, strength and defense
	Fire Pattern, firepower and prosperity

	Bead Pattern, brightness and happiness
	Copper Coin Pattern, wealth
	Tang Grass Pattern, the vitality of life

(4) Performance forms of Foshan lion dance

Through a detailed analysis of the lion dance performance process, this study aims to provide a profound cultural foundation and design inspiration for lion dance souvenir design. In the entrance stage, the performance begins with percussion music from the lion drum, gong, and cymbals. A new lion is bestowed with sacred power through the "dotting the eyes" ceremony, transforming it from a crafted artifact into a mythical creature symbolizing protection and blessings. Following this, the performers demonstrate martial arts etiquette before commencing the lion dance. The lion head slowly lifts and bows forward in a gesture known as the "Three Bows Ritual," symbolizing respect for "Heaven, Earth, and Humanity" (Jiang, 2011). This reflects the meaning and cultural value of traditional lion dance etiquette.

The "Cai Qing" (pick green) segment is the climax of the performance, where the lion obtains the symbolic "Qing" or lettuce, representing wealth and good fortune, to convey blessings and showcase the creative potential of the culture. In traditional Chinese Foshan lion dance, the "Cai Qing" (pick green) performance is mostly conducted on the ground. The props for "Cai Qing" (pick green) not only include lettuce but may also contain symbolic red envelopes and couplets. The stage setup incorporates ladders, benches, and other props to create various challenging formations, enhancing the visual appeal. Motion analysis shows that the lion's expressions are conveyed through intricate gestures, footwork, and movements. The lion dance incorporates various steps, including leaping, shifting, dodging, pouncing, bow stance, horse stance, crouching stance, kneeling, jumping, probing, spinning, and soaring, to depict the eight expressions of the lion: joy, anger, sorrow, happiness, movement, stillness, surprise, and doubt (Xie, 2023). The stances in lion dance, such as

horse stance, jumping steps, and empty stance, originate from Foshan's Southern-style martial arts. When combined with intricate hand movements, they create the lion's vivid expressions, making the lion dance a visual focal point in dynamic performances. Extracting these movement characteristics provides rich cultural details for souvenir design, helping to capture the spirit and symbolic value of the lion dance in creative product forms. Overall, these cultural elements and movement characteristics provide a solid cultural foundation and visual inspiration for souvenir design, ensuring that the designs capture the symbolic meaning and dynamic spirit of the lion dance.

Design guidelines for Foshan lion dance souvenirs

Consumer awareness and preference survey: (1) Target Audience: The primary consumer group consists of Gen Z consumers aged 18-25. Among them, 37.54% have a monthly income of 2,000 yuan or below, indicating price sensitivity. The proportion of female participants is slightly higher than that of males. **Table 3:** Respondent distribution and purchase frequency of souvenirs

X\Y	**Occasionally Purchase**	**Frequently Purchase**	**Buy Every Trip**	**Not purchased yet**	**Subtotal**
Male	83 (62.41%)	7 (5.26%)	15 (11.28%)	28 (21.05%)	133
Female	103 (70.07%)	10 (6.80%)	15 (10.20%)	19 (12.93%)	147
Other	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	5
X\Y	**Occasionally Purchase**	**Frequently Purchase**	**Buy Every Trip**	**Not purchased yet**	**Subtotal**
Under 18	2 (100%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2
18-25	112 (66.27%)	5 (2.96%)	13 (7.69%)	39 (23.08%)	147
26-35	33 (66%)	5 (10%)	8 (16%)	4 (8%)	50
36-45	25 (64.10%)	5 (12.82%)	4 (10.26%)	5 (12.82%)	39
46-55	13 (65%)	3 (15%)	4 (20%)	0 (0.00%)	20
Over 55	3 (60%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (40%)	0 (0.00%)	5

(2) Market Positioning: According to the analysis, 65.26% of respondents have limited knowledge of lion dance culture, yet 87.87% express strong interest in lion dance souvenirs. Despite their limited understanding of the culture, their high purchasing interest indicates a strong cultural appeal, providing a solid market foundation for the development of lion dance souvenirs.

(3) Design Direction: Factor analysis results from the survey indicate that respondents highly value the cultural significance of souvenirs. This suggests that the design should emphasize the unique cultural heritage and regional characteristics of lion dance, avoiding generic and overly simplistic designs. Integrating symbolic elements, traditional craftsmanship, and modern aesthetics can enhance the appeal and authenticity of the souvenirs.

Table 4: Rotated Factor Loading Coefficients Table

	Factor Loading Coefficient	**Communality (Common Factor Variance)**
Appearance	0.768	0.590
Price	0.706	0.499
Practicality	0.604	0.365
Cultural Connotation	0.775	0.601
Material	0.725	0.526
Portability	0.779	0.606

The importance of appearance has been confirmed in both analyses, reflecting respondents' strong focus on visual appeal. The design should blend tradition with modernity, utilizing contemporary design principles and techniques to refine traditional imagery, highlighting the cultural and artistic value of Foshan lion dance. A balance between aesthetics and cultural significance should be achieved, ensuring both attractiveness and portability to cater to tourism needs. Additionally, incorporating interactive or movable features can enhance the user experience. Additionally, the survey results revealed respondents' price sensitivity. Product pricing must take into account the purchasing power of the primary consumer group, necessitating appropriate choices in production processes and material selection. The strong correlation between portability and ease of transport in the factor analysis indicates that

consumers also consider practicality and convenience when making purchases, especially in a tourism context. Application of souvenir design principles and methods.

(1) When exploring the factors influencing the design of lion dance souvenirs, preliminary research and data analysis indicate that cultural symbolism is a crucial design element. The image of the lion dance and its associated elements carry symbolic meanings of auspiciousness, celebration, and warding off evil, closely linked to local festive events. These design elements effectively convey the traditional colors and patterns used in lion dance performances, with their symbolic significance being perpetuated through the dynamic performance and visual representation of the lion dance within its cultural context, showcasing the unique folk art and traditional customs of southern China. Secondly, uniqueness and innovation can enhance market competitiveness, strengthen cultural value, and promote brand recognition. For example, the design of tourism souvenirs in Changsha, based on the Xiang embroidery culture, emphasizes in-depth exploration and innovation of regional culture (He, 2015). In souvenir design, it is essential to avoid homogenization by integrating traditional elements with modern aesthetics, unique materials, or innovative design techniques. This approach preserves cultural foundations while aligning with the preferences of contemporary consumers. Emotional connection is the key to successful design. Emotional design aims to convey emotional value through products or services, fulfilling users' psychological and emotional needs ((Lu & Jiang, 2014)). A good souvenir can evoke tourists' emotions. Tourism souvenir design should incorporate the unique stories and regional spirit of the destination, integrating interactive or playful emotional elements. This allows tourists to recall their travel experiences when seeing these items, creating an emotional resonance that enhances their willingness to purchase and use the product, ultimately extending its lifecycle. Moreover, design aesthetics play a crucial role in souvenir design. It should feature visually appealing effects and artistically showcase local characteristics. The design style should align with mainstream aesthetics while maintaining a certain level of artistic expression. Finally, portability is an essential factor in souvenir design. The design should be convenient for tourists to carry, ensuring that it can be easily taken along or packed in luggage. Considering size and weight can effectively increase tourists' willingness to purchase and enhance the souvenir’s

market competitiveness. By integrating these factors, designers can create souvenirs that are not only culturally meaningful but also practical and aesthetically pleasing, meeting market demands.

(2) In the design process of Foshan lion dance souvenirs, designers first conduct systematic data collection and market research to thoroughly analyze consumer needs and preferences, ensuring a solid and targeted design foundation. Next, in the souvenir design phase, designers apply semiotic theory by incorporating colors and patterns with clear symbolic meanings to enhance the cultural identity and visual appeal of the souvenirs. Additionally, the use of character design adds emotional appeal to the product, highlighting its uniqueness and strengthening emotional resonance with consumers. Finally, after the product is launched, an effective feedback mechanism and data analysis are established to continuously optimize the design process. This approach enhances the product's market adaptability, meeting consumer demands while increasing its competitiveness.

Discussions

This study conducts an in-depth analysis of the history, artistic characteristics, and cultural connotations of Foshan lion dance and proposes strategies and methods for integrating its elements into modern souvenir design. In the modernization process of China's intangible cultural heritage, Foshan lion dance demonstrates significant market potential due to its unique visual language and symbolic meaning. Although the current souvenir market for lion dance lacks innovation, souvenirs can be revitalized by extracting cultural

symbols such as the shape, patterns, and colors of lion dance and integrating them with contemporary design concepts. By catering to the preferences of modern young consumers, this approach not only effectively promotes traditional Chinese culture but also contributes to regional economic growth. Moreover, this method strengthens consumers' emotional connection with the culture, further enhancing the dissemination and market appeal of Foshan lion dance.

New Knowledges

This study reveals the dual value of the Foshan lion dance in cultural heritage and modern design through an analysis of its history, role evolution, pattern characteristics, performance process, and movement features. The research examines the historical background of the lion dance as a symbol of traditional culture and explores its functional changes over different periods. From its origins in martial arts activities, to folk celebrations, and finally to its role as a cultural display in contemporary society, the lion dance has undergone significant evolution in terms of function. With social changes, it gradually became an important element in festive activities, serving multiple functions, including entertainment, art, and commerce. This study also delves into the visual elements and dynamic vocabulary of the lion dance. The evolution of roles, visual characteristics, ceremonial aspects of the performance, martial arts movements, and symbolic meanings of the Foshan lion dance provide rich cultural elements for souvenir design.

In addition, based on the cultural symbolism, market research, and design practices of the Foshan lion dance, this study proposes a souvenir development strategy that integrates traditional elements with modern design. The research finds that the design of lion dance souvenirs should balance cultural heritage, market innovation, and emotional value, emphasizing the combination of semiotics and character design to enhance the cultural recognition and emotional resonance of the product. Moreover, establishing a feedback and iteration mechanism helps continuously optimize product design, improve market adaptability, and promote the modernization and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage.

Conclusions

Based on the data analysis results of this study, the following conclusions were drawn: **Deepening the integration of cultural connotations and design.** Although the current souvenir market for lion dance lacks innovation, souvenirs can be revitalized by extracting cultural symbols such as the shape, patterns, and colors of lion dance and integrating them with contemporary design concepts. By catering to the preferences of modern young consumers, this approach not only effectively promotes traditional Chinese

culture but also contributes to regional economic growth. Moreover, this method strengthens consumers' emotional connection with the culture, further enhancing the dissemination and market appeal of Foshan lion dance. **Emphasize the diverse needs of the target market.** The survey indicates that individuals aged 18 to 25 show a strong interest in Foshan lion dance souvenirs. Designs should cater to the preferences of young consumers, emphasizing creativity and practicality to meet their demand for everyday decorative souvenirs. **Establish a feedback and iteration mechanism.** It is recommended to establish an effective feedback and data analysis mechanism after the souvenirs are launched. By tracking and collecting consumer preferences and user experience feedback, the insights can be applied to practical design optimization and innovation. Through iterative innovation, the souvenir designs can be continuously improved, enhancing their market adaptability and ensuring competitiveness in the highly competitive tourism souvenir market.

Suggestions

General Suggestions: This study has certain limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the research primarily focuses on young consumers (ages 18-25), limiting the generalizability of findings across other demographics, such as middle-aged consumers and international tourists. Expanding the target group would provide a more comprehensive understanding of market preferences. Additionally, the study relies on surveys and expert interviews, lacking long-term consumer behavior data. Future studies could integrate purchasing records and social media analytics to gain deeper insights into actual consumer decision-making processes.

Furthermore, while this research explores lion dance cultural symbols, the depth of cultural storytelling and product narrative remains an area for improvement. Future designs could incorporate more interactive and immersive experiences to enhance the cultural resonance of lion dance-themed products.

Suggestions for Further Research: Future studies should broaden the scope to include a wider range of consumers, analyzing cross-cultural acceptance and market potential in international settings. Additionally, integrating emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and smart

interaction features could enhance the engagement and cultural appeal of lion dance souvenirs.

A long-term user behavior tracking system would also be beneficial, allowing researchers to collect real-world data on product usage and consumer satisfaction over time. This would help optimize product design and refine marketing strategies based on actual user experiences.

Collaboration with cultural institutions, such as the Foshan Ancestor Temple Museum and intangible cultural heritage organizations, could further deepen the cultural significance of lion dance-themed products. Such partnerships could lead to the development of souvenirs with greater educational and cultural value.

Lastly, an interdisciplinary approach combining consumer psychology, product design, and brand strategy would provide valuable insights into the application of lion dance elements in different markets and product categories. By integrating these fields, future research can explore innovative ways to merge tradition with contemporary consumer needs, ensuring both cultural preservation and market success.

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