

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Exploring How Cultural Identity Shapes Consumer Social Well-Being and Feedback Behavior through a Cognitive–Affective–Behavioral Framework

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## ABSTRACT

Guochao culture is defined as the fusion of old Chinese cultural symbols with modern design and branding, which is a trend of a youth-oriented national style. Guochao culture has rapidly emerged as a major channel for youth to express identity and cultural values. This study examines how cultural identity, cultural confidence, and well-being shape Generation Z's feedback behavior in the Guochao context. Using the cognitive-affective-behavior (CAB) framework, it analyzes how cognitive factors (cultural identity) influence affective states (spiritual and social well-being), which in turn drive behavioral responses. The research further explores the moderating effect of nostalgia on cultural engagement. A total of 121 valid survey responses were collected from students at Hainan Normal University, and the data were analyzed with the support of structural equation modeling. Even though the size of samples is small, it can be considered as the appropriate size in the context of the PLS-SEM since it is an appropriate exploratory model with small sample size. Findings show that cultural pride, spiritual well-being, and social well-being act as sequential mediators between cultural identity and feedback behavior, whereas cultural praise does not exhibit this mediating role. Nostalgia was found to moderate these relationships, with stronger effects observed among respondents reporting lower levels of nostalgia. Overall, cultural identity exerts a significant indirect influence on feedback behavior through cultural pride and well-being, while nostalgia conditions these effects. These results provide theoretical insights into consumer behavior research and practical guidance for brand marketers engaging with Generation Z.

**Keywords:** Guochao culture; cultural identity; spiritual well-being; feedback behavior; Generation Z

## 1. Introduction

In the past decade, there has been a shift from the long-term “Made in China” to the now influential “Created in China” status. Chinese-style brands have also been rapidly expanding as an emerging topic. The co-creation and reconstruction of Chinese history, culture, and brands have brought new discourses and forms of brand production and promotion to the global market <sup>[1,2]</sup>. Recently, a new conceptual style has

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emerged, which is revitalizing traditional Chinese culture through unprecedented popular trends, one of which is “Guochao Culture” [3,4]. Guochao culture marks the rise of cultural identity and innovation of Chinese brands. In contemporary consumer economies, Guochao is manifested mainly in visual and pictorial symbols so-called modern redesigns of cultural icons, IP-based branding, retro-inspired aesthetics, which are widely spread via digital media.

Following the increasing competitiveness of the Guochao culture, it will gradually gain a competitive advantage on a global scale over the next 5 to 10 years [5]. The advent of Guochao culture has brought several changes and opportunities to the market. As market demand grows, numerous brands and companies have launched Guochao product lines to foster the prosperity of the domestic cultural and creative industries [3]. Additionally, an increasing number of overseas consumers and designers are attracted to Guochao cultural elements, indirectly promoting the “going global” of Guochao culture, and enhancing Chinese cultural soft power and international influence. The rise of Guochao products not only drives the prosperity of the Guochao cultural industry but also enhances the country’s international influence and cultural soft power, becoming an important force for promoting national development [4]. Owing to the growing attention on “Created in China,” Guochao brands have continued to rise through product innovation and brand marketing, constantly leading new consumer trends [5]. This has made brands related to Guochao culture more recognizable in the global market. Guochao products continue to improve in terms of quality, creativity, and price. Guochao brands are becoming increasingly popular consumer choices in global markets because of their improved quality and the integration of the Guochao culture [1]. Nonetheless, the rise of Guochao has also led to an influx of low-quality or superficial “national trend” products, creating inconsistency in aesthetic standards. Addressing how modern aesthetics can be enhanced within Guochao is a meaningful direction but remains outside the scope of this empirical study.

Nonetheless, the chain-mediating mechanism between cultural identity - affective well-being - feedback behaviors has hardly been explored in previous research in the context of Guochao. The lack of studies that incorporated cultural confidence (praise and pride) in CAB chain is one of the critical gaps in the theory that this paper fulfills.

Furthermore, Guochao culture not only promotes product competitiveness but can also benefit people. Previous studies investigated the enhancement of cultural identity and confidence, and consumer well-being [5-7]. By incorporating traditional cultural symbols into their product design, these brands stand out in a highly competitive market and meet modern consumer demands for individuality and uniqueness. According to a survey by IiMedia Research (2024), more than 80% of Chinese college student consumers believe that the quality of Guochao products has improved significantly, and are satisfied with it. As Guochao culture blends modern elements with traditional cultural heritage, the younger generation is more willing to engage in and understand it. Moreover, data forecasted that the Chinese Guochao Economy would reach a market size of 2,051.74 billion yuan in 2023, reflecting a year-on-year growth of 9.44%, and is expected to surpass 3 trillion yuan by 2028. Therefore, the development of Guochao culture can not only promote economic growth and aid the continuous expansion of the market size but also further meet the needs of consumers for personalization and cultural identity.

Specifically, Generation Z is the most prominent consumer group within the Guochao culture. Most of them today are only children, growing up with exclusive family resources, abundant material wealth, and a strong reliance on the Internet [8]. Their formative years were closely aligned with the rise of the Internet, advancements in computer science, and digital storytelling. They also have wealthier families [9]. Meanwhile, they value self-expression and instant feedback; therefore, they actively provide feedback to help develop the

Guochao culture<sup>[10,11]</sup>. To seek to express their individuality and establish emotional connections, Generation Z often finds inspiration in retro aesthetics, merging historical cultural elements with contemporary designs to create a unique personal style.

Meanwhile, Generation Z can easily access large amounts of cultural content that originated in the past. To find emotional resonance through nostalgic content, they are interested in past cultural heritage and symbols<sup>[10,12–14]</sup>. Generation Z receives Guochao cultural elements through its nostalgic content. These findings enhance the understanding of cultural identity, confidence, and well-being<sup>[15–17]</sup>. Some studies have shown that cultural identity, cultural confidence, and well-being positively enhance feedback behavior (B. Jones et al., 2024; Yin et al., 2023). Therefore, it is critical to understand consumer feedback behavior to enhance cultural development and personal well-being in Guochao. Gen Z is especially nostalgic since their interaction with Guochao products is highly visual and mostly aesthetics-oriented, and the nostalgia aesthetics (Y2K, retro, and symbols of childhood) often determine what they consume culturally. Thus, nostalgia can be viewed as an emotional amplifier that can lead to the normalization of cultural cognition on the behavioral responses.

The cognitive-affective-behavior model (CAB) has been widely applied in several research fields to understand consumer behavior. According to previous studies, the CAB draws on cognitive and affective factors to illustrate consumer behavior or behavioral outcomes<sup>[21,22]</sup>. Specifically, the CAB model has been widely applied in tourism research to illustrate travel behavior<sup>[22,23]</sup>, social networking reviews to understand their emotions or sharing behavior<sup>[22,24]</sup>, and customer service experiences to improve service quality<sup>[25,26]</sup>. These studies are only related to consumers' behavior and cognition and do not address how cultural identity influences feedback behavior more effectively, through affective factors and consumers' well-being (Hallanan, 2020). Therefore, future research should explore how cultural identity affects consumer feedback behavior under the influence of chain-mediated affective variables and customer well-being.

Previous culture-related studies investigating cultural confidence have used only one dimension and paid little attention to the other two dimensions of cultural confidence<sup>[6,27]</sup>. Therefore, it is crucial to examine how to influence consumer well-being using the two dimensions of cultural self-confidence as mediating variables<sup>[28]</sup>. Existing research shows that culture is significantly related to subjective well-being in several ways, with one notable pathway being the enhancement of community pride and the development of a strong sense of national identity in cultural tourism<sup>[29]</sup>. Although there is strong evidence that culture affects personal subjective well-being, so far, there is little culture-related literature exploring how cultural identity affects the two dimensions of cultural confidence that play a mediating role in affecting consumers' well-being in the context of Guochao culture. This study uses cultural confidence as a mediating variable to mediate the relationship between cultural identity and spiritual well-being, which ultimately affects customers' feedback behavior.

Nostalgia has garnered significant attention from tourism scholars who regard it as an emotional experience applied in the tourism domain<sup>[30,31]</sup>. Previous research indicates that heritage sites often evoke a strong sense of nostalgia among tourists<sup>[32,33]</sup>. However, a noticeable gap exists in the literature on nostalgia within the cultural domain, particularly regarding the impact of cultural identity on consumer feedback behavior in the context of Guochao culture. As Generation Z was our research sample, they focused on expressing themselves through unique styles. Furthermore, the Y2K style provides rich historical and cultural elements that satisfy the pursuit of individuality and cultural identity. Therefore, this study incorporates nostalgia as a moderating variable to distinguish the effects of high and low groups based on the characteristics of Generation Z's preference for the Y2K style.

This study aims to address the gaps identified in previous research. It further aims to explore whether Generation Z will have a cultural identity (CI), cultural pride (CPI), and cultural praise (CPA) under the influence of Guochao culture, and whether these cognitive factors affect the affective factors of Generation Z, thereby affecting their consumer feedback behavior (FB). Finally, the results of this study provide a theoretical basis for marketers to understand the importance of paying attention to the cognitive and affective factors of Generation Z in the context of Guochao culture. Considering the cognitive and well-being factors of Generation Z with Guochao culture can enable Guochao cultural products to attract more potential customers. Additionally, this study provides a practical contribution for marketers to conquer Generation Z.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Cognition-Affect-Behavior (CAB) model**

The CAB model, initially proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen and later expanded by [22], explains how behavior develops through the interaction between individuals and their environment. This model illustrates how cognitive and emotional factors influence individual actions [34]. Decision-making involves cognitive processes, such as personal beliefs and perceptions, which in turn trigger emotional reactions, either positive or negative. Bakanauskas et al. (2020) proposed that people's behaviors are shaped by cognitive and emotional responses. Rooted in the concept of human-environment interaction [36], the CAB model serves as a comprehensive framework for understanding behavioral adaptation to various environmental stimuli [26]. As in the case of Guochao, the visual cultural stimuli, such as traditional motifs, retro patterns, and redesigned cultural symbols are important environmental stimuli that trigger cognitive and emotional reactions that form the focal point of the CAB model.

Zheng et al., (2022) proposed using the CAB model to develop systematic models of consumer behavior. The CAB framework initially served as a consumer behavior observation tool in a consumption structure, particularly the usage behavior of a product or brand. The cognitive-affective behavioral (CAB) model has been used to assess the brand selection process [37] and the shopping experience (25,38,39). It is the predecessor of some theories, such as buyer behavior [40], emotional evaluation theory [41,42], and the consciousness-emotion-value model [25,43]. Moreover, the CAB model has been used to explain a variety of consumer behaviors in the tourism and hospitality literature, including the post-consumption behavior of restaurant customers, tourists' energy-saving behavior, residents' intention to promote local tourism, and customers' intention to participate in hotel green initiatives [23]. The CAB framework has been combined with the social capital theory to investigate the relationship between residents' social connections and their willingness to promote local festival tourism, which is influenced by their sense of place [23]. Zheng et al. (2022) used the CAB framework to delve into the factors that encourage energy conservation habits and foster customer loyalty.

#### **2.1.1. Cognition: cultural identity, cultural praise and cultural pride**

Cultural identity (CI) describes the way individuals within a given culture identify with and relate to fundamental aspects that set their culture apart from others [44]. This concept is distinct from national identity. Huntington (1993) proposed that the concept of national identity is rooted in four fundamental elements, namely religion, history, customs, and the social fabric within a nation's boundaries, whereas the former emphasizes the connection between historical development and cultural heritage. Specifically, cultural identity is about weaving cultural heritage into one's personal sense of self, setting it apart from labels like nationality, race, place of birth, or religion [46]. In some cases, nationality might not be the most prominent identity factor [47], so differentiating cultural identity from national identity can help us better grasp the

impact of cultural factors on business outcomes, rather than just nationality <sup>[48]</sup>. According to N. Pratt (2005), culture significantly molds an individual's identity, akin to a historical time capsule. Jameson (2007) stated that cultural identity forms part of the larger tapestry of personal identity and is an intrinsic state shaped by one's self-perception. Cultural identity is a collective sense of belonging that unites individuals through shared history and cultural legacy. Members of the same cultural group, like the Chinese Guochao, share traditions, practices, languages, values, and viewpoints, which in turn define their community. In collective cultures, such as the Chinese Guochao culture, cultural identity holds particular significance as individuals tend to define their self-concept and self-awareness through their relationships with others <sup>[50]</sup>. Given China's vast historical tapestry and cherished cultural heritage, the impact of cultural identity on consumer behavior is more pronounced in China than in the more individualistic Western cultures <sup>[51]</sup>. Cultural identity depends on personal connection to one's culture and is exemplified by a favorable socio-psychological perception of it.

Cultural confidence encompasses a shared perception of cultural identity, connection and affection rooted in a deep understanding, acceptance, and engagement with one's culture (6,28). It involves recognizing and affirming one's cultural values and vitality <sup>[52]</sup>. According to Yin et al. (2023), cultural confidence is a cognitive element in the CAB model. Cultural confidence refers to the positive emotional experiences generated by individuals affirming their culture based on an understanding of their own cultural identity <sup>[28]</sup>. This encompasses two dimensions, namely, cultural praise and pride. Therefore, cultural praise and cultural pride can be considered cognitive factors.

An evaluative acknowledgment of cultural advantages is seen in cultural praise and an emotional identification and self-relevant internalization with cultural heritage is seen in cultural pride. Cultural praise is an idea with cognitive evaluation of CAB structure, and cultural pride is a more affective concept through identification-based emotion.

### **2.1.2. Affective: spiritual wellbeing and social wellbeing**

Francis et al. (2015) proposed that spiritual well-being (SWC) should be initially defined as the lived experience reflecting an individual's spiritual health. Drawing on the spiritual well-being model developed by <sup>[54]</sup>, this study adopted the communal spiritual well-being domain. <sup>[55]</sup> defined communal spiritual well-being as the quality and depth of an individual's interpersonal connections, encompassing aspects such as interpersonal love, hope, trust, and faith. Therefore, we considered communal spiritual well-being an affective factor in the CAB model.

Social well-being (SW) primarily emphasizes how individuals assess the quality of their relationships with others, social groups, and society. It also involves perceptions of their living environments and roles within their social structure <sup>[56]</sup>. This concept includes five key dimensions: social realization, social harmony, social contribution, social identity, and social integration. The focus is on how an individual's social roles and functions contribute to those of others and society as a whole, from the perspective of social well-being <sup>[57]</sup>. Therefore, we consider social well-being an affective factor in the CAB model.

Spiritual well-being focuses on warmth, trust and inner harmony between people, whereas social well-being focuses on perceived social integration, community membership and contribution to society- they are both common in consumer behavior and cultural psychology studies.

### **2.1.3. Behavior: feedback behavior**

According to Yi & Gong (2006), customer citizenship behavior encompasses voluntary actions that enhance the overall success of a service organization, extending beyond what is essential for the proficient provision or execution of the service. These extra-role behaviors involve interactions with other customers,

employees, and the company. According to <sup>[59]</sup>, customer behavior consists of four main dimensions: feedback, advocacy, helping and tolerance behavior. This study primarily examines feedback behavior, in which customers provide useful information to employees. Therefore, feedback behavior is considered a behavioral factor in the CAB model.

## **2.2. Hypothesis development**

### **2.2.1. Cultural identity and cultural confidence**

Cultural identity refers to a person's self-awareness regarding their worldview, attitudes, values and beliefs <sup>[60]</sup>. This is closely linked to cultural confidence <sup>[61]</sup>. Cultural identity serves as the foundation for developing cultural confidence (Cheng et al., 2020). Generally, against the background of the Guochao trend, cultural confidence among individuals in China is intricately tied to the nation's grand revitalization. Such confidence is rooted in a deep sense of cultural identity <sup>[62]</sup>. At its core, cultural confidence reflects Chinese people's recognition, promotion, and preservation of Chinese culture <sup>[20]</sup>. Relevant research shows that cultural confidence comprises two dimensions: cultural praise and cultural pride <sup>[28]</sup>.

Cultural praise refers to a sense of assurance generated by recognizing and evaluating culture <sup>[28]</sup>. Some studies demonstrated that cultural confidence represents a shared aspect of cultural identity, which includes feelings of love and belonging arising from a community's profound understanding, acceptance, and engagement with their own cultural heritage (Pan et al., 2021). Additionally, research indicates that cultural identity and pride stem from deeply rooted local traditions and shared beliefs <sup>[29]</sup>, as these reflect individuals' attitudes toward acknowledging a culture <sup>[44]</sup> and feeling proud of their customs, history, and religion <sup>[61]</sup>. According to J. Gao et al. (2020) and Zhang (2020), excellent Chinese culture is a historical source of Chinese cultural confidence. This implies that it is easier to develop a strong cultural pride and establish a solid basis for cultural identity and self-confidence. Consequently, we tested the following hypotheses:

H1a: A strong cultural identity positively impacts cultural praise.

H1b: A strong cultural identity significantly impacts cultural pride.

### **2.2.2. Cultural praise and cultural pride, spiritual well-being, and social well-being, feedback behavior**

According to Huang et al., (2023), cultural praise refers to appreciation and respect for other people's cultures. Spiritual well-being involves the nature and intensity of connections among individuals <sup>[6]</sup>. Therefore, mutual respect and understanding of other cultures can promote harmony among people, thereby enhancing spiritual well-being. When individuals respect and appreciate different cultures, their minds become more open and inclusive, fostering inner balance and tranquility.

Cultural pride refers to an individual's identification with and pride in their own culture <sup>[20]</sup>. In other words, cultural pride can enhance a person's sense of belonging and identity, thereby increasing spiritual well-being. Spiritual well-being includes love, hope, trust, and faith. When people take pride in their culture, they tend to feel more hope and trust in their interpersonal relationships, which helps to improve their overall well-being. Therefore, we tested the following hypotheses:

H2a: Cultural praise significantly influences spiritual wellbeing.

H2b: Cultural pride significantly influences spiritual wellbeing.

The overall life satisfaction and quality of life of individuals have emerged as highly esteemed concepts within the realm of social sciences <sup>[65,66]</sup>. Over the past two to three decades, there has been a consistent interest in the well-being of local populations <sup>[67]</sup>. A wealth of studies has demonstrated that the subjective well-being and quality of life of community members are vital for fostering sustainable communities <sup>[65,66]</sup>.

Additionally, spiritual well-being, as a new form of well-being, positively influences individuals' assessments of their own subjective well-being [6].

Francis et al. (2015) proposed that spiritual well-being was initially characterized as a reflection of a person's internal spiritual health. Gomez & Fisher (2003) indicated the importance of spiritual well-being in comprehending happiness more fully. Based on the cognitive hierarchy, cognition is structured from lower-order values and fundamental beliefs, through various layers of general attitudes and convictions, and culminating in higher-order attitudes that inform behavioral intentions and subsequent actions [68]. In this framework, spiritual well-being, as a profound internal mental state, serves as the foundation of values or beliefs, whereas social well-being is more concerned with specific interactions and situations aligned with higher-order attitudes.

H3: Spiritual wellbeing positively influences social wellbeing.

According to, spiritual well-being is a key dimension of spiritual well-being [55,69]. Additionally, Canada et al., (2016) found relevant evidence that meaning, faith, and inner peace fostered by spiritual well-being can promote happiness, health, and overall quality of life, thereby enabling individuals to provide positive feedback. In other words, individuals with higher spiritual well-being often possess inner peace, tolerance, and confidence, which makes them more likely to provide constructive and positive feedback. As they are filled with a sense of balance and happiness, their feedback is typically driven by goodwill aimed at helping others rather than venting emotions or offering criticism.

H4: Spiritual wellbeing positively influences feedback behavior.

As a social individual, particularly within the context of a typical collectivistic culture in China, Chinese people's self-conceptions emphasize the importance of harmonious coexistence and interdependence with others [61]. A strong sense of belonging, enjoyment of intimate relationships and the feeling needed are highly valued [71]. Collectivism encourages individuals to prioritize each other's well-being from the perspective of others. Consequently, individuals need to have sufficient opportunities for social interactions [6]. Individuals who engage in frequent social interactions often possess larger social support networks and are more willing to provide positive feedback, which can help improve the behavior of others or the conditions of a particular group. This positive feedback not only benefits others but also reinforces their positive status within society. In other words, when people exhibit a strong sense of social well-being, they typically experience trust, support, and a sense of belonging in their social relationships. This positive social experience increases their willingness to engage in feedback behaviors, as they may believe that their opinions can yield positive changes. Additionally, their trust in these relationships makes them feel that their feedback is accepted and valued. As this study primarily examines feedback behaviors within the context of Guochao culture, it is reasonable to concentrate on the social well-being of individuals. This further indicates that social well-being may positively influence feedback behavior. Therefore, we tested the following hypotheses:

H5: Social wellbeing positively influences feedback behavior.

### **2.2.3. Mediation effect between cultural identity and feedback behavior**

Huang et al. (2023) described cultural praise as recognition and respect for other people's cultures. Spiritual well-being is characterized by the richness and intensity of a person's relationships with others [6]. Cultural pride, on the other hand, is understood as the awareness and appreciation one has for their heritage [20]. In other words, cultural pride can reinforce a person's feeling of belonging and self-identity, thereby contributing to their spiritual well-being, social well-being and feedback behavior. This suggests that the

recognition and appreciation of one's culture serve as a bridge between cultural identity and feedback behavior. We formulated the following hypotheses:

H6a: Cultural praise has a mediation effect between cultural identity and feedback behavior.

H6b: Cultural pride has a mediation effect between cultural identity and feedback behavior.

#### **2.2.4. Moderation role of nostalgia**

Initially, the term “nostalgia” was used in medicine to describe feelings of homesickness <sup>[72]</sup>. According to <sup>[72]</sup>, its meaning broadened to encompass positive emotions toward the past, often arising from dissatisfaction with the present. Nostalgia reflects a yearning for the past and an inexplicable affection for things, cultures, or activities connected to the past <sup>[73]</sup>. Research indicates that nostalgia can be categorized into two forms. Stern (1992) and J. Gao et al., (2020) stated that historical nostalgia reflects the desire to escape the present by revisiting a perceived better past, while personal nostalgia idealizes past experiences from one's own life.

Nostalgia is often associated with pleasant memories and past experiences. This emotion can make individuals more appreciative of their own culture, particularly cultural elements tied to childhood memories and family. Consequently, nostalgia can inspire Generation Z to praise traditional culture, showing respect and recognition for products in Guochao culture. Nostalgia encourages people to reflect more deeply on the uniqueness and historical richness of their culture. Generation Z members may realize the richness and value of their nation's culture through nostalgia, thereby enhancing their sense of cultural pride. Similarly, cultural pride, fueled by nostalgia, can be reflected in their admiration for Guochao cultural symbols or products.

In psychological research, <sup>[30]</sup> proposed that nostalgic recollections may enhance happiness and well-being. These memories can also trigger a desire to relive past experiences <sup>[75]</sup>. Growing up in a digital age, Generation Z's experience of nostalgia is often tied to the Internet, social media, and symbols of Guochao culture. For instance, nostalgic products, traditional Hanfu clothing, or early social media platforms may trigger nostalgic feelings. This nostalgia not only enhances well-being but also motivates positive feedback behaviors in these areas, driving a sense of fulfillment. For example, groups with a high degree of nostalgia tend to have more positive feedback toward Guochao culture than those with a lower degree of nostalgia. Therefore, we tested the following hypotheses:

H7: Nostalgia has a moderation effect among the paths.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Proposed model**

The model proposed in this study is based on the CAB model and aims to determine the feedback behavior of Generation Z in the context of Guochao cultural trends. This study evaluates cognitive factors with Generation Z in the context of Guochao cultural trends (such as personal cultural identity, cultural praise, and cultural pride), as well as their spiritual well-being, social well-being, and feedback behavior. First, this research seeks to assess how cultural cognitive factors influence the affective factors of well-being among Generation Z within Guochao culture. Second, it examines how spiritual and social well-being influences feedback behavior in Generation Z. Finally, it explores the moderating effect of nostalgia among Generation Z in these pathways.



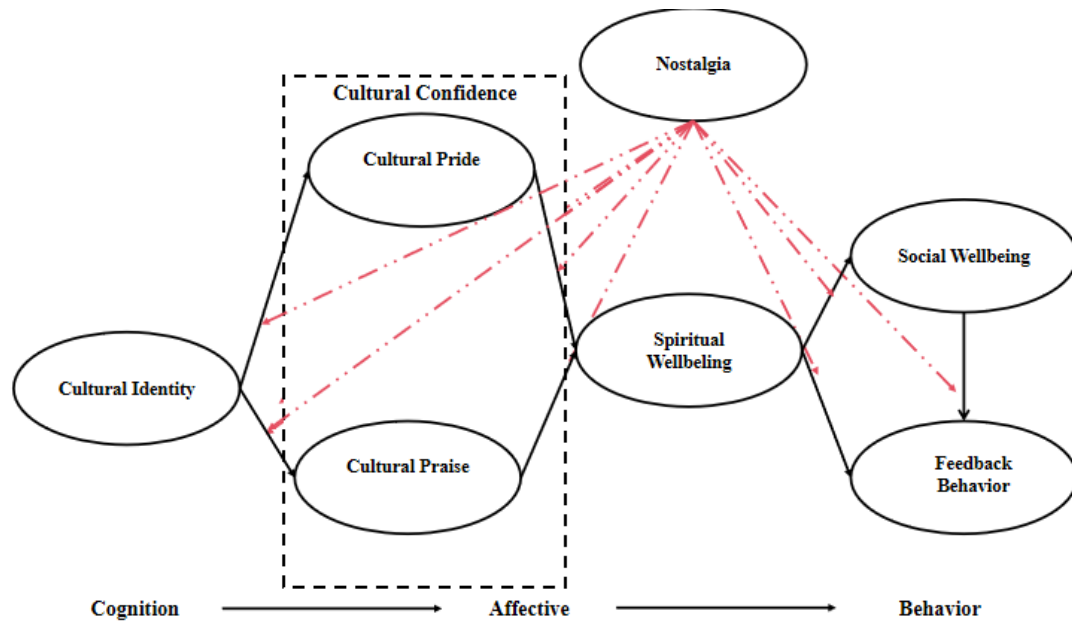


Figure 1. Proposed model.

### 3.2. Sample collection

In recent years, Guochao products have continued to improve in quality, creativity, and price. According to a survey by IiMedia Research (2024), more than 80% of Chinese college students believe that the quality of Guochao products has improved significantly and are satisfied with it. Building national fashion brands in various industries, breaking down technical barriers, enhancing cultural confidence and residents' sense of well-being, and demonstrating the Chinese brands' national fashion culture have become the needs of the Chinese market. Research data from IiMedia Research indicate that the main groups of national fashion culture consumers are constantly changing with age and that currently, Generation Z, a young group, deserves the most attention (*IiMedia Research, 2024; Super Awesome Report, 2023*).

Generation Z (born between 1995 and 2009) is a group that has been raised in the digital era. Members of this generation are characterized by their strong values, deep concern for environmental issues, and awareness of global conditions <sup>[76]</sup>. Generation Z is increasingly becoming a focus of global research. This group is known by various names such as iGeneration, Gen Tech, Online Generation, Post Millennials, Facebook Generation, Switchers, "always clicking," C Generation, and R Generation <sup>[77]</sup>. As they've matured in an era dominated by the Internet, smartphones, and laptops, they are true digital natives, effortlessly weaving technology into their daily routines. Thanks to the influence of technology, globalization, and access to various cultures, they belong to an extensive and ever-connected social media community. Generation Z favors visual content and prefers video summaries to articles <sup>[78]</sup>. Consequently, consumers tend to interact with brands that have robust digital profiles, especially on sites like TikTok and Instagram. <sup>[9]</sup>. According to the Super Awesome report (2023), 75% of Generation Z expect brands to offer nostalgic and special products.

Overall, Generation Z desires brands that stand out and are characterized by individuality and the Y2K style. They seek brands to heed their opinions. Moreover, they favor captivating, shareable, and memorable content, including videos, memes, and interactive formats. Therefore, feedback and comments are behaviors they are accustomed to and value, and more feedback yields greater trust from potential customers. According to the 2023 Super Awesome report, Generation Z is keen to provide feedback and reviews in

various ways, such as offline activities, social media groups, forums, and gaming platforms, which can better allow them to interact in various ways.

Owing to the characteristics of Generation Z, we selected Generation Z as the main research object. Additionally, the participants aged between 16 and 29 are mainly college students; therefore, the research subjects were college students from Hainan Normal University. The questionnaire data collection was mainly offline for a total of 15 days, from June 15 to July 1, 2024. After answering the questionnaire, the participants received a small gift worth US\$1. The questionnaire was designed to be completed anonymously; therefore, the privacy and names of the respondents were not disclosed.

We used offline surveys to collect the questionnaires, which totaled 260. After eliminating incomplete or unqualified questionnaires, 121 valid questionnaires were analyzed. Men and women accounted for 28.1% and 71.9% of the total sample, respectively. Respondents classified as Generation Z were born between 1995 and 2009. They had a college or bachelor's degree (90.9%), and the remainder were masters and doctoral students. Most students had experience understanding Guochao culture. Since the sample was selected in one university, it is not a high-quality representative of the overall population of Generation Z in China. The final section deals with this shortcoming.

### **3.3. Measurement development**

The measurement model included six constructions: cultural identity; cultural confidence containing cultural pride and praise; spiritual well-being; social well-being; and feedback behavior. In the evaluation process, all constructs were thoroughly examined with a variety of components and firmly grounded on a seven-point Likert scale, from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The survey questions were carefully chosen from previous studies to improve the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

In Table 1, we employed a mature and highly cited scale of cultural confidence and communal aspects of spiritual well-being from the field of psychology. Cultural identity is characterized as the collective identification with one's culture, which adopts seven survey items from J. He & Wang (2015) and Li et al., (2021). Cultural confidence is a positive emotional experience that arises from fully affirming one's culture, based on one's understanding of it. It includes two dimensions, namely cultural praise and pride. Cultural praise is defined as the sense of certainty produced when recognizing and evaluating culture, which is the primary content of cultural confidence and an inseparable foundation from cultural emotions <sup>[28]</sup>. Cultural pride is a natural emotional experience derived from the cognitive content of a culture <sup>[28]</sup>. Therefore, the cultural praise and cultural pride scale items were primarily rooted in the framework created by Yin et al. (2023), which also consists of five distinct items. Spiritual well-being involves a focus on the richness and profundity of our personal connections, encompassing elements like affection, faith, optimism, and a conviction in the goodness of others. Social well-being emphasizes the importance of one's role within society and its impact on others and the broader community. This study uses spiritual well-being based on the scale developed by Pan et al. (2021) with five items, while the scale of social well-being refers to the scale customized by Pan et al. (2021) with five sub-items. Citizenship feedback behavior is defined as the act of directly providing feedback or information and is evaluated using three items from <sup>[20]</sup>. Historical nostalgia refers to the longing to escape modern life by revisiting a distant past perceived as better than the present, whereas personal nostalgia idealizes memories of one's own past experiences. Personal and historical nostalgia were evaluated using eight and four nostalgia items, respectively, from <sup>[63]</sup>.

The original questionnaire was first created in English, and the corresponding questions were identified in Chinese literature based on this English version to create the final questionnaire. The remaining questions that could not be found in Chinese literature were translated into the participants' native language. The native

language version was backtranslated into English to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurements. Before launching the survey, we first conducted a two-day offline pretest with 20 college students who were asked to identify any unclear items. The final version of the survey was prepared based on their feedback. After verifying that the reliability, validity, and relevance of the factors predicted by the researcher were not problematic, a survey was conducted. Table 1 presents the construction items.

### 3.4. Statistics technology

We used SPSS to test the model with exploration factor analysis (EFA) and SmartPLS4 for validating our measures and theoretical construct. The PLS algorithm, a structural equation modeling (SEM) technique that emphasizes component-based analysis, is particularly well-suited for exploratory scenarios, especially when dealing with smaller sample sizes and less stringent requirements for data normality [79]. This methodology permits each indicator to have a distinct impact on the composite score of the latent variable, setting it apart from other methods [80]. Moreover, PLS-SEM focuses on the path coefficient and explains variance rather than the model fit, which Amos focused on [80]. Given its inherently exploratory nature [81], PLS is the perfect fit for our study, which seeks to reveal novel relationships within our research model.

## 4. Result

### 4.1. Exploratory factor analysis

This study employs SPSS and SMARTPLS to test the model with EFA, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), path coefficients, mediation effects, and moderation effects.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the construct measurements, we used EFA with varimax rotation to categorize the key dimensions of the model's constructions. This analysis was conducted using SPSS 22. Variables with factor loadings of 0.5 or higher were deemed appropriate [79]. The six-factor model was confirmed using an EFA. Regarding the reliability assessment, we employed Cronbach's alpha. The scale alpha coefficients ranged from 0.778 to 0.900. These results indicated that the scale items were internally reliable. An alpha value greater than 0.5 is acceptable; all constructs in the study achieved satisfactory reliability levels [82]. Table 1 presents detailed Cronbach's alpha results.

**Table 1.** Questionnaire, reliability, convergent validity.

Variables & Reference	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho-A	CR	AVE	R Square
CI	Under the influence of Guochao culture, important people from China's past are admired by people today.	0.904	0.907	0.926	0.677	
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, people frequently engage in activities that identify as "Chinese."					
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, one of China's strengths is that it emphasizes events of historical importance.					
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, Chinese possess certain cultural attributes that other people do not possess.					
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, Chinese in general feel that they come from a common historical background.					
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, China has a strong historical heritage.					

Variables & Reference	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho-A	CR	AVE	R Square
CPI	I have a positive attitude toward Guochao culture	0.891	0.894	0.92	0.696	0.495
	Although Guochao culture may have some shortcomings or undesirable aspects, it does not affect my recognition of it.					
	I am filled with pride and admiration for Guochao culture.					
	Overall, I am satisfied with Guochao culture.					
	Guochao culture has unique values and is not inferior to foreign cultures.					
CPA	Compared with other cultures, the traditions and history of Guochao culture are more brilliant and splendid.	0.89	0.892	0.919	0.694	.0.303
	Compared with other cultures, Guochao culture excels or leads in many areas.					
	Compared with other cultures, Guochao culture is more open and inclusive.					
	No matter what challenges and difficulties arise, Guochao culture is able to solve and cope with them.					
	Guochao culture is the foundation for personal growth and social development.					
SWC	Under the influence of Guochao culture, I could develop forgiveness toward others.(People are tolerant of each other)	0.828	0.829	0.898	0.745	0.413
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, I could develop kindness toward other people.(Being kind and friendly to people)					
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, I could develop respect toward for others. (Respect others and be respected)					
SW	Under the influence of Guochao culture, it expand my interpersonal communication objects.	0.86	0.861	0.905	0.705	0.355
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, it could improve my interpersonal relationships.					
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, it could uplift my quality of life.					
	Under the influence of Guochao culture, it could increase my career opportunities.					
FB	I will carefully complete a customer satisfaction survey	0.833	0.836	0.9	0.705	0.531
	I will give useful feedback to customer service.					
	When surveying residents' suggestions, I will recommend providing information.					

**Table 1.** (Continued)

**Note1:** CI = cultural identity, CPI= Cultural Pride, CPA=Cultural Praise, SWC= Spiritual wellbeing, SW=Social Wellbeing, FB=Feedback Behavior; AVE = average variance extracted from the constructs; CR= composite reliability; CRA= Cronbach's alpha.

## 4.2. Reliability and validity analysis

### 4.2.1. Reliability and convergent validity

Furthermore, we performed reliability and validity analyses to assess the measurement model using SmartPLS 4.0.

Prior to examining the proposed relationships, we assessed the measurement validity, encompassing content, convergent, and discriminant validity [83]. Regarding content validity, all items and constructions were derived from established literature and underwent minor wording adjustments following the pilot survey. Therefore, we are confident that they are accurately represented and clearly understood.

Moreover, this study evaluated individual item reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Table 1 shows that all factor loadings ranged from 0.70 to 0.90, exceeding 0.5, indicating strong item reliability [79]. Additionally, Table 1 presents that the items in the scale had internal consistency. Given that [84] an alpha value of more than 0.5 was determined to be acceptable, all constructs proposed in this paper achieved an appropriate level of reliability. The CR of all constructions was greater than 0.674, indicating high reliability. The average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct were above 0.5, demonstrating strong convergent validity [79].

### 4.2.2. Discriminant validity

To assess discriminant validity, the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct was compared with its correlations with other constructs. As shown in Table 2, all AVE square root values exceeded the corresponding inter-construct correlation coefficients, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity [84]. Although the AVE square root value was relatively modest (0.823), it remained higher than any of the inter-construct correlations, confirming the distinctiveness of the constructs. Additionally, the results demonstrated that all indicator variables exhibited the highest factor loadings on their respective latent constructs, thereby meeting the required discriminant validity criteria.

**Table 2.** Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Lacker criterion).

	CI	CPA	CPI	FB	SW	SWC
CI	0.823					
CPA	0.556	0.833				
CPI	0.707	0.738	0.834			
FB	0.652	0.548	0.604	0.866		
SW	0.704	0.662	0.683	0.708	0.840	
SWC	0.571	0.548	0.641	0.580	0.600	0.863

**Note<sup>1</sup>:** CI = Cultural Identity, CPI= Cultural Pride, CPA=Cultural Praise, SWC= Spiritual Wellbeing, SW=Social Wellbeing, FB=Feedback Behavior

## 4.3. Common method bias test

To mitigate common method bias (CMB), several statistical and procedural measures were implemented [85]. Participants were notified of the research's aim and provided with clear instructions to improve the accuracy of their responses [86,87]. Following a pretest of the questionnaire, ambiguous or potentially confusing items were revised or eliminated to improve clarity. Additionally, the sequence of independent and dependent variables was randomized to prevent respondents from subconsciously aligning their answers with the hypothesized relationships. To further minimize bias, survey questions were presented across multiple pages, ensuring that participants provided independent responses without direct exposure to preceding items.

From a statistical perspective, variance inflation factor (VIF) analysis was employed to assess the presence of CMB [88]. The results indicated that common method bias was not a significant concern, as all VIF values reported in Table 3 were below the recommended threshold of 3.3 (ranging from 1.847 to 2.755), confirming the robustness of the measurement model.

**Table 3.** Results of CMB.

Construct	NOI	Measurement items	FACTOR LOADING	VIF	References
Cultural Identity	6	CI 1	0.837	2.360	(He, J., & Wang, C. L. 2015)
		CI 2	0.775	1.893	
		CI 3	0.852	2.597	
		CI 4	0.773	1.849	
		CI 5	0.834	2.240	
		CI 6	0.860	2.755	
Cultural Pride	5	CPI 1	0.836	2.284	(Zhou & Bi, 2020)
		CPI 2	0.799	1.930	
		CPI 3	0.818	2.131	
		CPI 4	0.878	2.740	
		CPI 5	0.839	2.288	
Cultural Praise	5	CPA 1	0.847	2.499	(Zhou & Bi, 2020)
		CPA 2	0.821	2.410	
		CPA 3	0.820	2.185	
		CPA 4	0.842	2.471	
		CPA 5	0.834	2.228	
Spiritual Wellbeing	3	SWC 1	0.895	2.290	(Li et al. 2021)
		SWC 2	0.859	2.003	
		SWC 3	0.834	1.682	
Social Wellbeing	4	SW 1	0.843	2.110	(Pan et al. 2021 )
		SW 2	0.849	2.063	
		SW 3	0.826	1.891	
		SW 4	0.840	2.042	
Feedback Behavior	3	FB 1	0.881	2.020	(Yin et al., 2023)
		FB 2	0.870	2.005	
		FB 3	0.847	1.802	

#### 4.4. Hypothesis testing

In order to scrutinize the hypotheses put forth, the study employed structural model path coefficients and determined levels of significance as outlined [79]. The statistical significance of the path coefficients was assessed using t-statistics and p-values, ensuring a rigorous examination of the hypothesized relationships.

Table 4 presents the results of the path coefficient analysis, the outcomes of the hypothesis tests, and the structure of the model. The path coefficient linking CI to CPA was found to be 0.556 ( $t=4.967$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). The coefficient from CI to CPI was 0.707 ( $t=7.023$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ), thus supporting H1a and H1b. Meanwhile,

the path coefficient from CPI to SWC was 0.521, accompanied by a t-value of 3.202 and a p-value below 0.0001. Conversely, the path coefficient from CPA to SWC was 0.163, with a t-value of 1.051 and a p-value greater than 0.05, indicating the rejection of H2 and acceptance of H3. The connection between SWC and SW was marked by a path coefficient of 0.600 ( $t=4.908$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ), supporting H4. The direct impact of SWC on FB was statistically significant, with a coefficient of 0.242, a t-value of 1.993, and a p-value below 0.05, thus validating H5. Finally, the relationship between SW and FB was solidified by a path coefficient of 0.563, accompanied by a t-value of 4.272 and a p-value less than 0.0001, accepting H6.

**Table 4.** Path analysis.

	Hypothesis	Path coefficient	S.E	t value	P value	Supported
H1a:	CI -> CPA	0.555***	0.112	4.938	0.000	YES
H1b:	CI -> CPI	0.706***	0.101	6.973	0.000	YES
H2a:	CPA -> SWC	0.163	0.155	1.051	0.293	NO
H2b:	CPI -> SWC	0.521**	0.163	3.202	0.001	YES
H3:	SWC -> SW	0.600***	0.122	4.909	0.000	YES
H4:	SWC -> FB	0.183	0.130	1.409	0.159	NO
H5:	SW -> FB	0.420**	0.1343	3.130	0.002	YES
H6a:	CI -> CPA -> SWC-> SW -> FB	0.023	0.032	0.725	0.469	NO
H6b:	CI -> CPI -> SWC-> SW -> FB	0.093*	0.042	2.226	0.026	YES

<sup>a</sup> CI = Cultural Identity, CPI= Cultural Pride, CPA=Cultural Praise, SWC= Spiritual Wellbeing, SW=Social Wellbeing, FB=Feedback Behavior

<sup>b</sup> \*\*\*  $P < 0.001$  \*\*  $P < 0.01$  \*  $P < 0.05$

#### 4.5. Mediation effect

Preacher and Hayes (2008) explored the mediating role of flow in the relationship between CI and FB through a bootstrap methodology. They specifically assessed the indirect impact of CPI on the interplay between CI and FB by generating bias-corrected confidence intervals (BCCIs) and standard 95% confidence intervals (CIs) from 5,000 bootstrap samples. A significant indirect effect was indicated if the BCCIs and the CIs did not include zero, thus affirming the mediating influence <sup>[89]</sup>. The findings from the bootstrapping mediation tests regarding CI and FB are illustrated in Table 5. The data in Table 4 reveal that the CIs for the direct effects of CI and FB excluded zero, while the indirect effect in hypothesis 7 did include zero, suggesting that the bootstrap analysis demonstrated no mediating effect of CPI in the relationship between CI and FB. Moreover, when investigating the mediating influence of CPI on the connection between CI and FB, neither the CIs nor BCCIs encompassed zero, thereby confirming the presence of a partial mediating effect of CPI within this relationship. The mediation of cultural praise was not significant which may be an indication of its low levels of emotional activation. Cultural praise is based on evaluative recognition, but it might not be too high to produce such emotional states that would eventually result in behavioral reactions.

**Table 5.** Mediation effect.

	Percentile 95% CI		BC 95% CI	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Direct effect				
CI -> FB	0.211	0.709	0.184	0.679
Indirect effect				
CI -> CPI -> SWC -> SW -> FB	0.011	0.169	0.034	0.215
CI -> CPA -> SWC -> SW -> FB	-0.005	0.113	-0.003	0.131

*Note:* BC= bias corrected; CI= confidence interval.

*a* CI = Cultural Identity, CPI= Cultural Pride, CPA=Cultural Praise, SWC=Spiritual Wellbeing, SW=Social Wellbeing, FB=Feedback Behavior

#### 4.6. Moderation effect analysis

Additionally, we conducted a moderation analysis. This study investigates how nostalgia moderates the relationships between CI, CPI, CPA, SWC, SW, and FB. The findings demonstrated considerable disparities among the three impact measures. The moderation effects results indicated that nostalgia negatively moderates the relationship between cultural identity and cultural pride ( $\beta = -0.536^{**}$ ,  $p < .05$ ), cultural identity and cultural praise ( $\beta = -0.557^{*}$ ,  $p < .05$ ), as social well-being and feedback behavior ( $\beta = -0.420^{*}$ ,  $p < .05$ ), while no moderation effect exists in the other relationships. Specifically, this study divided consumer nostalgia into two groups: high and low. The former represents consumers with high nostalgia (N=59), whereas the latter represents consumers with low nostalgia (N=62). The study revealed notable disparities among the two groups. The results of the moderating effect showed that consumers with low nostalgia experienced a significant impact on their cultural identity, cultural pride, and cultural praise. Similarly, consumers with low nostalgia experienced a significant effect on social well-being and feedback behavior, indicating that they were more willing to engage in feedback behavior that was influenced by social well-being. No significant effects were observed in the high-sentiment group. Tables 6 and 7 present the results.

The finding of the stronger moderation of the low-nostalgia group suggests that those who are not highly emotionally attached to past cultural symbols base more on the current cultural prototypes and, therefore, the CAB pathway becomes more salient in their lives.

**Table 6.** Results of moderation effect.

Path	Path Coefficient	p-values
CI x NOS -> CPA	-0.557	**
CI x NOS -> CPI	-0.536	*
CPI x NOS -> SWC	-0.124	0.722
CPA x NOS -> SWC	-0.513	0.146
SWC x NOS -> FB	-0.008	0.969
SWC x NOS -> SW	-0.313	0.158
SW x NOS -> FB	-0.420	*

*a* CI = Cultural Identity, CPI= Cultural Pride, CPA=Cultural Praise, SWC= Spiritual Wellbeing, SW=Social Wellbeing, FB=Feedback Behavior

*b* \*\*\*  $P < 0.001$  \*\*  $P < 0.01$  \*  $P < 0.05$



**Table 7.** Results of moderation effect.

Path	Low segment (N=62)		High segment (N=59)	
	Coefficient	p-values	Path Coefficient	p-values
CI x NOS -> CPA	0.567	***	0.210	0.249
CI x NOS -> CPI	0.848	***	0.312	0.058
SW x NOS -> FB	0.344	***	0.356	0.108

*a* CI=Cultural Identity, CPI=Cultural Pride, CPA=Cultural Praise, SWC=Spiritual Wellbeing, SW=Social Wellbeing, FB=Feedback Behavior

*b* \*\*\*  $P < 0.001$  \*\*  $P < 0.01$  \*  $P < 0.05$

## 5. Conclusions and implications for theory and practice

### 5.1. Conclusions

Following the increasing competitiveness of the Guochao culture, it will gradually gain a competitive advantage on a global scale over the next 5 to 10 years. As there are few studies on Guochao in the cultural field that focus mainly on aesthetics [1,7,90], it has become increasingly important to examine how cultural identity and affective factors in the context of Guochao culture influence consumer behavior. Following the development of Guochao culture, this study explores whether Guochao products or brands foster cultural identity among consumers, thereby influencing their feedback behavior through cultural cognition (cultural praise and pride) and well-being (spiritual and social well-being). We collected 121 valid responses and used SPSS and Smart PLS for data analysis.

Overall, this study confirms that cultural identity affects feedback behavior through the mediating effects of cultural pride and well-being factors (spiritual and social well-being). Based on the results of this study, spiritual well-being positively influences social well-being. This is consistent with the results of a previous study [6]. Gao (2021) and Lin et al. (2022) found that reinforcing students' national cultural identity contributed to developing their self-confidence in national culture. Nevertheless, feedback behavior was not influenced by spiritual well-being directly (H4). It implies that inner emotional harmony alone cannot lead to outward behavioral involvement in the Guochao situation, but rather the impact of the socially oriented construct (social well-being) is even more prevalent.

Cultural pride is a psychological cognition of cultural confidence and one of its dimensions. Therefore, cultural identity positively impacts cultural pride. Cultural identity indicates that individuals highly identify with their culture. In light of the prevailing trends surrounding national trend culture, how can Generation Z demonstrate their belief in cultural pride in their everyday activities? Research indicates a significant connection between cultural pride and public mental health, aligning with findings from earlier studies [91,93]. Consequently, our findings underscore that the cultural identity of Generation Z plays a crucial role in shaping their perception of cultural pride and the spiritual well-being of others.

From the results, we infer that cultural identity not only significantly influences consumers' cultural pride [61,62,94], but also an intrinsic pride that affects feedback behavior through well-being factors (spiritual and social well-being). A significant moderating effect of nostalgia was detected in the consumer behavior pathways. This study provides a new perspective on consumer behavior and offers several theoretical and administrative implications.

### 5.2. Theoretical implications

First, we verified the feasibility and applicability of the CAB model by applying cultural identity to consumer feedback behavior in the context of Guochao culture. This research sheds light on the pivotal role

that the CAB approach plays in deepening our comprehension of the link between Generation Z's feedback and their cultural identity. This survey was conducted by collecting data offline <sup>[7]</sup>, and the sample subjects were selected from the Generation Z group rather than employees or tourists <sup>[20]</sup>, opening up a new market for this party.

Second, this study may be a pioneering attempt. Cultural identity has been shown to directly affect cultural confidence in past relevant studies (28,95–97). However, this study employs the two dimensions of cultural confidence (cultural praise and cultural pride) as independent variables to conduct path research, making the first attempt to expand the multipath relationship between cultural identity and cultural confidence <sup>[28]</sup>.

Finally, this research seeks to explore the influence of cultural identity on the feedback behavior of Generation Z, factoring in the moderating role of nostalgia <sup>[76]</sup>. To our knowledge, there has been no previous study establishing a link between cultural identity and the consumer behavior of students. This study addresses this gap by considering feedback behavior as a form of consumer citizenship. This study examines the context of Guochao culture and explores consumers' cultural identity, confidence, and pride as cognitive factors. This study expands on this relationship by examining how these factors influence consumer feedback behavior through the chain mediation of well-being-related affective factors and the moderating role of nostalgia.

### **5.3. Managerial implications**

Considering the beneficial effect of cultural identity on cultural pride, spiritual well-being, social well-being, and feedback behavior, we suggest that the government allocate more resources to enhance Generation Z's cultural identity. As cultural activities offer several benefits <sup>[98]</sup>, local governments could consider assisting schools or nonprofit organizations in organizing Guochao cultural festivals and cultural experiential projects during specific times. By participating in these activities, Generation Z can experience the fusion of traditional culture with modern elements, thereby enhancing their perception and recognition of culture. Additionally, utilizing media channels including TV, the web, and online platforms to promote Guochao culture through documentaries, short videos, and cultural programs can enhance Generation Z's understanding and appreciation of Guochao culture. These measures can effectively boost Generation Z's engagement and help build a stronger cultural identity. To enhance identity, brands can use retro colors, symbols of their cultural influences on the consumer during childhood, and recreated traditional motifs as a form of nostalgic stimulation in Gen Z consumers to produce feedback behavior.

Second, spiritual and social wellbeing are crucial factors. To foster Generation Z's immediate feedback and appreciation of Guochao culture, it is essential to evoke cognitive and emotional factors. We encourage the government to provide special funding to support Guochao cultural projects and activities that can enhance individuals' sense of well-being <sup>[20]</sup>. Encouraging businesses and individuals to participate in the promotion and innovation of Guochao culture has a positive impact. Supporting young creative talent in integrating traditional culture with modern design and technology can result in more aesthetically pleasing and practical Guochao products, further enhancing their senses of well-being. For example, several cities in China have hosted Guochao creative theme design competitions, such as the "Guochao Cultural Creativity Exhibition" during the Hangzhou International Design Week in 2024 (Hangzhou Daily, 2024). By providing funding and a platform to attract young designers, these events integrate traditional elements (such as blue and white porcelain patterns and paper-cutting art) with modern design concepts to create highly aesthetic and practical Guochao products, such as smart wearables, fashion clothing, and household items. This not only stimulated Generation Z's interest in traditional culture but also offered them opportunities to showcase

their creativity and enhance their sense of well-being, while promoting the innovation and promotion of Guochao culture.

Finally, this research constitutes a limited number of works exploring the behavior of Generation Z as consumer-citizen behavior in the context of Guochao culture. Focusing on cognitive and emotional elements offers marketers a solid theoretical framework, allowing them to capture the interest of Generation Z by enhancing their cognition and well-being through Guochao culture. This approach not only broadens the customer base for Guochao cultural products but also establishes a robust foundation for targeting marketing strategies. Social media channels can capture their feedback and comments by collecting and analyzing large-scale customer review data to attract more people to Guochao culture, which provides a huge opportunity for the Guochao culture market <sup>[99]</sup>. Moreover, it can attract more potential customers of Guochao culture by responding to and valuing customer feedback, comments, and opinions. The government should encourage Generation Z to share their Guochao cultural experiences through short videos or articles and foster user-generated feedback to effectively increase people's recognition of Guochao culture, thereby providing continuous feedback and improvement, which can promote the growth of Guochao culture and enhance its global influence.

#### **5.4. Limitations and further research**

While this study sheds light on new aspects, it isn't without its shortcomings. To begin with, as the sample consisted of students from Hainan Normal University, which has regional characteristics, the conclusions of this study may not be fully applicable to other regions <sup>[100]</sup>. Additional research is needed to delve into the applications and variations among samples from various locations. Moreover, this research explores the psychological mechanisms by which cultural identity affects feedback behavior through spiritual and social well-being from the perspective of consumer citizenship behavior. However, feedback behavior is only one type of consumer citizenship behavior; therefore, there are still other behaviors and other affective characteristics, such as psychological well-being and other consumer citizenship behaviors, that can be examined in future research. Ultimately, the research delves into how positive thought and emotional elements influence the way people offer feedback within the context of Guochao culture. Finally, subsequent studies mainly focuses on the influence of positive cognitive and affective factors on feedback behavior in Guochao culture; therefore, future research can investigate some negative cognitive or psychological factors.

#### **Conflict of interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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