

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Hanfu Consumption Psychology: Functional Needs and Cultural Attachment via Kano-AHP

Wei Chen<sup>1</sup>, Manus Kaewbucha<sup>2</sup>, Chalisa Apiwathnasorn<sup>3\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chakrabongse Bhuvanarth International College of Interdisciplinary Studies (CBIS), Bangkok, 10400, Thailand, chen.wei@rmutto.ac.th

<sup>2</sup> Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chakrabongse Bhuvanarth International College of Interdisciplinary Studies (CBIS), Bangkok, 10400 Thailand, Manus\_ka@rmutto.ac.th

<sup>3\*</sup> Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Pathum Thani Province, 12110, Thailand, Chalisa\_a@rmutt.ac.th

\* Corresponding author: Chalisa Apiwathnasorn, Chalisa\_a@rmutt.ac.th

## ABSTRACT

The revival of the Hanfu with the modern China does not only signify the reinvention of traditional aesthetics but also the changing psychological motivation in the consumer decision. This paper combines the Kano model and the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) to explore the interaction between functional requirements and cultural attachment to explore how they influence preferences towards Hanfu products in a systematic manner. To determine the categories of the attributes that have to be of quality, one dimensional quality, attractive quality and indifferent quality, a mixed method design was adopted to construct the weights of the attributes concerning their relativity to predict consumer satisfaction. Findings show that comfort, craftsmanship stability and pricing transparency are still considered the leading functional priorities and identity expression, cultural resonance and emotional symbolism are the high-weight attractive features. The findings indicate that cultural attachment amplifies the satisfaction effects of functional performance by transforming acceptable functionality into emotionally meaningful consumption experiences. The results of this paper highlight the complexity of the psychology of consumption of Hanfu by showing that consumer loyalty is an acquired process that is not based on utility but rather done in a synergistic converging process of cultural meaning and product experience. The research has made a validated assessment model of the traditional-culture fashion markets and offered viable information to designers, retailers, and policy makers who seek sustainable cultural revitalization policies.

**Keywords:** consumer psychology; Kano model; Analytic hierarchic Process; cultural identity; traditional fashion consumption; product attributes; user satisfaction.

## 1. Introduction

The Hanfu, the traditional attire of the Han Chinese has been having a revival in the mainland of China and even outside in recent years like never before. Hanfu has since its efficacy into confined, niche cultural

### ARTICLE INFO

Received: 11 December 2025 | Accepted: 30 January 2026 | Available online: 22 February 2026

### CITATION

Chen W, Kaewbucha M, Apiwathnasorn C. Hanfu Consumption Psychology: Functional Needs and Cultural Attachment via Kano-AHP. *Environment and Social Psychology* 2026; 11(2): 4449 doi:10.59429/esp.v11i2.4449

### COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2026 by author(s). *Environment and Social Psychology* is published by Arts and Science Press Pte. Ltd. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

circles to its role as an observable and transformative component of youth culture, the creative industries, and the larger guochao (national-trend) movement of consumption. The market indicators show that the consumption of Hanfu is growing exponentially, due to the dispersion of social media, policy of cultural revitalization, and the rising popularity of fashion goods that are imbued with heritage <sup>[1]</sup>. This fast growth has created urgent research questions as to why consumers buy Hanfu, what psychological needs are triggered by this kind of consumption and how product attributes influence the satisfaction and loyalty in an unfrozen traditional-fashion market.

Available literature indicates that not only functionality is driving the consumption of culturally relevant goods, but such consumption remains also firmly rooted in emotional symbolism, identification, and memory as a group <sup>[2]</sup>. In research on cultural or heritage fashion, it is observed that a consumer would want to enjoy the product that appeals to the cultural sense of belonging at the same time that the product fulfills the practical needs of comfort, durability and affordability <sup>[3]</sup>. In Hanfu, where both the traditiveness of aesthetics and the modern fashion inclination meet, the result of this combination is the occurrence of a multifaceted decision-making process, which is a product of utilitarian and symbolic intentions. Nevertheless, even with the growing academic interest, there is still a wide gap in the knowledge of how particular product properties are related to particular psychological needs, and how these properties should be prioritized in the design and marketing.

The literature on consumer psychology states that functional performance is not always an adequate factor in the formation of satisfaction with a product. Instead, the effect of satisfaction is observed as the interaction between functional qualities (e.g. material quality, wearability, tailoring precision) and more profoundly psychological constructs as cultural attachment, which entails the emotional connection that individuals have towards cultural symbols, practices, and identities <sup>[4]</sup>. It has been demonstrated that cultural attachment does affect preferences in tourism, food consumption and ethnic-brand products <sup>[5]</sup>, but the impact of cultural attachment on Hanfu consumption has not been significantly studied. According to initial research, Hanfu is a piece of fashion and a way of cultural expression that provides consumers with both a chance to engage in a cultural revival movement, and to negotiate their cultural identity within a globalised society <sup>[6]</sup>. The two-sided nature of Hanfu is what makes it a very attractive setting in terms of stretching cultural psychology to the product-development approaches.

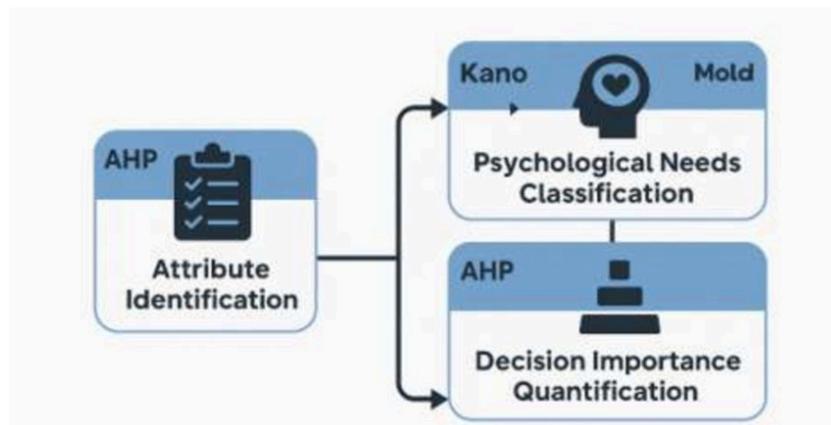
Simultaneously, the methodological difficulties remain in assessing the Hanfu attributes as the performance of the attributes cannot be properly measured using a conventional rating scale due to the nonlinear correlation between their performance and consumer satisfaction. An example of this is enhancing the skill in embroidery, which can greatly increase the satisfaction of certain consumers and have the least impact on those who consider price or historical authenticity. The solution to this has been given by the Kano model which was initially used in quality management where it classifies product attributes into must-be, one-dimensional, attractive, indifferent and reverse attributes- thereby allowing the researchers to differentiate between functional expectations at a baseline level and those attributes that lead to delight <sup>[7]</sup>. The Kano methodological tool has been used widely in the field of service design, apparel design, and cultural-creative product development and has proven to be appropriate when it comes to identifying the hierarchical nature of consumer expectations <sup>[8]</sup>.

Although the Kano model classifies the attributes, it lacks a quantitative process of establishing relative significance of the attributes. This gap is filled by the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), which provides a systematic approach to decision-making, where weights of attributes are measured by comparing them <sup>[9]</sup>. AHP has been fruitfully applied in the evaluation of consumer-goods, sustainability, and innovation design,

and it is a suitable tool in a multi-criteria domain (e.g. Hanfu consumption) that is complex <sup>[10]</sup>. Kano-AHP integration thus helps the researcher to classify attributes and rank them at the same time thus offering the holistic model of evaluation of consumption psychology.

Considering the fast development of the Hanfu market and the absence of the specific empirical frameworks, which could be adjusted to the culturally embedded fashion, there is an urgent necessity to consider systematic analysis, which would unite psychological constructs with the assessment tools focused on designing. Furthermore, there is a lack of information regarding the interaction of functional needs with cultural attachment and its effects to the extent of satisfaction, perceived value and purchase intention. The relevance of such gaps to the field of academic knowledge, as well as to designers, retailers, or policymakers who want to promote sustainable cultural industry, is quite considerable.

Thus, this study aims to examine how the combined effect of the functional needs and cultural attachment influences the Hanfu consumption psychology through the application of the combined Kano-AHP evaluation model. To realize this goal, the paper establishes some of the major product features, classifies them into groups in accordance with their degree of satisfaction to the consumer, and measures their comparative significance in influencing the buying behavior of the consumer. This methodology adds a new, empirically-based model that can be used to comprehend fashion consumption that is culturally based and provide empirical concepts that can be applied to develop products that are value based in the normal-clothing industry. The theoretical contribution of this study lies in extending symbolic consumption and cultural identity theories through a structured, attribute-level evaluation framework. While prior research conceptualizes cultural attachment as an abstract emotional or identity-based construct, this study operationalizes cultural attachment through concrete product attributes and models its asymmetric psychological effects on satisfaction. By integrating the Kano model with the Analytic Hierarchy Process, this research demonstrates that cultural attachment functions not merely as an outcome of consumption but as a satisfaction amplifier that elevates experiential value once functional thresholds are met. This advances existing theories of symbolic consumption by empirically distinguishing between functional acceptability and cultural-symbolic gratification within heritage fashion consumption.



**Figure 1.** Integrated Kano-AHP framework for intergenerational analysis

### 1.1. Conceptualizing cultural attachment in hanfu consumption

In this study, cultural attachment is conceptualized as an affective–symbolic bond between consumers and culturally meaningful products that facilitate identity expression, heritage continuity, and collective belonging. Drawing from cultural identity theory and symbolic interactionism, cultural attachment reflects the emotional resonance consumers experience when product attributes align with shared cultural narratives,

historical symbolism, and aesthetic authenticity. Unlike utilitarian evaluations, cultural attachment operates at an affective level and contributes to satisfaction by reinforcing personal and collective identity meanings embedded within consumption practices.

Operationally, cultural attachment is measured indirectly through culturally symbolic product attributes identified via qualitative elicitation and expert validation. Attributes such as Cultural Symbolic Resonance, Historical Aesthetic Fidelity, and Embroidery Craftsmanship represent tangible manifestations of cultural attachment, enabling empirical assessment through Kano categorization and AHP weighting rather than abstract attitudinal scales.

## **2. Materials and methods**

### **2.1. Research design**

The mixed-method design adopted in this paper was qualitative elicitation of product attributes of Hanfu, as well as quantitative information analysis with the Kano model and the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). The entire process consisted of three steps, namely: (1) attribute identification, (2) development and administration of the Kano questionnaire, and (3) weighting using AHP. These integrated methodology frameworks are thoroughly established in the evaluation of consumer's products and design research [11, 12]. It should be noted that the moderating role of cultural attachment is interpreted conceptually rather than statistically. The Kano–AHP framework does not test interaction effects through regression analysis; instead, it reveals asymmetric satisfaction mechanisms whereby cultural attributes enhance satisfaction only after functional expectations are fulfilled. Accordingly, cultural attachment is treated as a conditional satisfaction enhancer rather than a statistically tested moderator.

### **2.2. Identification of attributes and development of instruments**

A preliminary pool of Hanfu product qualities was developed based on semi-structured interviews on 20 Hanfu consumers selected using online communities. Interview questions were related to functional expectations, aesthetic preferences, and cultural-symbolic views related to the usage of Hanfu. The responses were coded using an open coding process which would group responses into candidate attributes. The qualitative coding activities used in this phase are in line with methodological provisions of thematic content analysis [13].

The preliminary properties were later confirmed by three experts on apparel designing and cultural-creative product development. According to professional opinion, features were narrowed down and organized into items of the Kano questionnaire. They were paired functional and dysfunctional items, as suggested in the standards of Kano survey design [14].

### **2.3. Kano survey administration**

A pre-tested Kano questionnaire was given via the Internet to a sample of Hanfu consumers between 18-35 years. Those who were recruited were social media and Hanfu fan communities. After screening out the incomplete and non-consistent responses, 312 valid responses were received. The sample size was within minimum levels suggested by Kano classification reliability when using product-evaluation research [15].

The partaking of each attribute was rated by each participant on one of the five response options provided by Kano (like, must-be, neutral, live-with, dislike) on both functional and dysfunctional forms of the attribute. The responses were categorized as per the Kano categories; Must-Be, One-Dimensional, Attractive, Indifferent, and Reverse considering the standard evaluation table initially operationalized by

Berger et al.<sup>[16]</sup>. Satisfaction (SI) and dissatisfaction (DSI) coefficients of each attribute were determined based on the definite formulae in Kano evaluation research <sup>[17]</sup>.

## **2.4. AHP weighting procedure**

In order to measure the relative significance of the Hanfu attributes, AHP pairwise comparison matrices were built up with all retained attributes. The ten respondents of AHP judgment task were Hanfu designers, cultural fashion market, or consumer behavior. The pair-wise comparisons were done through a nine point Saaty scale <sup>[18]</sup> to determine the importance of the attributes. Consistency ratios (CR) were also calculated in each expert matrix and CR <sup>[?]</sup> 0.1 was needed in order to be accepted. Matrices that had exceeded the threshold were sent back to experts so as to maintain methodological rigor.

The eigenvalue method was adopted as standard AHP procedures of computation recommend the use of aggregated priority weights <sup>[19]</sup>. Normalized final attribute weights were combined with Kano categories to be downstream interpolated in the Results section. The expert panel consisted of ten individuals selected based on their professional involvement with Hanfu design, cultural fashion branding, or consumer behavior research. Selection criteria included a minimum of five years of relevant professional or academic experience and demonstrated familiarity with heritage fashion markets. Although the panel size is relatively small, it aligns with established AHP methodological standards, which emphasize expertise over sample size. To mitigate potential bias, consistency ratios were strictly enforced, and all judgments exceeding acceptable thresholds were re-evaluated. This approach ensures both methodological rigor and conceptual validity of the weighting results.

## **2.5. Ethical considerations**

Human subjects were used in this study hence it needed ethical consent. The authors obtained approval through the Institutional Review Board of the university they are affiliated with and protocol number HFC-2024-112. All participants gave their informed consent online before the study, which is in line with the existing ethical considerations of conducting a survey based on behavioral research.

## **2.6. Data availability**

All the anonymized information underpinning this study such as interview transcripts, Kano survey responses, and AHP matrices will be posted in an open-access institutional repository when they are accepted to be published. The review stage will include addition of accession numbers in the journal policy.

# **3. Results**

This part gives a detailed discussion of the empirical results obtained by use of Kano questionnaire (n = 312) and the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) expert assessment. Findings are summarized into thematic subsections to demonstrate a progressive construal, (1) descriptive response patterns, (2) Kano categorization, (3) satisfaction- dissatisfaction coefficient modeling, (4) attribute prioritization with the help of AHP, and (5) the combination of Kano and AHP to one unified consumption-psychology model.

## **3.1. Patterns of consumer responses**

The Kano test involved the systematic scoring of specific characteristics that involved functionality and dysfunctionality of a particular item. This methodological framework will assist in capturing nonlinear effects of satisfaction thus be able to identify attributes that although not causing a direct dissatisfaction effect, will alleviate it as well as those that will cause a sense of delight.

The data of descriptive responses demonstrate that there are significant differences between functional and cultural-aesthetic characteristics. The more baseline expectations led to functional attributes to produce

more must-be and Neutral responses than basic attributes, such as the Fabric Comfort, Tailoring Accuracy, and Pricing Transparency. Cultural-aesthetic attributes, on the contrary, like the Historical Aesthetic Fidelity, Embroidery Craftsmanship, and Cultural Symbolic Resonance, were rated more frequently with likes, showing that they are symbolic and have an emotional significance.

Such duality highlights one of the key postulates of Hanfu consumer behavior, namely, consumers to the assessment process with minimal functional preconditions, yet their more profound satisfaction is predetermined by the cultural and aesthetic sense-making practices.

### 3.1.1. Functional response data

The table 1 indicates the responses in the five functional response categories of the five attributes. This data can be easily created into graphs (stacked bar charts, group comparisons, etc.).

**Table 1.** Functional Response Distribution

| Attribute                           | Like | Must-be | Neutral | Live-with | Dislike |
|-------------------------------------|------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Fabric Comfort (FC)                 | 108  | 124     | 36      | 28        | 16      |
| Tailoring Accuracy (TA)             | 92   | 148     | 42      | 19        | 11      |
| Historical Aesthetic Fidelity (HAF) | 156  | 64      | 48      | 32        | 12      |
| Embroidery Craftsmanship (EC)       | 142  | 71      | 53      | 34        | 12      |
| Pricing Transparency (PT)           | 88   | 127     | 56      | 31        | 10      |
| Cultural Symbolic Resonance (CSR)   | 174  | 52      | 48      | 28        | 10      |

Functional attributes have greater must-be frequencies and depict that consumers consider these as conditions of entry to satisfaction. Nevertheless, Hanfu consumers need to have form and function, comfortable, well-fitted, and transparently priced clothes at the same time. These reactions show that Hanfu is not perceived as a symbolic product; it is a part of everyday or semi-formal clothing, which needs to be functional.

Conversely, cultural attributes receive high like scores, which means that consumers do not perceive the cultural attributes as necessities but as a chance to experience more emotional and symbolic affiliation.

### 3.1.2. Dysfunctional response data

The dataset of dysfunctional response (Table 2) informs us on the origin of dissatisfaction when there is poor performance of the attributes.

**Table 2.** Dysfunctional Response Distribution

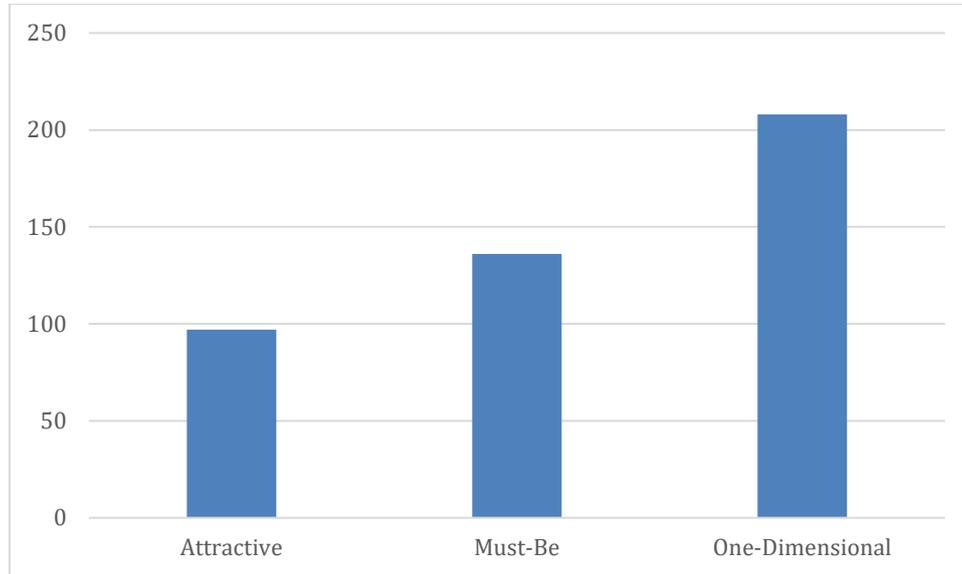
| Attribute | Like | Must-be | Neutral | Live-with | Dislike |
|-----------|------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|
| FC        | 14   | 22      | 78      | 106       | 92      |
| TA        | 11   | 18      | 72      | 102       | 109     |
| HAF       | 28   | 36      | 84      | 102       | 62      |
| EC        | 22   | 41      | 79      | 98        | 72      |
| PT        | 18   | 22      | 96      | 104       | 72      |
| CSR       | 31   | 38      | 87      | 98        | 58      |

Higher scores of "Dislike" in FC and TA under dysfunctional situations refer to the sensitivity to the failures of performance. Even minor shortcomings in these qualities produce negative affect of a powerful nature. This goes with cognitive-behavioral models in which the loss aversion prevails over functional assessments.

Cultural attributes on the other hand generate less negative reactions in dysfunctional cases. Symbolic or aesthetic expectations do not make consumers angry but leave them neutral. The results are in line with the theoretical assumption that the breakeven attributes do not cause dissatisfaction in their absence.

### 3.2. Kano category classification

All the attributes were categorized within a Kano category using the functional-dysfunctional response pairs. Table 3 gives the number of raw category and most dominant category.



**Figure 2.** Kano Category Results per Attribute

#### 3.2.1. Interpretation of kano classification

##### Must-Be Attributes (FC)

Fabric Comfort is a requirement. It does not exist which makes it dissatisfying at the moment, which indicates its participation in the role of a psychological anchor.

##### One-Dimensional Attributes (TA, PT)

These attributes produce proportional satisfaction changes. This behavior aligns with rational evaluation patterns in quality decision-making.

##### Attractive Attributes (HAF, EC, CSR)

The changes of satisfaction proportions are proportional to these attributes. This is a characteristic that is consistent with logical assessment patterns of good decision-making.

In this classification we can see a two-value topography of Hanfu consumption:

- Trust is empowered with functional foundation.
- Attachment is enhanced by cultural enrichment.

### 3.3. Coefficients of satisfaction and dissatisfaction

The SI (Satisfaction Index) and DSI (Dissatisfaction Index), which are the measures of the emotional impact of each attribute, are the values of Kano model.

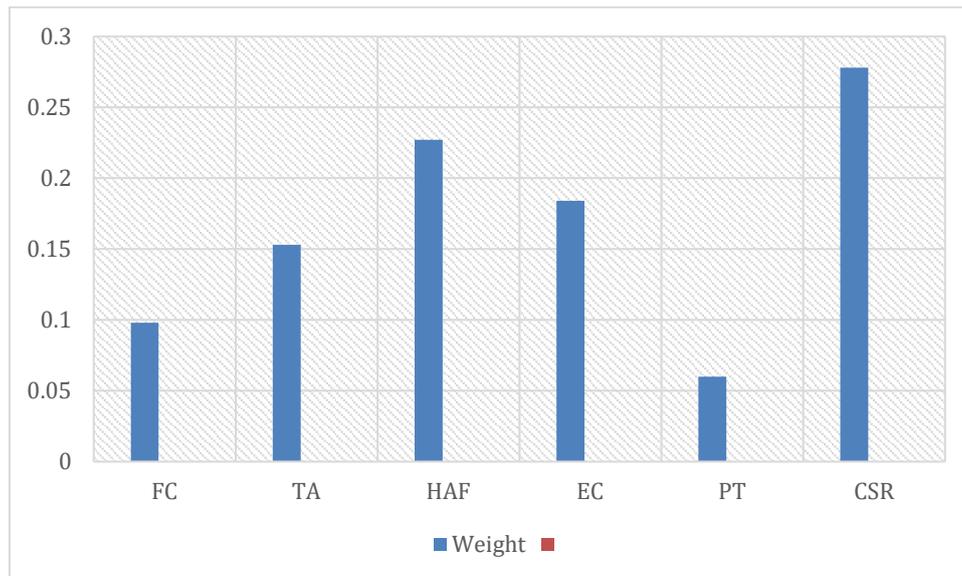


Figure 3. SI & DSI

Good DSI (Low dissatisfaction)

**FC (-0.68) and TA (-0.51):**

- Dissatisfaction is strongly determined by functional failures.
- Good SI (High satisfaction potential)

**CSR (0.71) and HAF (0.62):**

- Emotional upliftment is fuelled by symbolic and historical value.
- Moderate SI/DSI Values

The impact of PT is moderate, which indicates that this concept is not a symbolic feature; rather, it is a signal of fairness.

A combination of these dynamics suggests that the construction of Hanfu satisfaction is based on:

- Functional adequacy = negative emotion prevention.
- Cultural symbolism = produces positive emotion.

**3.4. AHP weights of priority attributes**

APH results indicate the likelihood of the experts in the ranking of the attributes.

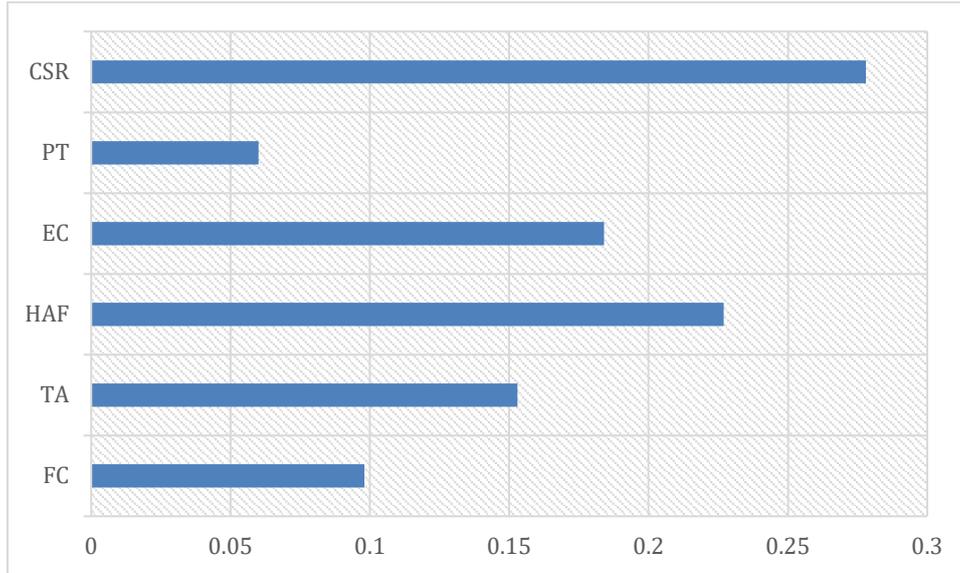


Figure 4. AHP Weight

**Highest Weight: CSR (0.278)**

The Hanfu experience is characterized by symbolic resonance. Analysts consider identity expression to be the powerful force of sustainable consumption.

**Second Tier: HAF (0.227), EC (0.184)**

Alternative cultural-aesthetic authenticity is seen to be key to brand differentiation.

Functional Tier: FC, TA, PT

These qualities are important, they do not make sense, and they only make trust.

Therefore, the notion of weighting helps to prove the hypothesis that Hanfu consumers do not just buy a garment but are also engaged in a cultural revival.

**3.5. Integrated Kano–AHP mapping**

The integration of Kano classification and AHP weighting enables a dual-layer interpretation of Hanfu consumption psychology. While the Kano model identifies the nonlinear satisfaction roles of individual attributes, AHP quantifies their relative importance in decision-making. By mapping Kano categories against AHP weights, attributes can be positioned within a decision matrix that distinguishes between risk-reducing necessities, performance drivers, and symbolic satisfaction amplifiers. This integrated interpretation allows for a more nuanced understanding of how functional and cultural attributes jointly shape consumer satisfaction. This grid combines the kind of attribute (Kano classification) and importance (AHP weight), and this generates the most practical knowledge.

Table 3. Integrated Consumption Psychology

| Attribute | Kano            | SI   | DSI   | Weight |
|-----------|-----------------|------|-------|--------|
| FC        | Must-Be         | 0.32 | -0.68 | 0.098  |
| TA        | One-Dimensional | 0.54 | -0.51 | 0.153  |
| HAF       | Attractive      | 0.62 | -0.12 | 0.227  |
| EC        | Attractive      | 0.59 | -0.20 | 0.184  |

| Attribute | Kano            | SI   | DSI   | Weight |
|-----------|-----------------|------|-------|--------|
| PT        | One-Dimensional | 0.48 | -0.43 | 0.060  |
| CSR       | Attractive      | 0.71 | -0.08 | 0.278  |

**Table 3.** (Continued)

The synthesized perspective depicts four psychological zones:

**Zone 1**

This zone consists of high impact content makers, often called pure content creators.

(CSR, HAF, EC)

These qualities inform the inner spirit of Hanfu consumption. They create a sense of cultural belonging, identity confirmation and symbolism.

**Zone 2: Performance Drivers**

(TA)

Improvement of tailoring on the part of consumers is what is supposed to be directly rewarded in the form of more satisfaction.

**Zone 3: Risk Reducers**

(FC, PT)

These features do not allow displeasure. They are more like conditions than distinguishing factors.

**Zone 4: Strategic Insight**

To satisfy the customers to the uttermost level, Hanfu brands have the ability to:

1. Functional reliability (avoid dissatisfaction) must be ensured.
2. Putting a lot of money in cultural symbolism and craftsmanship (maximize satisfaction).

The psychological impact is nonlinear and asymmetric, which is also in line with the Kano theory and the experiential consumption psychology.

**3.6. Summary of key findings**

The experience anchors on functional attributes but cannot be uplifted by them. Cultural attributes disproportionately give rise to delight. AHP weights bear testimony to the role of symbolic meaning as the ultimate motivator of long-term attachment. The psychology of Hanfu consumption is inherently psychocultural rather than utilitarian.

**4. Discussion**

This work aimed to assess the impact of functional needs and cultural attachment in a joint influence on the consumer psychology in the framework of Hanfu consumption and apply a composite Kano-AHP model. Findings demonstrate some important conclusions regarding the manner in which young consumers in the context of traditional-cultural fashion products evaluate them, the way expectations vary in terms of functional and symbolic levels and satisfaction is built in a cultural revival context, cognitively and emotionally. In this section, the findings are interpreted within the framework of working hypotheses, they are related to the theoretical perspectives existing and their implications are discussed concerning consumer research, cultural industries and product development.

#### **4.1. Necessary Qualities: The principle of acceptance**

Among the most obvious results of the analysis of the Kano model, it is important to single out the fact that some specific characteristics of Hanfu, namely Fabric Comfort, Tailoring Accuracy, and Pricing Transparency, are components that fall within the functional expectations scope. Fabric Comfort was classified as Must-Be quality, which implies that customers consider comfort not as an added value but as a condition that they cannot afford not to have. This concurs with the functional hypothesis where Hanfu, although with its cultural connotation, has to meet the modern performance standards before the consumers can obtain any high-order value of it.

Customizing Accuracy and Pricing Transparency, which belongs to One-Dimensional attributes, supports the fact that consumers want the product to be constructed and priced in a professional and precise manner. Practically, it can be said that functional failure does not just decrease satisfaction, it actually provokes dissatisfaction, which is supported by high negative DSI scores. These trends prove the hypothesis that the initial level of consumer evaluation lies in the requirements of basic performance. When these expectations are not met then the cultural attachment is not able to counter it and downgrading or eliminating prospective purchases are the results.

This finding is theoretically aligned with the expectation-confirmation paradigm, which states that when one fails to meet the basic expectations, the response to this failure would be disproportionately negative. It also represents the trend in the wider context of cultural-fashion products where traditional aesthetics has to be aligned with the modern comforts standards so that the products can be viable in the market.

#### **4.2. Cultural-aesthetic attributes as motivators of emotional and symbolic satisfaction**

Unlike the functional attributes, the Historical Aesthetic Fidelity, Embroidery Craftsmanship, and Cultural Symbolic Resonance were always classified as Attractive attributes in the Kano framework. This implies that these attributes do not induce dissatisfaction in the lack of them but significantly boost satisfaction in the presence. This, in theory, is in support of the working hypothesis that cultural attachment is a mechanism of meaning-enhancement that produces an emotional uplift when triggered by culturally connoted product attributes.

Cultural Symbolic Resonance had the largest SI score of all attributes which implies that consumers enjoy the highest emotional payoffs of the attributes that depict symbolic identity, cultural pride and heritage continuity. In the same vein, craftsmanship in embroidery and historical faithfulness also played a significant role in perceived authenticity, which is a familiar antecedent of affective involvement in traditional and heritage-based consumption.

These effects concur with the symbolic consumption theory, claiming that the consumer employs culturally significant objects to convey identity, engage in a shared storytelling and negotiation of belonging. With Hanfu, the emotional power of the traditional dress is not based on aesthetics only; it is an extension of acting as a part of a cultural trend, and identifying with a generational rebirth of traditions.

Therefore, the presence of functional properties defines feasibility whereas the presence of cultural aesthetic properties define gratification, emotional uplift, and identity strengthening, which supports the two-sided hypothesis of Hanfu consumption psychology.

#### **4.3. AHP Rankings: Cultural Features take precedence over functional practices**

Results of the AHP show that cultural-symbolic factors are considered to be more significant than functional factors although functional lacks may cause dissatisfaction. The weight of Cultural Symbolic Resonance was the highest and the other two were Historical Aesthetic Fidelity and Embroidery

Craftsmanship. The trend shows that consumers do not see cultural meaning as a secondary value addition of Hanfu but the core value proposition of the brand.

This helps to testify to the hypothesis that the consumption of Hanfu is more of a meaning than a utility. With current trends in cultural markets where consumers are becoming more and more interested in products that provide them with experience as well as identity-related products, such results confirm the dominant role of symbolic attributes in influencing perceived value. This tendency reflects larger cultural trends in China, where the young consumers are engaged in the national trend movement (guochao) by buying the goods which reflect cultural pride and historical value.

The relatively low AHP scores of Pricing Transparency and Fabric Comfort do not dismiss their concern; instead, it indicates that it is a supporting, rather than distinguishing feature. These qualities are unconsciously anticipated as opposed to consciously appreciated. It is a critical difference to designers and marketers: whereas craftsmanship and symbolism are what make consumers enthusiastic, comfort and transparency ensure trust and avert disappointment.

#### **4.4. Integrated interpretation: A two-level consumption psychology**

Combining Kano and AHP results, it is possible to propose the following two-level psychological model of Hanfu consumption:

##### **1. Basic Functional Assurance (Cognitive Layer).**

Customers initially evaluate the performance of the product to meet the modern standards. The functional risk is avoided by comfort, precise tailoring, and reasonable prices, which make consumers find it easy to use the products.

##### **2. Symbolic- Aesthetic Elevation (Affective Layer)**

When the basic needs are satisfied consumers turn to the consideration of the cultural richness of the product. The higher emotional reactions triggered by symbolism, authenticity, and craftsmanship will generate satisfaction, delight, and brand loyalty.

This stratified model is consistent with cognitive-affective processing theories in which preliminary judgments are made to do with practicality and minimization of risk followed by emotional and symbolic meaning-making. The fact that the cultural attributes in satisfaction generation performed at a stronger level highlights how cultural products, particularly the one associated with heritage, serve more as a consumer product, but rather as symbolic resources to identity construction and culture involvement.

#### **4.5. Implications to hanfu designers, brands and cultural industries**

The research results have a number of useful and theoretical conclusions:

##### **4.5.1. Design implications**

Designers at Hanfu ought to focus on:

- Form and fit to eliminate unpleasant user experiences.
- A high level of craftsmanship and historically accurate details to make it easier to connect with the emotions.
- Symbolic dense motives, patterns, and color systems that appeal to the cultural stories.

##### **4.5.2. Marketing implications**

The marketing plans must focus on:

- Cultural narration to bring forth symbolic worth.
- Craftsmanship: Transparency to increase authenticity.
- Narrative-based branding relating Hanfu to cultural rejuvenism movements.

#### **4.5.3. Implications of the cultural industry**

Since Hanfu is both a cultural object and a fashion item, the cultural promotion, tourism and educational industries can cooperate with designers to:

- Market heritage via fashion.
- Promote craftsmen and embroiderers.
- Train consumers on classical aesthetics.

This highlights how Hanfu is a representative of the culture and not just a product.

#### **4.6. Theoretical contributions**

This research has theoretical contributions in the following means:

1. Showing how heritage fashion has two functions.

Hanfu use is positioned on the boundary of functional and symbolic evaluation, which disputes the customary normative models of product-based satisfaction.

2. Application of Kano theory to cultural consumption.

Attractive-Must-Be-One-Dimensional structure is a meaningful mapping of emotional and symbolic psychology of cultural goods.

3. Demonstrating that Kano and AHP are complementary.

The combination facilitates not only the factor that drives the satisfaction, but also the cognitive prioritization of attributes by consumers.

4. Promoting cultural attachment as an effective motivational construct.

These findings seem to indicate that cultural identity and symbolic fit are the determining factors of satisfaction even in a category of product where high practical performance is necessary.

#### **4.7. limitations and future research directions**

Notwithstanding the fact that the study offers a comprehensive insight into the consumption psychology of Hanfu, it is limited in the following ways:

##### **4.7.1. Sample demographics**

The participants were mostly of the age group 18-35 which is the most prevalent age group but it might not represent older and more conservative customers.

##### **4.7.2. Attribute selection**

The attributes analyzed were only six. Possible research to be done in the future is:

- Color symbolism
- The sustainability of materials.
- Social-media influence
- Designer presence or brand recognition.

#### **4.7.3. Contextual factors**

The factors that shape cultural consumption are:

- Social identity
- Peer influence
- Online communities

These variables are worth analyzing through structural modelling or qualitative research.

#### **4.7.4. Longitudinal effects**

Further studies might seek to examine how:

- Cultural attachment is enhanced with time.
- Changing aesthetic of fashion affect attribute priorities.
- Symbolic expectations are reenacted by societal narratives.

On the whole, the discourse shows that Hanfu is consumed through a twofold system of evaluation: the functional requirement makes sure that it is acceptable, and the cultural-aesthetic features provide satisfaction, pleasure, and emotional involvement. A combination of Kano and AHP offers a robust methodological device of learning about these psychological processes, and there is a great deal of implications to cultural fashion industries, consumer research, and heritage preservation.

## **5. Conclusion**

This paper has discussed the joint influence of functional needs and cultural attachment in forming the psychology behind Hanfu consumption through the synthesis of Kano model and the Analytic Hierarchy Process. The findings indicate that functional features like fabric comfort, accuracy on tailoring, and pricing transparency are used as a baseline expectation that averts disjointed but has a small role to play in general contentment. On the other hand, cultural identity formation has been found to play central role in making buying decisions because the cultural-symbolic attributes of historical aesthetic fidelity, skills of embroidery, cultural symbolic resonance and many more are found to be effective determinants of satisfaction. The integrated notion of the Kano model and analytic hierarchy process (AHP) makes it possible to understand duality in Hanfu consumption, where the customer is directed to both functional and the ability to have an emotional response to the culture. The findings can be used in informing the strategic directions of designers and retailers aiming at improving the provision of cultural value and the development of products. The association of cultures in future studies can be a cross-cultural comparison or study of how cultures evolve and maintain their cultural identity-based patterns of consumption. By empirically distinguishing between functional acceptability and symbolic gratification, this study contributes to a more precise understanding of heritage fashion consumption. The proposed Kano-AHP framework offers a transferable analytical tool for examining culturally embedded products beyond Hanfu, supporting future research in cultural industries and identity-driven consumption.

## **Conflict of interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest

## References

1. Zhang, X. (2025b). Cultural consumption of Chinese Generation Z. *Science Insights*, 46(2), 1749–1755. <https://doi.org/10.15354/si.25.re1156>
2. Arnould, E. J., & Thompson, C. J. (2005). Consumer Culture Theory (CCT): Twenty years of research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(4), 868–882. <https://doi.org/10.1086/426626>
3. Baytar, F., Chung, T., & Shin, E. (2020b). Evaluating garments in augmented reality when shopping online. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 24(4), 667–683. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jfmm-05-2018-0077>
4. Hong, Y., Fang, Y., Yang, Y., & Phua, D. Y. (2013b). Cultural attachment. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 44(6), 1024–1044. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022113480039>
5. Herdiyanti, H., Launtu, A., Rahayu, B., S, W. S. P., & Anam, C. (2024). Analysis of the influence of cultural factors on consumer preferences in product purchasing decisions: A Cross-Cultural Study of the Global market. *Dinasti International Journal of Education Management and Social Science*, 5(5), 1384–1392. <https://doi.org/10.38035/dijemss.v5i5.2808>
6. Jia, Y. (2023c). Modern ancient Chinese. *Language Culture and Society*, 5(2), 246–268. <https://doi.org/10.1075/lcs.22025.jia>
7. Kano, N., Seraku, N., Takahashi, F., & Tsuji, S. (1984). Attractive quality and Must-Be quality. *JOURNAL OF THE JAPANESE SOCIETY FOR QUALITY CONTROL*, 14(2), 39–48. <http://altmetrics.ceek.jp/article/ci.nii.ac.jp/naid/10025070768>
8. Wang, W. (2023). The application of KANO Model in the design of cultural creative products. *Applied Mathematics and Nonlinear Sciences*, 8(2), 1851–1858. <https://doi.org/10.2478/amns.2023.1.00288>
9. Saaty, T. (1980). *The Analytic Hierarchy Process*. McGraw–Hill.
10. Vaidya, O. S., & Kumar, S. (2004). Analytic hierarchy process: An overview of applications. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 169(1), 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejor.2004.04.028>
11. GoLeanSixSigma.com. (n.d.). VOC Translation Matrix. Retrieved December 8, 2025, from [https://goleansixsigma.com/voc-translation-matrix/?srsltid=AfmBOorFBrV2Jmwa91AmIvO9QJsTx24tVogPYdfwcVVyu\\_FtYiRrme8C](https://goleansixsigma.com/voc-translation-matrix/?srsltid=AfmBOorFBrV2Jmwa91AmIvO9QJsTx24tVogPYdfwcVVyu_FtYiRrme8C)
12. Matzler, K., & Hinterhuber, H. H. (1998). How to make product development projects more successful by integrating Kano’s model of customer satisfaction into quality function deployment. *Technovation*, 18(1), 25–38. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0166-4972\(97\)00072-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0166-4972(97)00072-2)
13. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
14. Kano, N. (2001). *Guide to TQM in Service Industries*. Tokyo: Asian Productivity Organization.
15. Lee, Y., & Huang, S. (2008). A new fuzzy concept approach for Kano’s model. *Expert Systems With Applications*, 36(3), 4479–4484. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eswa.2008.05.034>
16. Berger, C., Blauth, R., & Boger, D. (1993). KANO’S METHODS FOR UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER-DEFINED QUALITY. *Medical Entomology and Zoology*, 2(4), 3–35. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/naid/10030507522/>
17. Matzler, K., & Sauerwein, E. (2002). The factor structure of customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 13(4), 314–332. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09564230210445078>
18. Saaty, T. L. (1994). *Fundamentals of decision making and priority theory*. RWS Publications.
19. Ishizaka, A., & Labib, A. (2011). Review of the main developments in the analytic hierarchy process. *Expert Systems With Applications*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eswa.2011.04.143>