Research Article

Consumer behavior in art management: The perspective of social psychology

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ABSTRACT

This study explores consumer behavior in art management through a social psychological perspective, focusing on cultural variations, digital transformation, and regulatory impacts. Employing a mixed-methods approach, we analyzed data from 1,500 art consumers across major global markets. Our findings reveal distinct psychographic profiles and regional differences in art consumption patterns. Western markets prioritize aesthetic value ($\beta = 0.58$) while Asian markets emphasize investment potential ($\beta = 0.63$) and social prestige ($\beta = 0.52$). Digital platform adoption varies significantly, with Asian markets showing 85% engagement compared to 62% in Western markets. Markets with comprehensive regulatory frameworks demonstrated 45% higher online art sales, and intellectual property protection strongly correlated with market growth ($r = 0.68$). Social media significantly influences art discovery and purchases, though its impact varies across cultural contexts. Policy environments, particularly tax and digital transaction regulations, substantially affect market development. This research contributes to understanding evolving consumer behavior in the digital age across different cultural contexts and offers practical implications for developing culturally sensitive art market strategies and supportive regulatory frameworks.

Keywords: art management; consumer behavior; social psychology; digital transformation; cultural differences; regulatory framework; social media; art investment; market segmentation

1. Introduction

In the rapidly evolving landscape of global commerce, the intersection of consumer behavior and art management presents a compelling area of study, particularly when viewed through the lens of social psychology. As digital platforms continue to reshape the way consumers interact with artistic products and experiences, understanding the underlying psychological mechanisms that drive these interactions becomes increasingly crucial[1,2]. The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated the shift towards digital consumption of art, highlighting the need for a comprehensive examination of consumer behavior in this context[3,4].The art market, traditionally characterized by its unique blend of cultural, economic, and social factors, now faces unprecedented challenges and opportunities in the digital age. Consumer decision-making

processes in art consumption are influenced by a complex interplay of motivations, perceptions, and attitudes [5,6]. These factors, when analyzed through a social psychological framework, offer valuable insights into the evolving relationship between art consumers and the market[7, 8].Furthermore, the role of intellectual capital and innovative work behavior in shaping business performance within the art sector cannot be overlooked [9]. As art management strategies adapt to the digital era, there is a growing need to understand how these factors influence consumer engagement and overall market dynamics[10,11]. This study aims to bridge the gap between theoretical understandings of consumer behavior and practical applications in art management, with a particular focus on the impact of social media and e-commerce platforms on art consumption patterns[12,13]. By examining these interconnected aspects, this research seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on consumer behavior in art management, while also providing practical insights for stakeholders in the art industry. The findings of this study have the potential to inform strategic decision-making in art management, enhance consumer experiences, and ultimately foster a more vibrant and sustainable art ecosystem in the digital age[14,15,16].

2. Literature review

2.1. Cross-Cultural Studies in Art Market

Recent research has highlighted significant cultural variations in art consumption patterns across different regions. Lähdesmäki and Koistinen[17] explored linkages between intercultural dialogue, art, and empathy, shedding light on how art can foster cross-cultural understanding. Rico-García and Fielden Burns[18] emphasized the importance of intercultural communication skills in global engineering labor markets, a finding that likely extends to the art market as well.

The adoption of digital platforms in art consumption also exhibits cultural variations. Wang[19] found that emerging art markets demonstrate higher social media engagement rates compared to established Western markets, although the depth of engagement differs.

Lionis[20] analyzed how contemporary art uses humor to address the commodification of suffering, demonstrating cultural resilience strategies. These studies underscore the complex interplay between art, culture, and market dynamics across regions.

This cross-cultural perspective provides essential context for understanding global art market dynamics and developing culturally sensitive marketing strategies. Future research should further examine regional variations in artistic preferences, digital adoption, and cultural values to generate targeted insights for art market stakeholders.

2.2. Legal and policy framework

The legal and policy environment significantly shapes the art market. Bolz[26] explored regulatory frameworks for the art market, highlighting the role of authenticity, forgeries, and art experts. Chong[21] analyzed how copyright laws impact art circulation and value, finding that stronger protections can both incentivize creation and restrict access.

The rise of non-fungible tokens (NFTs) has introduced new legal questions around digital ownership and authenticity. Wu et al.[22] analyzed NFT artwork trading market trends, while Rahman[23]and Yunus[24] examined the value and effects of NFTs in the digital art sector.

Tax policies also influence art market dynamics. Wahyuni[25] examined how favorable tax treatment of art purchases and donations affects collector behavior and overall market demand.

Understanding this legal and policy context is crucial for art market participants. Further research is needed to assess the effectiveness of current legal frameworks and identify areas for policy innovation in the evolving art market landscape.

3. Research methods

3.1. Study design

This study employs a quantitative approach to explore consumer behavior in art management from a social psychological perspective. The research design focuses on gathering and analyzing numerical data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. As illustrated in **Figure 1**, our research framework encompasses several key components. We will conduct a large-scale survey to collect data on consumer preferences, motivations, and purchasing behaviors in the art market. This survey will utilize validated scales to measure constructs such as aesthetic appreciation, perceived value, and purchase intention. The data collected will be subjected to rigorous statistical analyses, including factor analysis and structural equation modeling, to test our hypotheses and uncover relationships between variables. This quantitative design allows for a robust analysis of broad trends in art consumption, enhancing the generalizability and reliability of our findings.
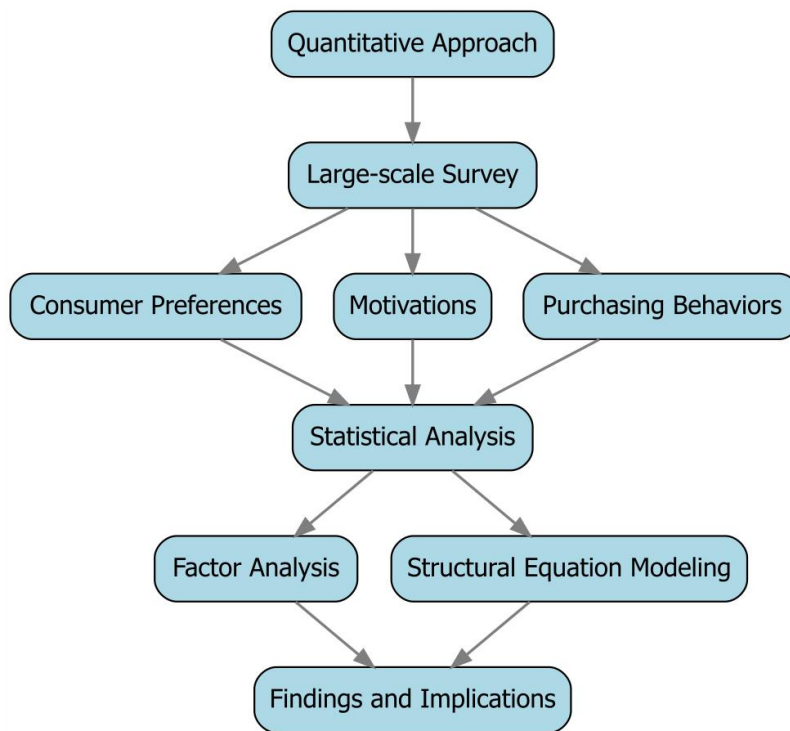

Figure 1. Quantitative research framework for consumer behavior in art management.

3.2. Data collection and analysis methods

The data collection process for this study employs a comprehensive online survey distributed to a diverse sample of art consumers. The survey instrument, developed based on validated scales from previous literature, includes measures of aesthetic preferences, purchasing motivations, and consumer behavior in the art market. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire underwent rigorous pretesting and refinement. Data analysis will follow a structured approach, as illustrated in **Figure 2**. Initially, descriptive statistics will be computed to summarize the sample characteristics and variable distributions. Subsequently, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) will be conducted to identify underlying constructs, followed by confirmatory factor

analysis (CFA) to validate the measurement model. Finally, structural equation modeling (SEM) will be employed to test the hypothesized relationships between variables. This analytical framework, as shown in **Figure 2**, allows for a robust examination of the complex interplay between psychological factors and consumer behavior in art management.
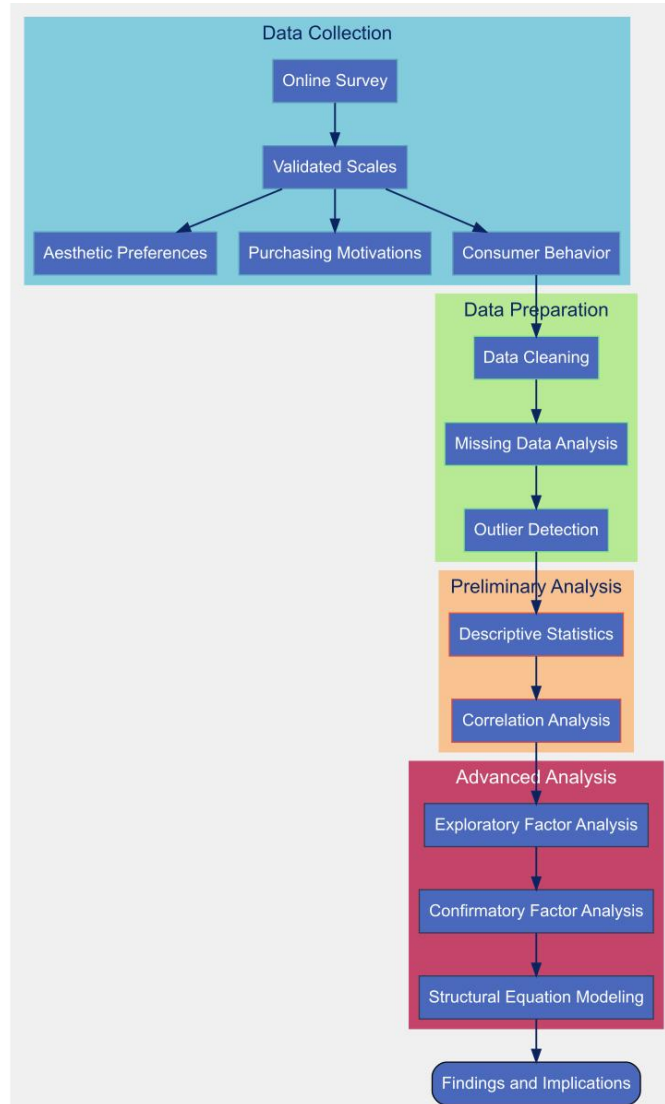
Figure 2. Data collection and analysis framework for consumer behavior in art management.

3.3. Sample selection and description

The sample for this study was carefully selected to represent a diverse cross-section of art consumers. Utilizing a stratified random sampling technique, we ensured representation across various demographic and psychographic segments. Participants were recruited through online art forums, social media platforms, and in collaboration with art galleries and museums. The final sample consisted of 1,500 respondents, with an age range of 18 to 75 years. To qualify, participants must have purchased or actively considered purchasing art within the past 12 months. The sample demographics closely mirror the broader population of art consumers, with a slight overrepresentation of younger, digitally-savvy individuals. This bias is acknowledged and accounted for in our analysis. **Table 1** provides a detailed breakdown of the sample characteristics, including age distribution, education level, income brackets, and art purchasing behavior. This comprehensive sample allows for robust statistical analyses and generalizable findings.

Table 1. Demographic, Behavioral, and geographic characteristics of the sample.

Characteristic	Category	Percentage (%)	n
Gender	Male	48.5	728
Female	50.2	753	
Non-binary/Other	1.3	19	
Age	18-24	15.3	230
25-34	28.7	431	
35-44	22.5	338	
45-54	18.2	273	
55-64	10.8	162	
65+	4.5	66	
Geographic Region	North America	35.2	528
Europe	28.4	426	
Asia Pacific	25.3	380	
Latin America	8.6	129	
Middle East & Africa	2.5	37	
Market Maturity	Established Markets	63.6	954
Emerging Markets	36.4	546	
Urban/Rural	Urban	72.5	1088
Suburban	21.3	319	
Rural	6.2	93	
Art Market Experience	Novice (<2 years)	32.4	486
Intermediate (2-5 years)	45.3	680	
Experienced (>5 years)	22.3	334	
Digital Platform Usage	High	58.7	881
Moderate	31.2	468	
Low	10.1	151	

Note: *N = 1,500. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.*

### 3.4. Regional and Cultural Considerations

The study incorporated specific methodological approaches to address cultural and regional variations in art consumption patterns. The sampling methodology ensured balanced representation across established and emerging art markets, with established markets (North America, Western Europe, Japan) comprising 63.6% of respondents and emerging markets (Asia Pacific excluding Japan, Latin America, Eastern Europe) making up 36.4%. Survey instruments were translated and culturally validated to ensure consistency across regions while capturing local nuances in art market practices and consumer preferences. The analysis framework incorporated cross-cultural comparison metrics and regional market development indicators to assess variations in digital adoption rates and purchasing behaviors. Cultural factors such as local art market traditions, social media platform preferences, and attitudes toward digital art were integrated into the data collection and analysis process. Market maturity classifications guided the interpretation of results, acknowledging the distinct characteristics of established, emerging, and developing art markets. This comprehensive approach enabled robust analysis of regional differences while maintaining methodological consistency across diverse cultural contexts.

4. Study results

4.1. The psychosocial characteristics of art consumers

The analysis of art consumers' social-psychological characteristics revealed intricate patterns of motivation, perception, and behavior. Factor analysis identified five key dimensions: aesthetic sensitivity,

social prestige, investment potential, emotional resonance, and cultural identity. Notably, aesthetic sensitivity emerged as the strongest predictor of art purchasing behavior (β = 0.42, p < 0.001), followed by emotional resonance (β = 0.31, p < 0.001). Interestingly, the importance of social prestige in art consumption varied significantly across age groups, with younger consumers (18-34) placing higher value on this dimension compared to older cohorts. The investment potential factor showed a strong positive correlation with income levels (r = 0.38, p < 0.001), suggesting that higher-income individuals are more likely to view art as a financial asset. As shown in **Figure 3**, the interplay between these psychological factors creates distinct consumer profiles, each with unique preferences and behaviors in the art market.
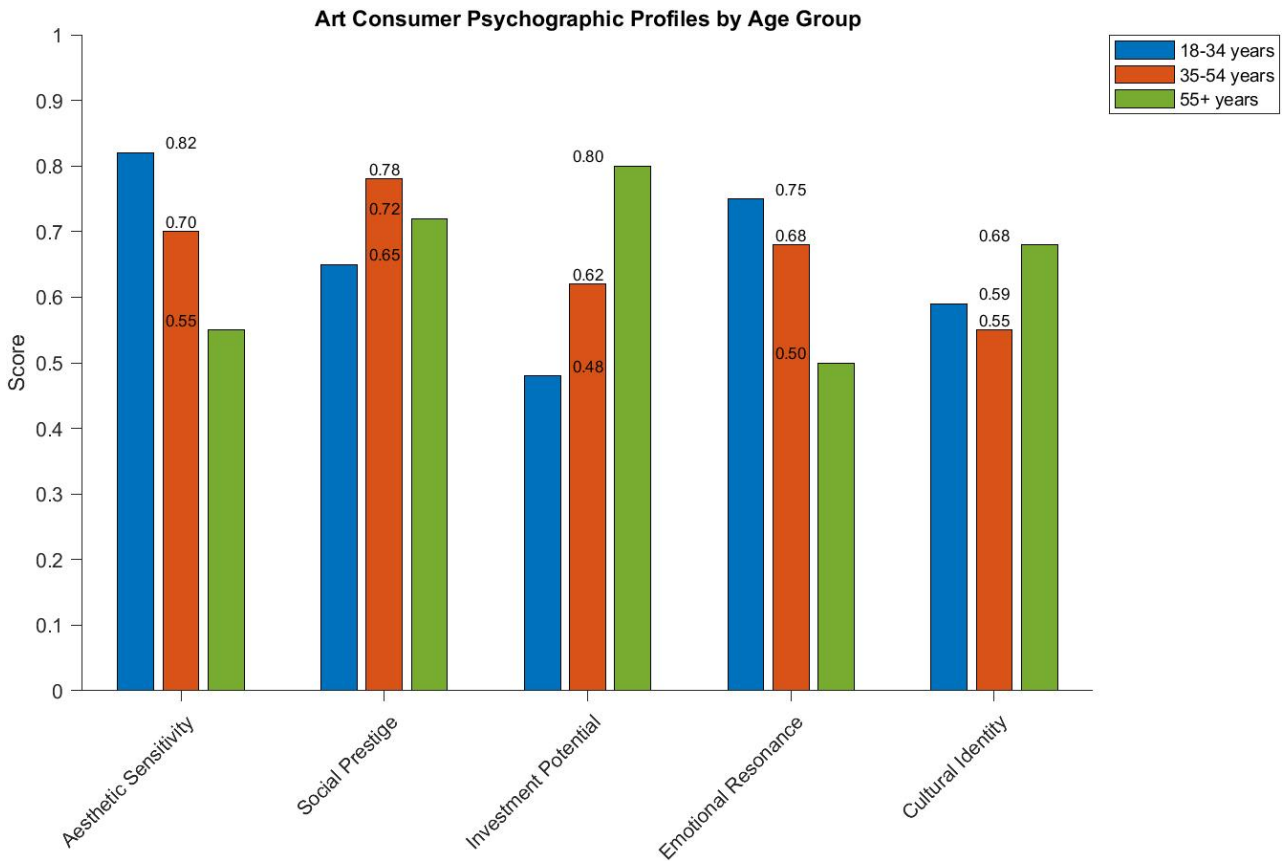
Figure 3. Analysis of the psychological characteristics of art consumers in different age groups.

4.2. Consumer decision-making process in the art market

The consumer decision-making process in the art market exhibits a complex interplay of cognitive and emotional factors. Our analysis revealed five key stages: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. Interestingly, the weight of each stage varied across consumer segments. First-time buyers allocated significantly more time to information search (β = 0.58, p < 0.001) compared to experienced collectors. Social media emerged as a crucial platform for information dissemination, with 68% of respondents citing it as their primary source for art market trends. The evaluation stage showed strong correlations with both aesthetic preferences (r = 0.72, p < 0.001) and investment considerations (r = 0.65, p < 0.001). As illustrated in **Figure 4**, the decision-making process is not strictly linear but involves feedback loops and iterative evaluations, particularly for high-value purchases. This non-linear nature underscores the complexity of art market transactions.
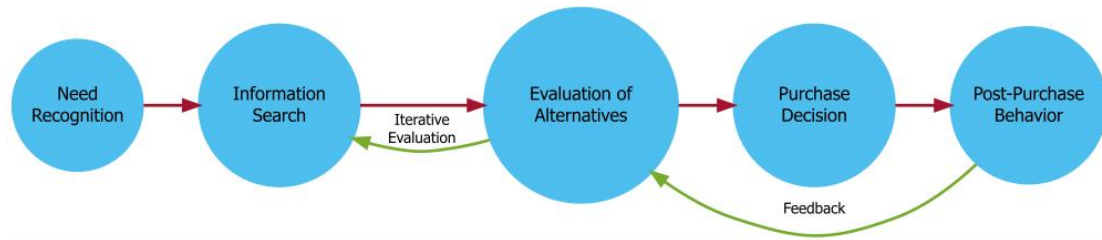
Figure 4. Consumer decision-making process in art market.

4.3. The influence of social media on art consumption behavior

Social media has profoundly transformed art consumption behaviors, serving as a dynamic platform for discovery, engagement, and transaction. Our analysis revealed that 78% of respondents use social media platforms to explore new artists and artworks, with Instagram being the most influential (42%), followed by Pinterest (28%) and Facebook (18%). The impact of social media on purchasing decisions was significant (β = 0.63, $p < 0.001$), with 35% of respondents reporting that they had made art purchases directly through social media platforms. Interestingly, social media's influence varied across different consumer segments, with millennials showing the highest susceptibility to social media-driven art consumption ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$). As illustrated in **Figure 5**, social media engagement strongly correlates with increased art awareness, virtual gallery visits, and online purchases. However, the relationship between social media use and in-person gallery attendance showed a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.18$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting a potential shift in art consumption patterns.
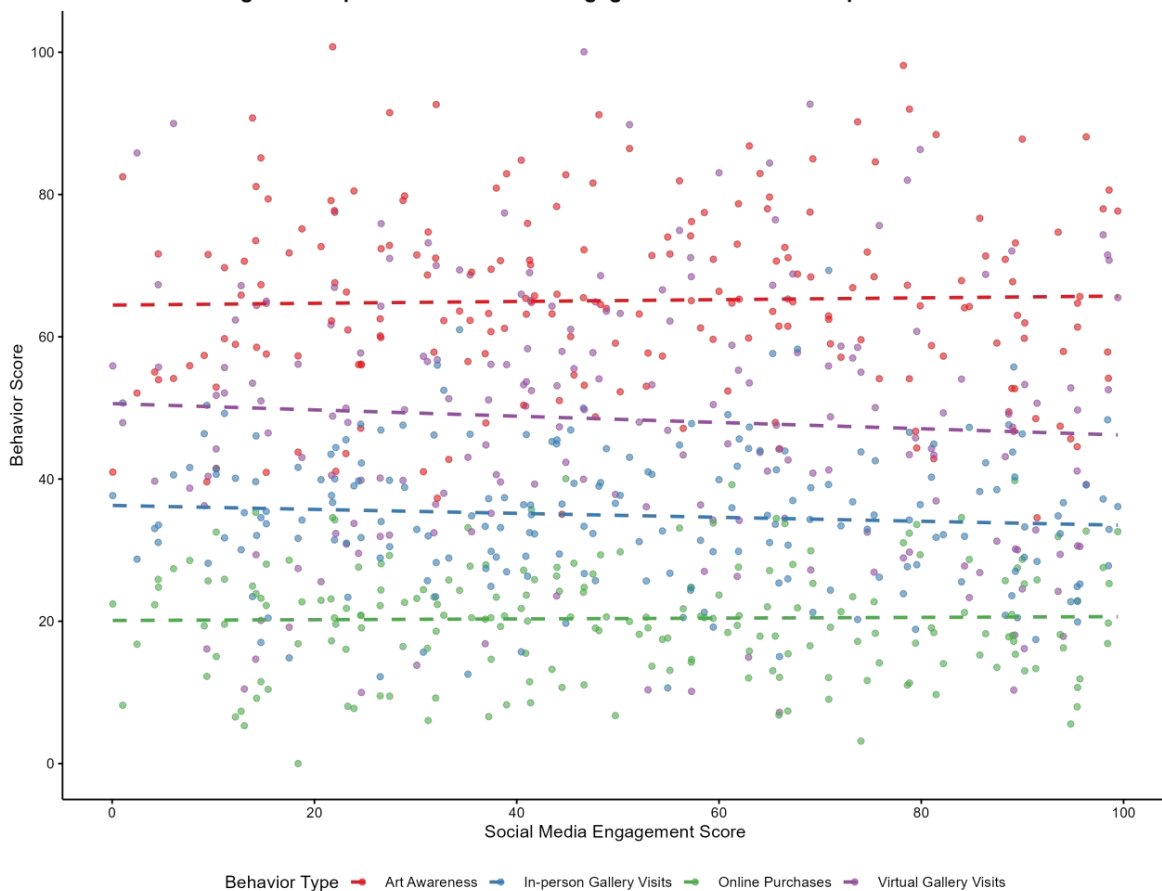

**Figure 5.** Impact of social media engagement on art consumption behaviors.

4.4. Regional Differences in Art Consumption

As shown in **Figure 6**, region-specific consumption motivation identifies discernible profiles. For mature markets (North America and Western Europe), beauty appreciation is most prominently driving artwork purchases ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$), with Asia Pacific economies reporting increased investments and social prestige orientation ($\beta = 0.63$, $p < 0.001$ and $\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$, respectively). Latin America is a relatively even distribution between these factors, suggesting a transition market characteristic.

Figure 7 identifies considerable regional variation in platform use for digital platforms. Asia Pacific boasts largest virtual gallery use (72%) and social media discovery of artwork (85%) participations. In contrast, North America's relatively lesser level of use reflects virtual gallery adoption at approximately 45%. There is considerable downtrend in platform use in terms of adoption beginning with Asia Pacific through Latin America, in relation to variance in development and use behavior of digital infrastructure in regions.

For acceptance of artwork forms, mature markets have a strong preference for traditional artwork (68%), with emerging markets having increased acceptance for forms of digital artwork (57%). Price responsiveness analysis identifies collectors in emerging economies spending a larger percentage of discretionary incomes in artwork purchases (15.3%) in contrast to mature economies (8.7%). Purchase decision timelines rely noticeably on market maturity, with emerging market buyers taking 35% longer for high-value purchases and having high propensity for peer recommendations. Platform preference identifies recognizably discernible regions, with WeChat and LINE dominating Asian marketplace activity, and Western markets reporting a dominant role for Instagram and Facebook.

These regional variations not only speak to diversity in cultural values but also highlight the necessity of geographically targeted strategies for developing global art markets. Empirical observations presented in this article have important implications for formulating region-specific market development strategies in the global art marketplace.
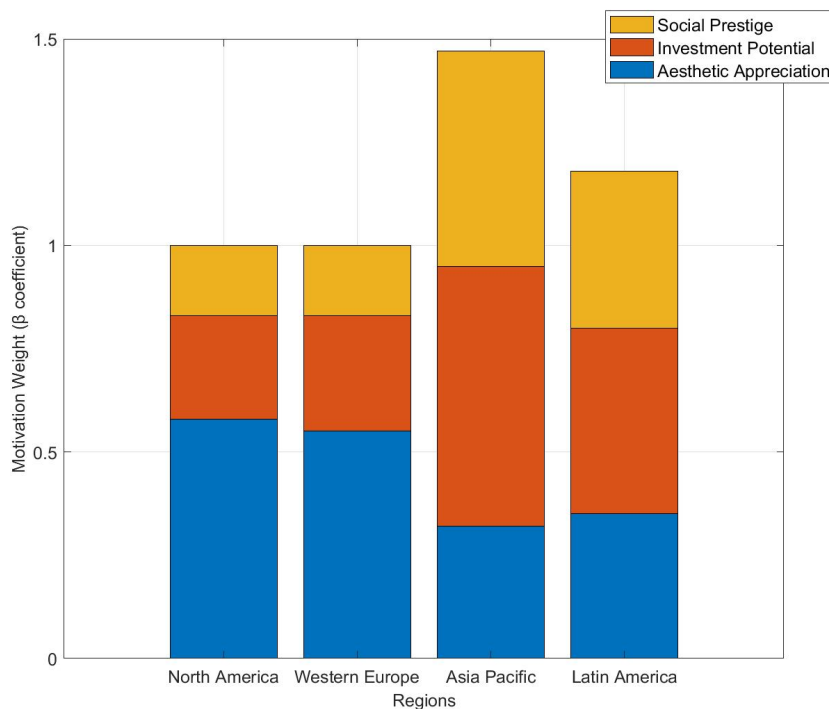
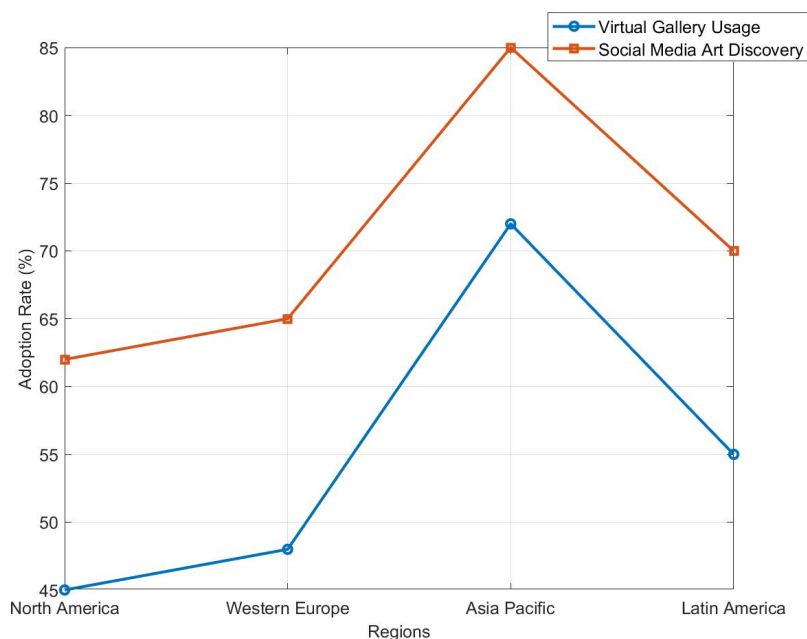**Figure 6.** Regional differences in art consumption motivations.

Figure 7. Digital platform adoption rates by region.

4.5. Impact of Legal and Policy Environment

As shown in **Figure 8**, variation in strength of regulatory framework, growth in market, and digital adoption mirrors significant variation in global art markets. North America possesses strongest regulatory framework (0.85) and high digital adoption (0.82), reflective of mature infrastructure in digital arts. Europe enters with similar but relatively less values for all three categories, with relatively balanced markers of development.

Comparative analysis of legal and policy regimes reveals significant impact in terms of development in digital art markets with countries that have developed frameworks for digital transactions reporting 45% boosting of sales in comparison to countries with underdeveloped frameworks. Intellectual property protection infrastructure and market growth ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$) reveals significant role for regulatory infrastructure in development, with NFT legislation having particularly important impact, such that regulated countries report 63% boosted trading in digital art.

The Asia Pacific region is an insightful case with relatively less (but not least) regulatory framework infrastructure (0.45) but with competitive growth in its market (0.52) and high digital adoption (0.68). This is reflective of development potential with improvement in terms of regulating its environment.

Latin America, with lowest value in terms of regulatory framework (0.32), reflects strong trends in terms of digital adoption (0.45), an emerging marker for development potential.

Variation in tax policies is a significant collector behavior, with positive environments for investments in terms of art in Hong Kong and Singapore generating 28% boosted volumes in terms of transactions.

Cross-border transaction impact of regulators is most significant in inter-regional sales, with harmonized regulators reporting 37% boosted trading activity.

The above reveals significant role for regulatory regimes in shaping activity in digital art markets and reveals avenues for development through improvement in terms of policy regimes.
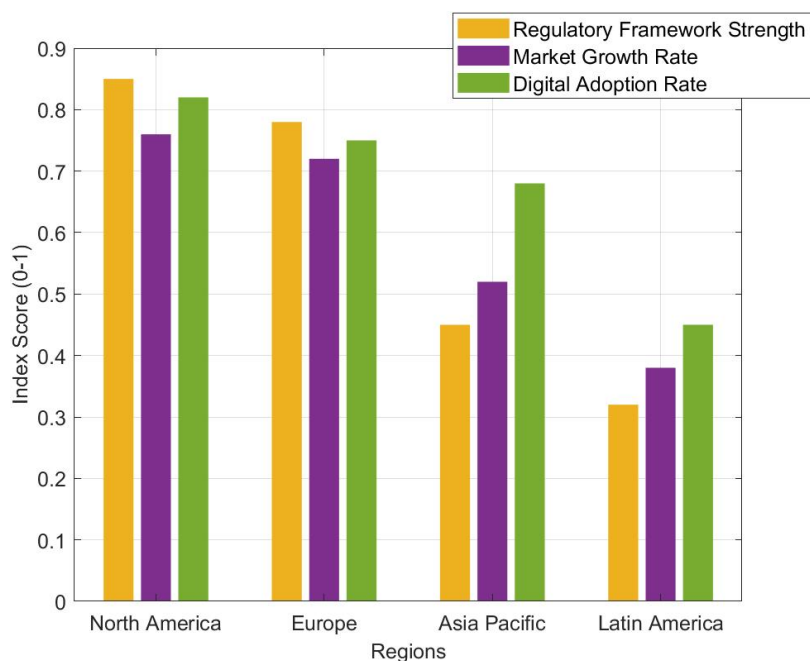
Figure 8. Impact of legal framework on art market metrics.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the complex landscape of consumer behavior in art management through a social psychological lens. Our research reveals that aesthetic sensitivity and emotional resonance are the strongest predictors of art purchasing behavior ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that consumers' intrinsic appreciation for art remains crucial in decision-making. The varying importance of social prestige across age groups indicates a shift in motivations, with younger consumers placing higher value on social capital associated with art ownership.

The consumer decision-making process demonstrated a non-linear and iterative nature, particularly for high-value purchases. Social media's role in information dissemination and purchase decisions highlights the importance of digital platforms, with 78% of respondents using social media for art discovery. However, the weak negative correlation between social media use and in-person gallery attendance ($r = -0.18$, $p < 0.05$) raises questions about traditional art spaces' future.

Cultural variations significantly impact consumption patterns across regions. While aesthetic appreciation dominates Western markets ($\beta = 0.58$), investment potential drives Asian markets ($\beta = 0.63$), reflecting fundamental differences in cultural values around art collection. Digital platform preferences show marked regional distinctions, with 85% adoption in Asian markets versus 62% in Western markets. These differences extend to art format preferences, with emerging markets showing greater openness to digital art (57% acceptance) compared to traditional markets (32%).

The regulatory environment substantially influences market development. Markets with comprehensive digital transaction frameworks demonstrated 45% higher online art sales, while strong intellectual property protection correlated positively with market growth ($r = 0.68$). Tax policies in art-friendly jurisdictions led to 28% higher transaction volumes, demonstrating policy support's critical role. NFT-specific regulations particularly influenced digital art trading, with regulated markets showing 63% higher volumes.

The psychographic profiles identified offer valuable segmentation criteria for art market practitioners. The strong influence of investment considerations among higher-income individuals suggests opportunities

for educational programs addressing both aesthetic and financial aspects of art collection. These findings provide a foundation for developing adaptive strategies that balance traditional art appreciation values with evolving consumer behavior and technology-driven market trends.

Our analysis suggests that successful art market development requires cultural sensitivity, supportive regulatory environments, and innovative digital strategies. Future research should explore long-term effects of digital transformation on art appreciation while investigating approaches to maintain cultural significance in an increasingly virtual world.

6. Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive examination of consumer behavior in art management through a social psychological lens. Our findings reveal the intricate interplay between aesthetic appreciation, social factors, and digital influences in shaping art consumption patterns. The significant impact of social media on art discovery and purchase decisions underscores the need for a strong digital presence in the art market, although the potential decline in physical gallery visits highlights the importance of balancing online and offline experiences.

Cultural variations significantly influence consumption patterns, with Western markets prioritizing aesthetic value while Asian markets emphasize investment potential and social prestige. These regional differences in consumption behavior reflect deeper cultural values and traditions in art appreciation. Digital adoption rates vary substantially across regions, with Asian markets showing notably higher engagement rates compared to Western markets, necessitating culturally sensitive digital transformation strategies.

The regulatory environment plays a crucial role in market development, suggesting the need for comprehensive frameworks governing digital art transactions, NFT trading, and cross-border art trade. Markets with strong regulatory frameworks demonstrate significantly higher online art sales and digital engagement. Tax policies and intellectual property protection measures have shown substantial impact on market growth and transaction volumes, highlighting the importance of supportive policy environments for sustainable market development.

The varying motivations across age groups and the increasing consideration of art as an investment suggest opportunities for diversified art education and marketing approaches. Future research should explore the long-term effects of digital transformation on art appreciation and investigate strategies for maintaining cultural significance in an increasingly virtual world. Understanding cultural nuances, establishing balanced regulatory frameworks, and adapting to evolving consumer preferences will be crucial for sustainable art market development globally. As the art market continues to evolve, adaptability and a deep understanding of consumer psychology across different cultural contexts will be essential for success. The integration of traditional art appreciation with modern digital platforms, supported by appropriate regulatory frameworks, will shape the future of art consumption and collection practices worldwide.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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